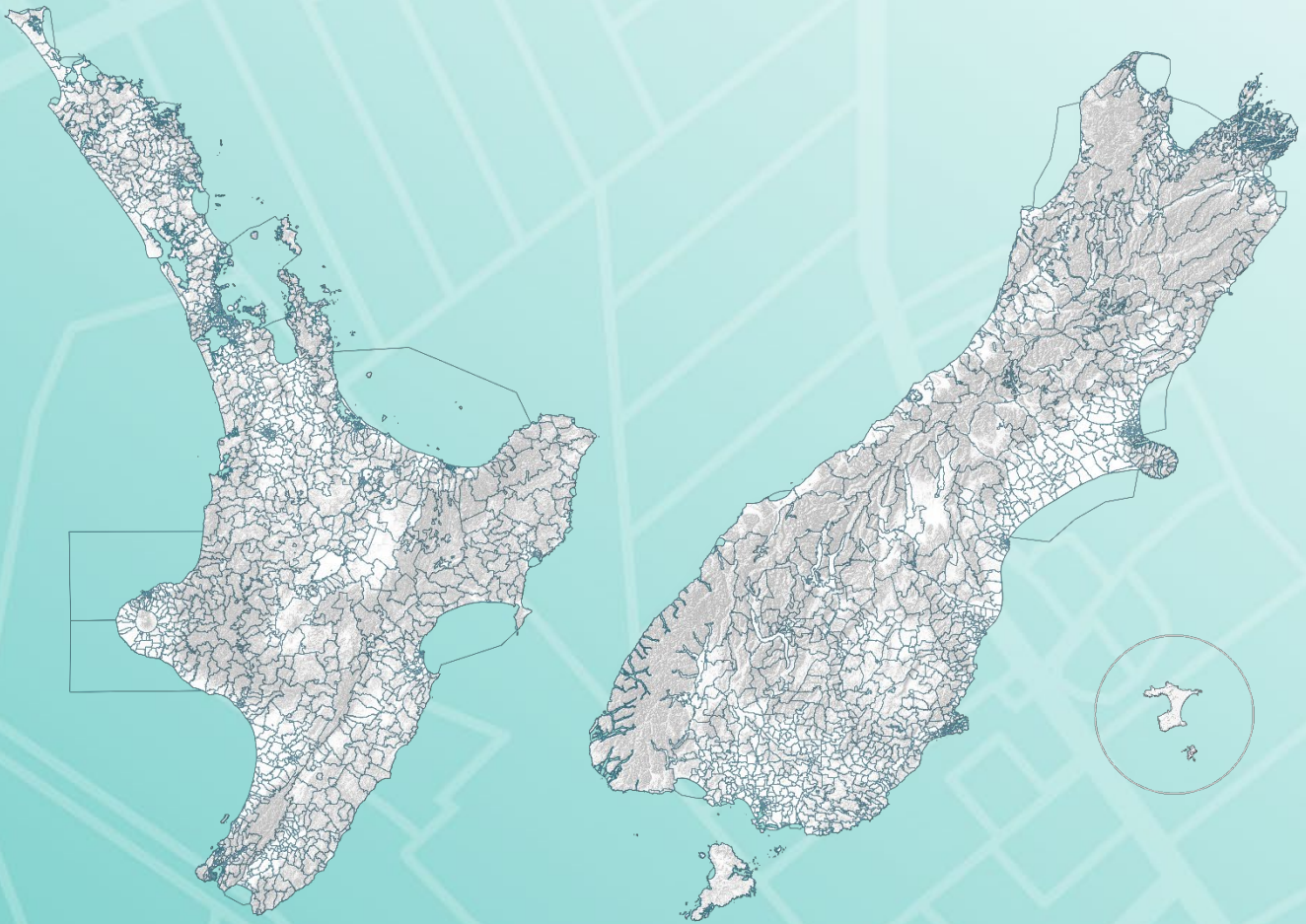


# NZ Suburbs and Localities

## Data Dictionary



Version 1.1

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## Versioning

Version number	Amendments	Date
1.0	Original document	19/06/2023
1.1	Changes to population estimate	03/02/2025

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Purpose

This document provides a detailed data dictionary for NZ Suburbs and Localities, a dataset administered by Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand.

