

Hon Dr Megan Woods

MP for Wigram

Minister of Housing

Minister for Infrastructure

Minister of Energy and Resources

Minister for Building and Construction

Associate Minister of Finance



26 June 2023

Vui Mark Gosche Chair,
Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities
PO Box 2628
WELLINGTON 6140

Tēnā koe Vui,

DIRECTION TO ASSESS AUCKLAND LIGHT RAIL PROJECT AS A POTENTIAL SPECIFIED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

We, the Minister of Housing and Minister of Finance, acting jointly, direct Kāinga Ora – Homes and Communities, under section 29(b) of the Urban Development Act 2020 (UDA), to assess the Auckland Light Rail project, as a potential specified development project (SDP).

Key features of the Auckland Light Rail urban development project

Proposed project

The Auckland Light Rail urban development project (ALRUDP) is defined as enabling:

1. the development and renewal of the urban environment, with a focus on enabling large-scale urban development and housing development, and
2. the development of related commercial, industrial, community, or other amenities, infrastructure, facilities, services, or works

within the ALRUDP proposed project area specified below.

Proposed ALRUDP project area

The proposed project area for ALRUDP is the geographic area referred to as the “ALR corridor”, most of which was excluded (“whited-out”) from the Proposed Intensification Planning Instrument – Plan Change 78, as noted in the August 2022 Proposed Plan Change 78 Information Sheet #13: [Plan Change 78 and the Auckland Light Rail corridor](#). This area includes the majority of the 24km City Centre to Airport route identified in the Indicative Business Case (IBC). The majority of land within the central business district (CBD) is within scope of the proposed project area, minus land around the waterfront. Annex A provides the exact boundaries of CBD land within scope.

Proposed ALRUDP project objectives

The key outcomes and outputs expected for the ALRUDP are that it contributes to sustainable, inclusive, and thriving communities in Auckland by:

1. enabling urban development uplift associated with the case for the ALR project, including at least the estimated 66,000 additional households by 2051 set out in the IBC. This would contribute to 'Unlocking significant urban development potential, supporting a quality compact urban form, and enabling integrated and healthy communities' (IBC investment Objective 3), and realise Investment in rapid transit plus urban interventions (IBC Future Three).
2. enabling 97,000 additional jobs by 2051, of which 81,000 are already anticipated whether or not the core transport investment proceeds.

Proposed governance body

Under the UDA, Kāinga Ora, as part of its assessment report, will recommend the composition and terms of reference of the proposed governance body of any SDP recommended to be established. We note a project body can be a variety of legal forms. We anticipate that the governance body will have representation from Kāinga Ora, and other key partners (partners involved in the governance of ALR).

Rationale for inclusion of the CBD

We acknowledge that the planning provisions for the CBD are very permissive of urban development and that Auckland Council has already given effect to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development in relation to the CBD. Our intention for including the CBD in the proposed project area is not to open these existing urban planning provisions up for extensive debate. Rather, we seek consideration of whether the powers available to SDPs may be applied to the CBD to support the project objectives. Our expectation is that this is clearly communicated to stakeholders when undertaking the assessment.

Timing of related decisions

A Final Investment Decision on ALR by the Crown and Auckland Council is currently anticipated in mid-2024. We, and the Minister of Transport, as ALR Sponsor Ministers, believe that it is important to have as much clarity as possible by that time as to whether an alternative path exists under the UDA to enable and realise the urban development outcomes critical to ALR.

We appreciate that assessing the ALRUDP project as a potential SDP will be a significant undertaking for Kāinga Ora and other stakeholders who contribute to an assessment. We therefore request that Kāinga Ora use best endeavours to assess the ALRUDP in accordance with the requirements of the UDA and to provide its project assessment report and recommendation to establish or not establish the ALR project as an SDP by 1 July 2024.

We acknowledge that Kāinga Ora may choose to place particular, but not exclusive, focus on key urban development locations identified in the IBC (Dominion Junction, Mount Roskill/Wesley, Onehunga and Māngere), and land within a walkable catchment (radius) of preferred ALR route and station locations to be agreed by ALR Sponsors.

