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Special Housing Areas - Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Special Housing Area (SHA)?

Special Housing Areas are a tool provided for within the council's agreement with the government, the Auckland Housing Accord, and accompanying Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act (HASHAA) legislation to boost Auckland's housing supply.

By increasing the number of new sites and dwellings in Auckland, the council and the government aim to make housing more accessible and affordable.

Auckland Council has the following criteria for establishing Special Housing Areas:

1. Adequate infrastructure exists or is likely to exist
2. Demand for residential housing in the proposed SHA
3. Evidence of demand to create qualifying developments in the SHA
4. Strategic location
5. Yield
6. Contribution to housing affordability
7. Inside the Rural Urban Boundary
8. Appropriate zone in the PAUP
9. Quality of the development and compatibility with the PAUP
10. Local board views
11. Iwi views
12. Land owner views

View the full set of criteria with guidelines [here](#).

Where are Special Housing Areas located?

Auckland Council is working with the government, developers and landowners to identify suitable areas for Special Housing Areas. Auckland's elected representatives are also involved leading up to the final decision on which SHAs are recommended for approval to central government.



These are in a mixture of existing urban (brownfields) and new urban (greenfields) land.

A number of Special Housing Areas have been approved by the council and the government and are now legal entities. These are listed here:

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/ratesbuildingproperty/housingsupply/Pages/specialhousingareas.aspx>

All of the locations had previously been identified as places where:

- growth is best suited
- people want to live
- there is room for homes to be built
- infrastructure is largely in place, or there is capacity to build such infrastructure.

Who owns the land designated as Special Housing Areas?

In some cases, private owners, infrastructure providers, iwi, or property developers own the land. In other cases, the land is owned by agencies such as Housing New Zealand or Auckland Council Properties Ltd.

What role does the council have?

The council will continue to identify new areas to be Special Housing Areas from now until the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan comes into effect, probably in 2016, or until the council and the government is satisfied that the outcomes in the accord have been achieved.

The council's job is to recommend Special Housing Areas to the government for approval. The council then administers the planning and consenting process inside the Special Housing Areas. The private sector (i.e. land developers, infrastructure providers and builders) must then do the rest, albeit subject to the council's ongoing regulatory supervision.

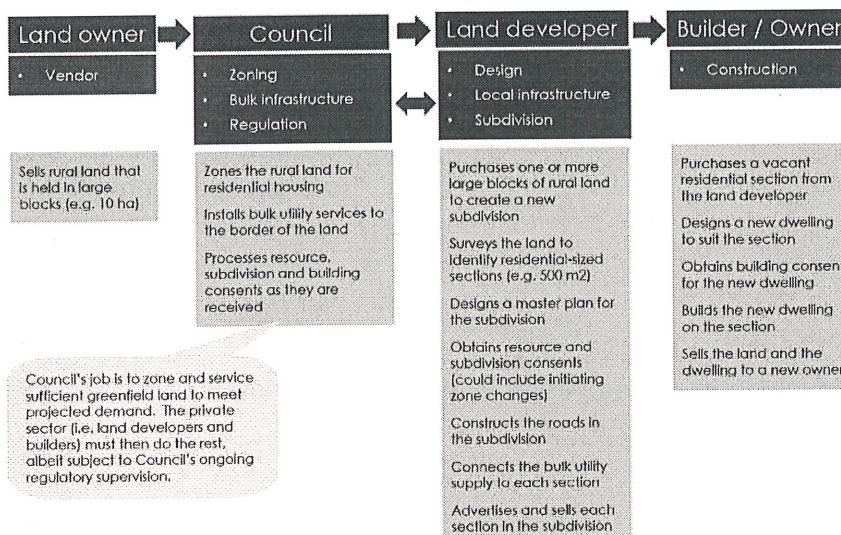
Who builds the homes?

In most cases, private sector development companies will build homes inside Special Housing Areas for sale to private individuals and families. In some cases, community housing organisations, iwi or others in the private sector build the homes that will be targeted to the needs of particular groups. In all cases, the council will require that a portion of all homes are affordable to first-home buyers.

The council will not be building homes. In greenfield areas, the process is as follows:

Greenfield land supply chain

In the supply of greenfield land for housing, the steps that council can initiate are limited to re-zoning rural land and supplying bulk services.



My property is within a Special Housing Area. Can I now go ahead and develop my land?

Your property would need to be large enough to accommodate a minimum of four new dwellings. Generally, we'd be looking for sections of at least 1,200m² in

size. You could also work with one of your neighbours and combine your sites to get a larger development site.