Users of this document will include those needing to understand the information and data structure of NZ Suburbs and Localities.

## 1.2. Context

NZ Suburbs and Localities describes the spatial extent and name of communities in urban areas (suburbs) and rural areas (localities) for navigation and location purposes.

The suburb and locality boundaries cover New Zealand including North Island, South Island, Stewart Island/Rakiura, Chatham Islands, and nearby offshore islands.

## 1.3. Background

NZ Suburbs and Localities is based on the NZ Localities dataset previously maintained by Fire and Emergency New Zealand. The NZ Localities dataset was created by Fire and Emergency NZ in 2005 to assist emergency first responders to quickly locate an emergency call, reducing confusion and delay.

Under the Local Government Act 1974, the Surveyor-General at Toitū Te Whenua has a responsibility to collate addresses allocated by Territorial Authorities for electoral, postal, and other purposes. Given the importance of a suburb or locality to ensure addresses are unique, NZ Localities was transferred to Toitū Te Whenua in June 2023. NZ Suburbs and Localities contains the same data but with a simplified data structure, the adoption of official place names and a new change request process. The original NZ Localities dataset is no longer maintained.

## 2. Data Dictionary

NZ Suburbs and Localities describes the spatial extent and name of communities in urban areas (suburbs) and rural areas (localities) to for navigation and location purposes.

<https://data.linz.govt.nz/layer/113764-nz-suburbs-and-localities/>

### 2.1. NZ Suburbs and Localities Attributes

A description of each of the NZ Suburbs and Localities attributes and relevant data sources are described below.

**id** The unique identifier or primary key for each suburb and locality.

**name**

The name of the community represented by the suburb or locality boundary.

Ngā Pou Taunaha o Aotearoa New Zealand Geographic Board (Pou Taunaha) is New Zealand's national place naming authority responsible for official place names in New Zealand. If an official place name has been gazetted by Pou Taunaha this name is adopted.

If an official name is not recorded, any new name will be decided by the relevant Territorial Authority in consultation with the NZ Suburbs and Localities Review Panel.

**additional\_name**

Any common, in use name for the suburb or locality boundary.

*Example:* Wellington Central has the additional name Wellington CBD.

Waiheke Island has the additional name Hauraki Gulf.

Note historical names previously used for a suburb or locality are classified as 'Replaced' in Pou Taunaha's New Zealand Gazetteer

<https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/>.

**type**

There are seven type categories:

- Suburb
- Locality
- Conservation Land
- Lake
- Inland Bay
- Island
- Coastal Bay

A suburb mainly occurs in an urban area, a locality mainly in a rural area and conservation land is managed by the Department of Conservation

Lakes are included in NZ Suburbs and Localities if the shoreline defines part of another boundary. Islands, inland bays, and coastal bays identified by Fire and Emergency NZ as critical to an emergency response are also included.

**major\_name**

Describes the wider area in which the boundary is located. Every suburb, locality and conversation land boundary has a major name.

**major\_name\_type**

There are three major name types:

- City  
an urban area with approximately over 50,000 residents
- Town  
an urban area with approximately over 1,000 residents and fewer than 50,000 residents
- Major Locality  
a rural area with approximately fewer than 1,000 residents

**territorial\_authority**

Identifies the Territorial Authority where the suburb or locality is located.

Where a suburb or locality boundary covers multiple Territorial Authorities, all Territorial Authorities are listed in alphabetical order.

*Example:* Ashhurst is partly located in three Territorial Authorities -

Manawatu District, Palmerston North City and Tararua District

The latest Stats NZ Territorial Authority dataset is used as the source dataset. <https://datafinder.stats.govt.nz/data/?q=territorial+authority>

Note that offshore islands and coastal bays are recorded in the Stats NZ territorial authority data as 'Area outside'.

**population\_estimate**

An estimate of the resident population has been assigned to each suburb and locality by Stats NZ. The suburb and locality population estimates are updated annually and were last updated in February 2025 using population estimates at 30 June 2024 (2018 Census base).

