

BUILDING COVERAGE STUDY

PROJECT	MILLDALE STAGES 10 - 13 Wainui East, Auckland, New Zealand
FOR	Fulton Hogan Land Development Ltd (FHLD)
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE

Fulton Hogan Land Development (FHLD) is seeking a Resource Consent to increase the maximum site coverage for all residential lots across Milldale Stages 10–13 to 50%. The proposal involves increasing building coverage limits from 40% in the Mixed Housing Suburban zone and 45% in the Mixed Housing Urban zone to a unified 50%.

A Building Coverage Assessment has been undertaken to evaluate whether the proposed increase can be accommodated while maintaining consistency with the overall objectives and meet the standards set out in the Auckland Unitary Plan (AUP) without compromising key urban design and amenity outcomes.

1.2 BACKGROUND

The Wainui Precinct Plan, which informs development across Milldale, was prepared over a decade ago. Its zoning layout followed a radial pattern centred around indicative roading alignments and key nodes. Since then, Milldale's urban form has evolved to better integrate with natural stream corridors, open spaces, and key transport routes. This reflects a shift in the masterplanning approach, one that is more responsive to the site's natural features, landform, and existing infrastructure, shifting away from the original radial structure. The subdivision pattern in Milldale is highly regular and co-ordinated, characterised by predominantly rectangular and street-facing lots to support efficient land use and infrastructure delivery.

As explained in the analysis below, building coverage alone does not define neighbourhood character or amenity. Instead, the type and scale of housing are more directly shaped by subdivision layout and lot size. Provided zoning standards, such as building height, yard setbacks, and height-in-relation-to-boundary controls, remain unchanged, they would play a more significant role in shaping built form and on-site amenity than building coverage.

It is also noted that this assessment is grounded in real-world development scenarios. While the proposed increase in building coverage allows for greater design flexibility and efficiency, not all sites will utilise the full 50%, as this depends on on-site specific conditions. This has been evident in earlier stages of Milldale, where most developments remained below the maximum coverage, resulting in a more balanced built form and well-integrated on-site amenity.

This Building Coverage Study has been prepared to assess whether increasing building coverage across Stages 10–13 is an appropriate urban design response that remains consistent with the overall intent to achieve high-quality, well-functioning residential environments.

A 50% building coverage has previously been approved under blanket consent for earlier Milldale stages, including Stages 6, 6F and 9. This approach was accepted, although the Council has recently raised concerns about its continued use, particularly the potential for a homogenous built form outcome if applied in Stages 10-13.



Figure 1: MHS and MHU Zone Standalone Lots in Milldale Stages 10-13 as shown in red.



2.0 ASSESSMENT

2.1 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

This Building Coverage Study focuses on evaluating the potential effects of increased building coverage on the planned built character of the underlying residential zones, including the suburban built character of the MHS zone and the urban built character of the MHU zone. It considers whether increasing building coverage to 50% would materially affect the planned outcomes for these zones.

The study recognises that building coverage works in conjunction with other standards, such as yard setbacks, building height, and height-in-relation-to-boundary, which together shape built form and on-site amenity. It assumes that the visual character of dwellings in both the MHS and MHU zones is primarily influenced by yard controls, which are largely determined by lot size and dimensions. Therefore, an increase in building coverage is not expected to significantly change the overall built form or undermine the anticipated character of either zone.

To test this assumption, the study comprises two complementary assessment methods that focus on:

- The impact of increased building coverage on overall built form and its relationship to the streetscape; and
- The effect on on-site amenity, including privacy, outdoor space, and separation between dwellings.

Method 1: Streetscape Analysis

- This method evaluates existing residential built form in Milldale by comparing development outcomes across zones with differing building coverage limits - specifically, Mixed Housing Suburban (MHS) zone (40%), and Mixed Housing Urban (MHU) zone (45%). These comparisons illustrate the difference in built form outcomes with a 5% coverage increase.
- By examining physical characteristics and urban grain across these zones, the study identifies any observable differences in massing and streetscape quality. These insights help inform the likely urban design implications of increasing building coverage to 50% (relatively), providing a basis for anticipating changes to built form and neighbourhood character.