We acknowledge that Kāinga Ora may prefer to conduct its project assessment in stages, and that at any point before or after public notice is given in accordance with section 35 of the UDA, Kāinga Ora may consult with us, and if necessary seek an amendment to the parameters of the ALRUDP project as set out in this direction.

Kind regards,



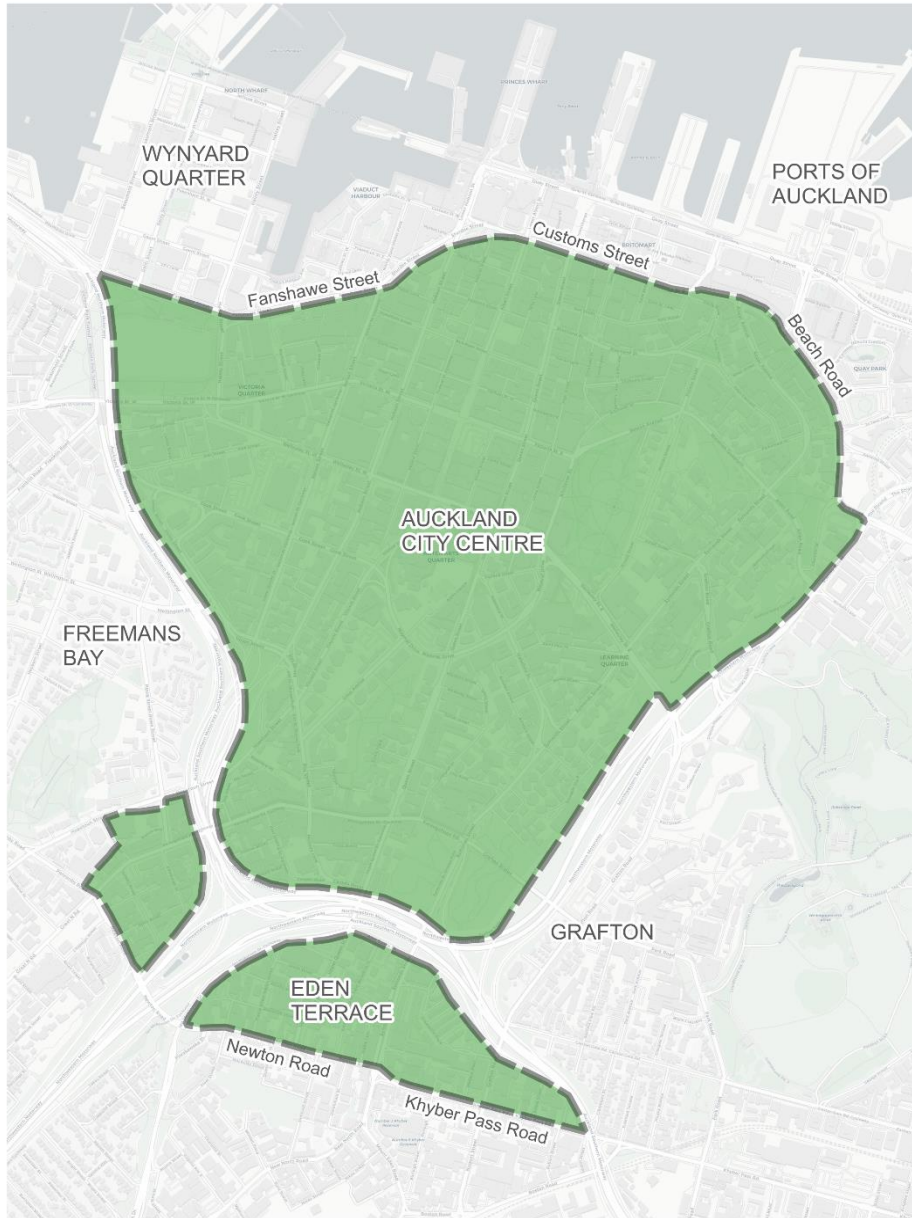
Hon Grant Robertson
Minister of Finance
22 / 06 / 2023




Hon Dr Megan Woods
Minister of Housing
20 / 06 / 23

Annex A: Land in the CBD within scope of the proposed project area

Proposed Project Area in the Auckland City Centre



 Proposed project area in the Auckland City Centre