Stats NZ use the customised estimated resident populations (ERP) at Statistical Area 1s (SA1s) to calculate these population estimates based on dwelling location. These population estimates are derived from the official subnational population estimates published by Stats NZ in October.

Any suburb and locality boundary update will have a population estimate generated from [Stats NZ 250m Estimated Resident Population grid](#) until the annual update by Stats NZ takes place.

We appreciate this valuable collaboration with Stats NZ and their support for this work.

**ascii fields**

Each of the four name fields have a corresponding ascii field where non-ascii characters, including macrons, have been removed. These are name\_ascii, additional\_name\_ascii, major\_name\_ascii and territorial\_authority\_ascii. This is to facilitate data queries and filtering and to support customers unable to work with macrons.



## 2.2. NZ Suburbs and Localities Schema

The data schema describes each of the attribute fields and provides an example value.

Attribute Name	Data Type	Length	Allow Nulls	Example
id	integer	32	No	1157
name	varchar	100	No	Ōtara
additional_name	varchar	500	Yes	Woodlands, Te Rere Marae, Waioeka, Waioeka Pa, Apanui
type	varchar	30	No	Locality
major_name	varchar	100	Yes	Ōpōtiki
major_name_type	varchar	30	Yes	Major Locality
territorial_authority	varchar	250	Yes	Ōpōtiki District
population_estimate	integer	32	Yes	601
name_ascii	varchar	100	No	Otara
additional_name_ascii	varchar	500	Yes	Woodlands, Te Rere Marae, Waioeka, Waioeka Pa, Apanui
major_name_ascii	varchar	100	Yes	Opotiki
territorial_authority_ascii	varchar	250	Yes	Opotiki District
shape	geometry	-	No	Polygon

## 2.3. Formats

NZ Suburbs and Localities is available in a number of formats:

- Download as Geodatabase, Shapefile, Geopackage SQL/Lite, KML or DWG  
<https://data.linz.govt.nz/layer/113764-nz-suburbs-and-localities>
- ArcGIS REST service  
<https://arcgis.com/home/item.html?id=cfe52bdf2a76491d86c4f433957f2460>
- WFS service  
<https://data.linz.govt.nz/layer/113764-nz-suburbs-and-localities/webservices>

Textual data uses UTF-8 character encoding. The source geometry of all spatial data uses NZGD2000 / New Zealand Transverse Mercator 2000 (EPSG 2193) as the spatial reference system.

## 2.4. Change Sets

Previous versions of NZ Suburbs and Localities are accessible via the LINZ Data Service:

<https://data.linz.govt.nz/layer/113764-nz-suburbs-and-localities/history>

If NZ Suburbs and Localities is downloaded, the data can be maintained via the LINZ Data Service Changeset API. The Changeset API enables easy data updates by providing access to the data that has changed between revisions. Changesets are created through a feature-by-feature comparison between the latest and the previous revision of a dataset, which identifies new, updated, or deleted features.