Method 2: Lot Testing Analysis

- The lot testing will determine whether the proposed increase in building coverage can be accommodated while maintaining compliance with core planning standards and ensuring a reasonable level of on-site amenity.
- The lot testing assesses the feasibility of 50% building coverage using two typical MHS and MHU lots in Milldale. The lot sizes selected are the average size and dimension of lots proposed in Stages 10-13 and are therefore generally reflective of a typical development lot.
- Given that MHU represents the most intensive zone, demonstrating compliance at this level suggests the uplift could also be achievable in lower-density zones.
- Key assumptions and parameters include:
 - Two typical MHS and MHU lots, the MHS with an area of 400m² (15m wide by 25m deep), and the MHU with an area of 320m² (12.8m wide by 25m deep).
 - A generic single-storey dwelling typology (3–4 bedrooms).
 - A 5% increase in building footprint (from 40% and 45% to 50% building coverage).
 - A group of 6 typical dwelling typologies for both MHS and MHU, with 50% coverage to assess effects on neighbouring properties.
 - Assessment of compliance with key performance standards, including:
 - Landscape area,
 - Outlook space,
 - Outdoor living space.



3.0 STREETScape ANALYSIS

3.1 BUILDING FRONTAGE ASSESSMENT

Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban Zone

80 Maryvale Road, Milldale

Lot Width: 15m

Lot Length: 28m

Lot Area: 442m²

Building Coverage: Approx 40%



Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone

81 Maryvale Road, Milldale

Lot Width: 15m

Lot Length: 25m

Lot Area: 374m²

Building Coverage: Approx 44%





Residential – Mixed Housing Suburban Zone

47 Maurice Kelly Road, Milldale

Lot Width: 12m

Lot Length: 28m

Lot Area: 336m²

Building Coverage: Approx 37%



Residential – Mixed Housing Urban Zone

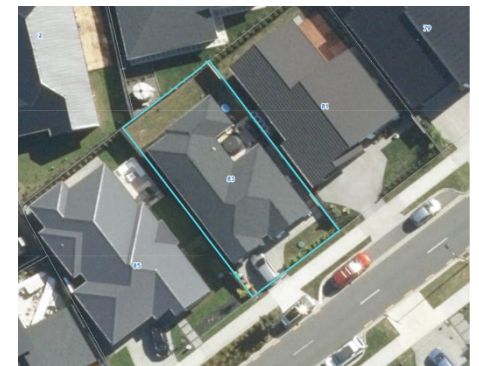
83 Maryvale Road, Milldale

Lot Width: 12m

Lot Length: 25m

Lot Area: 320m²

Building Coverage: Approx 45%





3.2 ANALYSIS FINDINGS

These figures compare built form outcomes of existing dwellings in the Mixed Housing Suburban (MHS) and Mixed Housing Urban (MHU) zones in Milldale, with particular reference to how building coverage influences the visual presentation of units from the street.

Building Width and Frontages

- The MHS and MHU dwellings reviewed at both comparison sites (80/81 and 47/83 Maryvale and Maurice Kelly Roads) show identical or near-identical frontages, despite differences in building coverage and lot size of approximately 5%.
- For example, the dwellings at 80 and 81 Maryvale Road both span 15m across the street frontage, even though building coverage increases from 40% (MHS) to 44% (MHU). This demonstrates that increases in building coverage are generally achieved by extending the depth of the building toward the rear, rather than by widening the built form.
- A similar pattern is evident at 47 and 83 Maryvale Road, where both homes maintain a 12m street frontage regardless of zoning or building coverage.

Built Form

- The use of articulated façades, porches, and roof variations helps break up the building mass and avoid any perception of visual dominance or bulk, even on lots with higher building coverage.
- Garage dominance remains consistent across the, showing no increased prominence in higher-coverage dwellings.

Neighbourhood Character and Amenity

- The overall character and pattern of the streetscape remains uniform across MHS and MHU examples. Increases in coverage do not translate to increased height, reduced setbacks, or altered materiality that would otherwise result in a character change.

- Fencing, planting, and driveway treatments maintain a consistent suburban appearance, with no discernible difference in visual amenity or openness between zones of differing coverage.
- The built forms maintain a low-rise, detached character aligned with zone expectations, contributing positively to the public realm and preserving neighbourly amenity.

Summary

The dwellings assessed demonstrate building coverage ranging from approximately 37% to 45%. These examples illustrate that an increase in building coverage in those examples has minimal impact on the built form as perceived from the public realm. This conclusion is equally applicable to increases in building coverage proposed in this resource consent application.

