

Memo

To: Aircraft Noise Community Consultative Group
From: Mark Laurenson
Date: 2 June 2026
Subject: Barriers to NRP Uptake – Covenants

1 Purpose

AKL has previously presented information to the ANCCG about the uptake of Noise Reduction Packages (**NRP**), steps taken to improve uptake, and possible remaining barriers to uptake. The requirements for a covenant to be registered on the title of the property has consistently been recognised as a significant barrier.

This memo sets out the work undertaken recently by AKL around the potential to remove the covenant requirement from AKL's designation.

2 What are NRP covenants and why are they required?

AKL's designation includes a requirement for AKL to make offers to install NRP in eligible¹ buildings used for particular activities before these buildings fall within the MANA or HANA for a given year.

Before a NRP is installed, the landowner must enter into a land covenant under the Land Transfer Act in favour of AKL. The covenants are legally binding, recognise the installation of the NRP, and prevent landowners from lessening the effectiveness or removing the NRP.² AKL's land is receiving the benefit and is referred to as 'the benefitted land'.

AKL provides the text of the covenant and the instruction to the landowner's solicitor who then acts for both AKL and the landowner to complete the covenant registration on the property title. AKL pays the costs of registration and the landowner's reasonable legal fees.

The NRP covenant registration process typically takes two to three months. Installation of a NRP only proceeds following successful covenant registration. Once installed, the landowner is responsible for ongoing operating costs and maintenance of the NRP.

3 Are covenants a barrier to uptake of the NRP?

Since programme inception in 2003, approximately 750 properties have accepted a NRP. This equates to approximately 38% of potentially eligible properties.

¹ To be eligible, existing buildings must have been built or consented prior to 10 December 2001 (when AKL's contours were formally established).

² The covenants are not 'no complaint' covenants and do not prohibit landowners from complaining about aircraft noise.

AKL has taken a range of steps to increase uptake and better manage the impacts of aircraft noise, including to help landowners understand the covenant requirement. Of note, AKL now provides up to \$300 towards legal advice to landowners to help them understand the covenant requirement. AKL has also hosted a session with local law firms explaining the NRP covenants and provided a guidance document to them. On request, AKL provides landowners with a list of local law firms familiar with the NRP covenant requirements.

Despite these efforts, NRP uptake remains low and AKL's analysis indicates that the covenant requirement remains a barrier to uptake.

Since 2023, AKL has notified more than 1,000 properties per year of their potential eligibility for the NRP. Response rates have led to 169 homes being made a formal offer to date but only 80 of these offers have been accepted to proceed to install.

4 Can AKL just stop requiring the covenants?

The NRP covenants are a requirement of AKL's designation and AKL cannot simply stop requiring covenants. An alteration to the designation would be required to remove the covenant requirement.

AKL considers it is the primary benefactor of the covenant requirement and is not opposed to the principle of removing the requirement. AKL can see that removal of the covenant requirement will increase uptake of NRP with corresponding benefits for the management of noise and reverse sensitivity effects.

More specifically, AKL anticipates that removal of the covenant requirement will simplify the NRP offer for landowners by removing what can seem a significant legal process related to what is often the owner's most valuable asset. This is in turn anticipated to lead to more interest in inspections and formal offers.

Where parties are willing to proceed with the covenant, removal of this requirement would speed up the process to install by two to three months. This is anticipated to be well received by homeowners.

AKL considers the principal drawback of discontinuing NRP covenants would be the loss of a mechanism to record on the title that a property had received a NRP. AKL considers this can potentially be addressed in other ways and is actively exploring options to better inform parties about aircraft noise as addressed under the Auckland Unitary Plan, including in relation to AKL's designation. One potential avenue is via the Land Information Memorandum (**LIM**) process under the Local Government Official Information Act.

5 Engagement

AKL has written to BARNZ and Auckland Council about the potential to remove the covenant requirement.

AKL is engaging with Council around the potential pathway to alter the designation in the most efficient way and using the LIM to better inform parties around aircraft noise and the NRP.

One option AKL is exploring is a potential minor designation alteration process as AKL used to revise the Terms of Reference in 2025. Members that were part of the ANCCG at the time will recall that this included seeking feedback from the ANCCG about the proposed changes. As it did in 2025 in relation to the Terms of Reference, AKL considers the perspective of the ANCCG is important to understand the potential effects on the community of covenant removal.

6 Next steps

AKL would be pleased to answer any questions about the content of this memo at the upcoming ANCCG and to receive feedback on the principle of removal of the covenant requirement.