Minimum requirements according to the property's zone are as follows:

Zone	
Terraced housing and apartment building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No minimum property size • The property's front boundary with the road needs to be a minimum of 25m wide
Mixed housing (suburban + urban)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property minimum size of 1200m²
Single house zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In general, these can't be sub-divided. So limited opportunity (if any) under Special Housing Areas • There may be opportunities to sub-divide should you join with neighbouring property / properties
Mixed Use zone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site needs to be developed for four or more dwellings.

Property developers will need to provide suitable infrastructure to support their developments.



When will Special Housing Areas be ready to build in?

This will depend on whether the development is in a greenfield or brownfield area, whether it is part of an existing development and other factors. There will, however, be a defined timeframe for the consent to be implemented.

In some cases, Special Housing Areas will be areas already under development and the Special Housing Area status will allow the acceleration of development or make use of new zoning provisions in the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan.

Some homes may be ready within a year of the Special Housing Area's establishment. Exact timings will largely be determined by the relevant property developers and builders.

Why wasn't I consulted about the Special Housing Area in my neighbourhood?

The council is working with the local boards when it is interested in establishing a Special Housing Area in a particular area. When a developer applies for resource consent for a qualifying development (QD) within a Special Housing Area, adjacent landowners may be notified.

My land is now included in a Special Housing Area. How is this likely to affect the value of my property?

The inclusion of a property within a Special Housing Area is just one factor of many a valuer would consider when revaluing your property.

I don't think there's enough infrastructure in my area to support more development. Is the council thinking about this?

The council is identifying the infrastructure required to make Auckland's Special Housing Areas successful well before any development occurs. The council is collaborating with their partners at Auckland Transport, the council's stormwater and parks units, Watercare Services Ltd and Auckland Council Properties Ltd - to name just a few, to this end.

The council is also working with the government to ensure its infrastructure programmes also align with work taking place within the Special Housing Areas.

Special Housing Areas are identified predominantly for housing, but also with provision for business, community services and amenities. The areas must have critical infrastructure in place, such as water, wastewater, stormwater and public transport links, or there must be the capacity to put such infrastructure in place.

What is in place to ensure developers build the right kind of homes?

All the locations have been selected with careful planning and safeguards in place. The council is committed to delivering quality neighbourhoods, not just houses. These are places where people want to live, where there is equity and choice in housing and other amenities, and where wider services, employment and amenities are accessible through private and public transport modes.

The council's master-planning team is working with developers, particularly in large greenfield Special Housing Areas, to collaboratively achieve good design outcomes. The proposed Unitary Plan also has stronger quality requirements than most of the operative plans it will replace.

All new developments containing five or more dwellings must be designed and constructed to achieve a 6-star rating from the NZ Green Building Council Homestar tool or certification under the Living Building Challenge.

How do I apply to buy an affordable home?

The council is not involved in the marketing or allocation of homes in Special Housing Areas. That is the role of each developer. However, the council can provide names of developers in Special Housing Areas.

In some cases, these are listed here:

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/ratesbuildingproperty/housingsupply/Pages/specialhousingareas.aspx>

(Scroll down to the section: Locations of Special Housing Areas)



Can I apply for my property to be a Special Housing Area?

We are no longer accepting requests for new SHAs.

The final date a stand-alone application for a qualifying development (QD) within an SHA can be lodged is 16 September 2016. Please visit the [SHA page](#) on the council website for more detail.

What are the advantages of building within Special Housing Areas?

Special Housing Areas offer a fast-track consenting process (three months for brownfield and six months for greenfield QD application) with a proactive council pre-application process, limited notification and appeals – all of which are designed to enable better and faster implementation.

A Special Housing Area also enables a more integrated planning and consenting process that will include a strong focus on quality development.

What support will the council provide for a Qualifying Development within a Special Housing Area?

A one-stop shop for applications through the council – including the assignment of a lead project planner, who will project manage the consent application through the entire process. Appropriate charges will apply during the application phase.

What planning rules will be in place for Special Housing Areas?

The Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (30 September 2013) rules will apply.

Is it expected that the housing targets be achieved solely through Special Housing Areas?

No. The Auckland Housing Accord targets will be achieved through a mixture of business as usual consents and Special Housing Areas making use of the new provisions in the proposed Unitary Plan.

You can [email the SHA team](#) or phone us on (09) 373 6292 if you have further enquiries.