The analysis of the existing urban fabric in Milldale reveals that consistent lot widths, sizes, and configurations contribute to a uniform streetscape character, with limited variation in built form as most dwellings are single-storey. There is minimal visual differentiation between zones at street level. Built forms, yard setbacks, and site layouts show little variation, typically featuring single-storey standalone dwellings with similar height, bulk, and coverage. Despite differences in building coverage provisions between zones, the overall development outcomes remain visually coherent.



4.0 LOT TESTING ANALYSIS

4.1 RESIDENTIAL – MIXED HOUSING SUBURBAN ZONE

Site Area: 400m²

Building Area: 160m²

Building Coverage 40%

Landscape Coverage 52% Approx

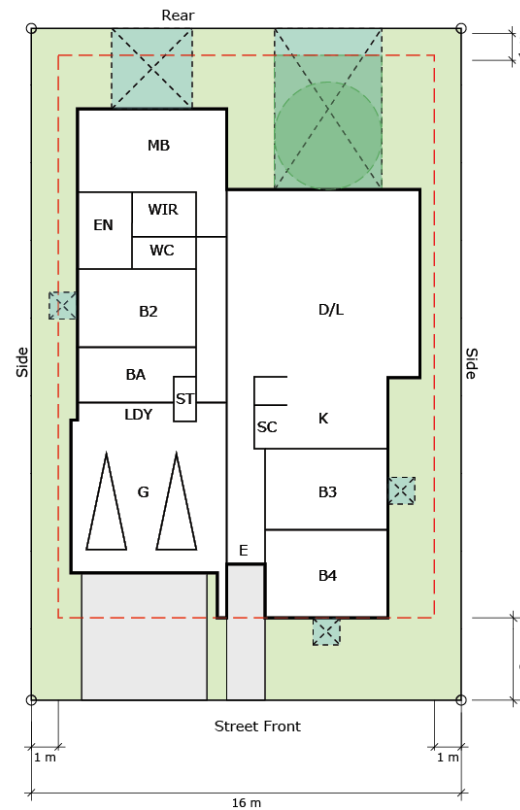


Site Area: 400m²

Building Area: 200m²

Building Coverage 50%

Landscape Coverage 42% Approx



SITE LEGEND

Lot Boundary	
Yard Setback Requirements	
Outdoor Living Space (4m min. dimension)	
Primary Living Outlook Space (6mx4m)	
Primary Bedroom Outlook Space (3mx3m)	
Extended Building Coverage	



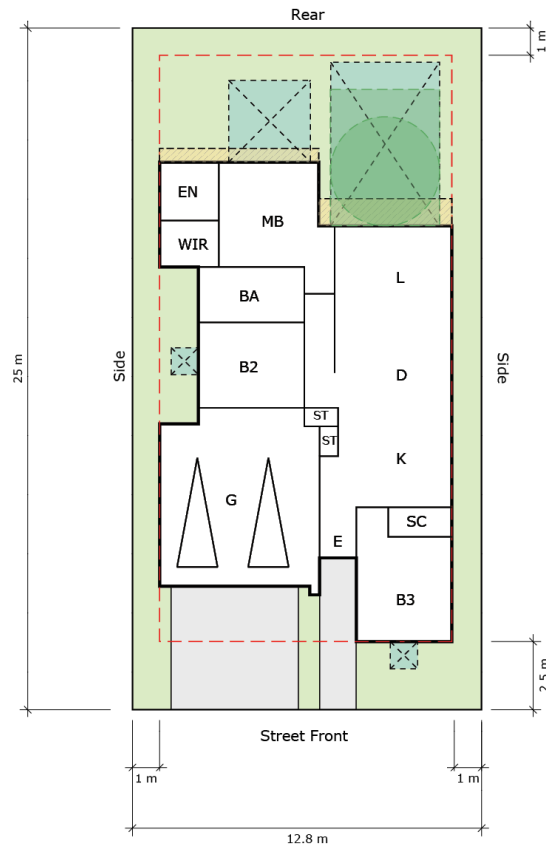
4.2 RESIDENTIAL – MIXED HOUSING URBAN ZONE

Site Area: 320m²

Building Area: 144m²

Building Coverage 45%

Landscape Coverage 44% Approx

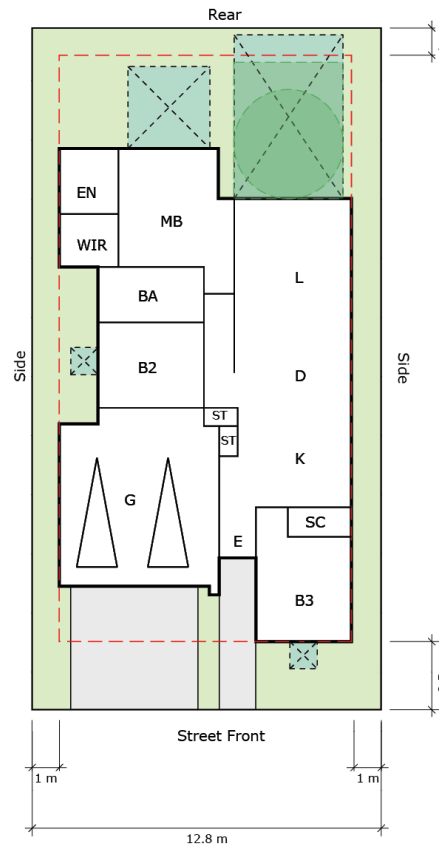


Site Area: 320m²

Building Area: 160m²

Building Coverage 50%

Landscape Coverage 40% Approx



SITE LEGEND

Lot Boundary	
Yard Setback Requirements	
Outdoor Living Space (4m min. dimension)	
Primary Living Outlook Space (6mx4m)	
Primary Bedroom Outlook Space (3mx3m)	
Extended Building Coverage	



4.3 ANALYSIS FINDINGS

The lot testing assessment looks at how increasing the maximum building coverage to 50% in both the MHS and MHU zones affects built form, outlook space, private outdoor living open space, and the streetscape interface, using typical lot layouts.

Built Form

Mixed Housing Suburban (MHS) – 400m² Lot

- In both the 40% and 50% coverage layouts, the overall building width remains unchanged, preserving the standard 1m side yard setbacks on each boundary. The increased building footprint is delivered through additional depth, with minor internal reconfiguration.
- The street-facing character remains largely the same, retaining consistent garage placement, entry articulation, and planting opportunities. This ensures no meaningful change in visual dominance or perceived bulk from the public realm.
- The building maintains an articulated footprint, avoiding a blank built form and thereby supporting neighbourhood character expectations within the MHS zone.

Mixed Housing Urban (MHU) – 320m² Lot

- Similarly, the MHU typology keeps the overall building width the same, with 1m side yard setbacks still in place—even with increased coverage. This is especially important on smaller sites, where additional floor area is more likely to be added at the rear.
- The front and side yard setbacks comply in both versions, ensuring alignment with AUP zone provisions and minimising encroachment into the street interface. This maintains a coherent edge and avoids the effects on front garden or parking areas.
- Despite the tighter site width (12.8m), the increased building coverage is accommodated in the rear of the dwelling to avoid adverse streetscape effects.

On-Site Amenity Outcomes

Outdoor Living Space

- Both MHS and MHU designs maintain full compliance with the minimum outdoor living space standard (20m² with a 4m dimension).
- The outdoor living area remains well located to the north or rear, directly accessible from primary indoor living spaces, ensuring privacy, solar access, and usability are preserved despite increased built form.

Outlook Spaces

- Outlooks from primary bedrooms (3m x 3m) and living areas (6m x 4m) are unaffected in both zone examples. Their orientation and spatial allowance remain in line with AUP standards, providing a good standard of internal amenity.
- The additional building coverage does not infringe upon required outlook areas, demonstrating that internal living quality can be retained even at higher site intensity.

Landscape Coverage

- MHS: There is a decrease from 52% to 42% landscape coverage, still above the 40% minimum for the zone.
- MHU: Includes a similar decrease from 44% to exactly 40%, aligning with the minimum landscape requirement.
- These results confirm that a 50% building coverage can be achieved without breaching landscape thresholds, even on compact sites.

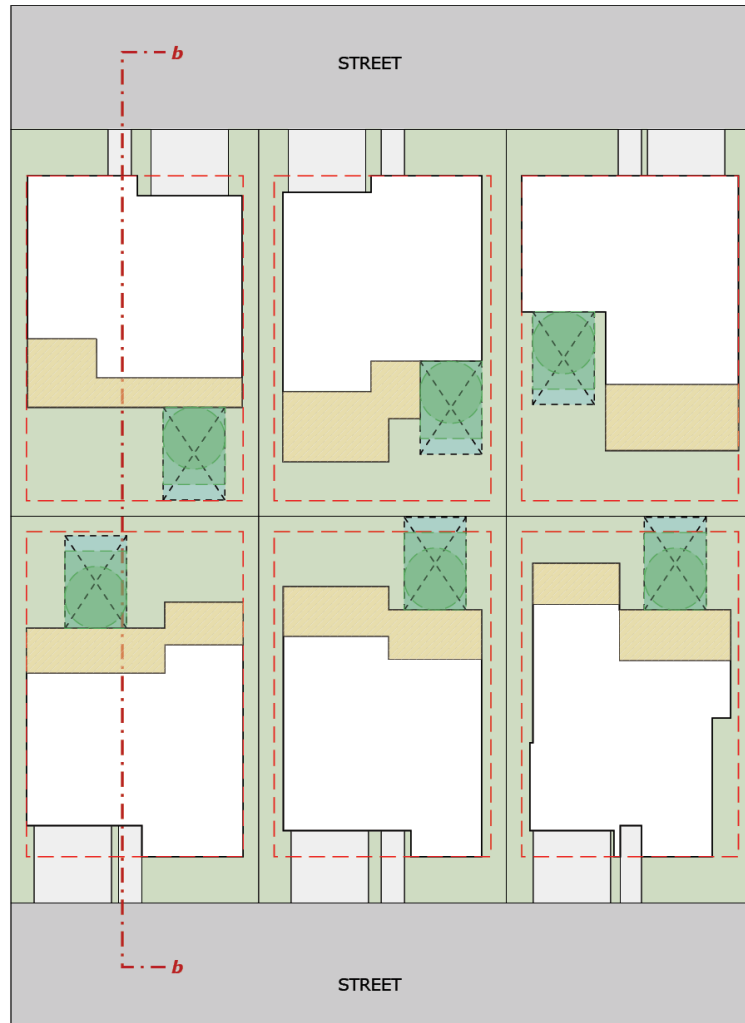
Summary

The analysis shows that the look of dwellings in these zones is mostly influenced by front and side yard setback, especially for detached houses. Therefore, increasing building coverage is not expected to change the overall outcome and impact on the streetscape significantly.



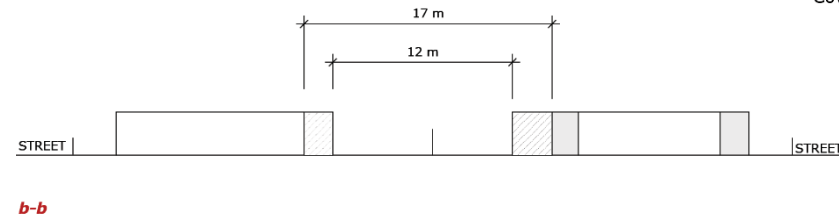
5.0 EFFECTS ON ADJOINING PROPERTIES

5.1 RESIDENTIAL - MIXED HOUSING SUBURBAN ZONE



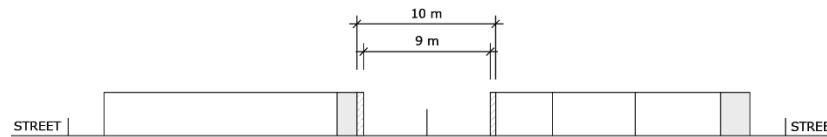
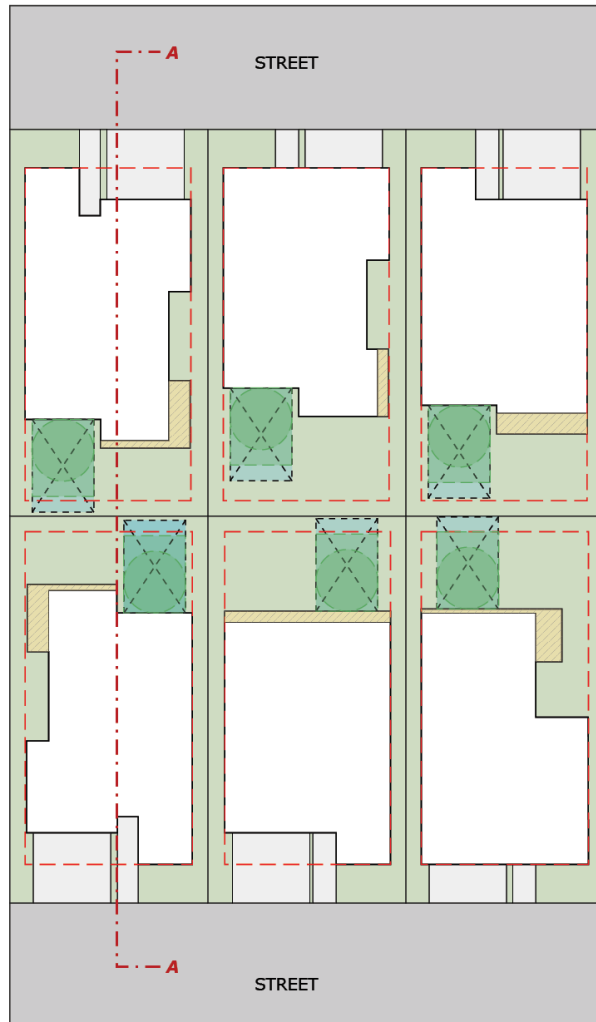
SITE LEGEND

Lot Boundary	
Yard Setback Requirements	
Outdoor Living Space (4m min. dimension)	
Primary Living Outlook Space (6mx4m)	
Extended Building Coverage	





5.2 RESIDENTIAL - MIXED HOUSING URBAN ZONE



a-a

SITE LEGEND

Lot Boundary	
Yard Setback Requirements	
Outdoor Living Space (4m min. dimension)	
Primary Living Outlook Space (6mx4m)	
Extended Building Coverage	



5.3 ANALYSIS FINDINGS

This analysis considers a wider perspective on the impacts of adjoining sites rather than single sites. The accompanying plans and sections illustrate building separations between sites and the yard.

Dwelling Separation and built form

The cross-sectional diagrams reveal the following:

- MHS Zone (Section b–b): Distance between buildings across boundaries is approximately 12–17 metres, reflecting a slightly denser but still well-separated typology.
- MHU Zone (Section a–a): Separation distance between buildings across boundaries remains approximately 9–10 metres.

The separation distance between dwellings remains consistent regardless of increased building coverage and demonstrates that:

- The perceived bulk of the built form is not considered excessive when viewed from between the adjoining properties
- Adequate separation distances for solar access and visual privacy are maintained, largely due to the use of single-storey typologies and the placement of outdoor living areas at the rear.
- The built form across the dwellings continues to support a sense of openness and suburban character, even in the more intensive MHU zone.

Summary

At the broader neighbourhood scale, the diagrams show:

Increased building coverage does not result in any clustering or “terracing” effect.

Setbacks and rear yard areas ensure each dwelling maintains a clear boundary between private and shared visual zones.

Landscape coverage and planting area remain functional and well-defined, supporting stormwater management, vegetation, and providing visual softness.



6.0 CONCLUSION

This Building Coverage Study confirms that increasing maximum building coverage to 50% within the Mixed Housing Suburban (MHS) and Mixed Housing Urban (MHU) zones can be successfully accommodated without compromising key urban design principles, on-site amenity, or neighbourhood character. Across both individual lots and broader neighbourhood scale, the following conclusions have been drawn:

- Built form remains visually appropriate, with building width, side yard setbacks, and front elevation treatments retained. Additional building coverage is typically absorbed to the rear of the dwelling, avoiding visual dominance from the street.
- The resulting built form continues to align with the planned suburban and urban built character outcomes of both the MHS and MHU zones.
- Streetscape quality and rhythm are preserved, with no measurable adverse effects on scale, openness, or consistency across the public realm.
- On-site amenity is maintained, with all sites continuing to comply with Auckland Unitary Plan standards for outdoor living space, landscape area, and outlook.
- Neighbouring properties are not affected, as building separation, privacy, and solar access remain consistent across adjoining lots.
- Housing flexibility is improved, enabling more functional and diverse internal layouts to meet evolving household needs.

Collectively, the findings demonstrate that a 50% building coverage allowance can be applied across both MHS and MHU zones in a manner that supports more efficient land use and increased housing capacity while ensuring that the quality, character, and amenity of residential environments are not undermined.