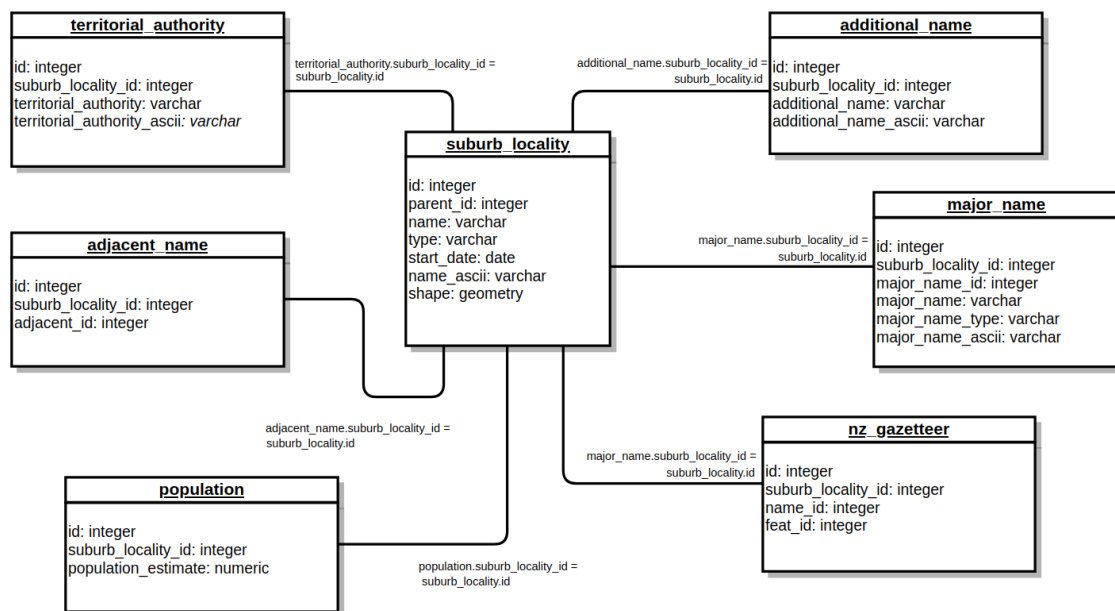
For more information about the Changeset API please see:

<https://www.linz.govt.nz/guidance/data-service/linz-data-service-guide/changesets/changeset-api>

### 3. NZ Suburbs and Localities Dataset

NZ Suburbs and Localities defined in Section 2 is an easy to use layer generated from a normalised data model.

The data model is used to store and maintain the data before creating the NZ Suburbs and Localities layer. The data model is called the NZ Suburbs and Localities Dataset and is made up of a spatial table with six related tables.



NZ Suburbs and Localities Dataset is available from the LINZ Data Service:

Suburb Locality	<a href="https://data.linz.govt.nz/layer/113763">https://data.linz.govt.nz/layer/113763</a>
Major Name	<a href="https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/113014">https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/113014</a>
Additional Name	<a href="https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/110593">https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/110593</a>
Territorial Authority	<a href="https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/110596">https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/110596</a>
Adjacent Name	<a href="https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/110594">https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/110594</a>
NZ Gazetteer	<a href="https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/113008">https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/113008</a>
Population	<a href="https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/113761">https://data.linz.govt.nz/table/113761</a>

Additional data held in the NZ Suburbs and Localities Dataset which is not published in the NZ Suburbs and Localities layer is **start\_date**, **parent\_id**, **name ID**, **feature ID** and **adjacent\_name**.

**start\_date** is held in the **suburb\_locality** table and records the date the boundary was created.

**parent\_id** is held in the **suburb\_locality** table and links a water feature to a larger water feature via the **id** field. An example is Waiheke Island is located within Hauraki Gulf. Waiheke Island **parent\_id** 8620 links to id 8620 Hauraki Gulf.

id	parent_id	name
8620	-	Hauraki Gulf
6522	8620	Waiheke Island

**name\_id** and **feat\_id** are held in the **nz\_gazetteer** table and link to names and features in Pou Taunaha's New Zealand Gazetteer <https://gazetteer.linz.govt.nz/>.

**adjacent\_name** is held in the **adjacent\_name** table and automatically generated to provide a link to all neighbouring suburbs and localities which share the same boundary. The link is formed via the **suburb\_locality\_ID** field.

### Why publish the NZ Suburbs and Localities Dataset?

Publishing the full data model including related tables as NZ Suburbs and Localities Dataset, enables some customers to improve database performance for data access, search, filter, and geocoding and to manage the variable cardinality in the data.

The NZ Suburbs and Localities data model supports the variable links between a suburb or locality and the associated related tables. The data model is considered to have high cardinality or a high number of links for some features, for example Taihape has twenty Additional Names. Similarly, multiple suburbs or localities are associated with one Major Name, for example 182 suburbs have Auckland as the Major Name. Other features in the data model have low cardinality for example some suburbs have no Additional Name.

## 4. Contact Us

Please contact the Toitū Te Whenua Addressing and Properties Team if you have any questions or feedback about NZ Suburbs and Localities [addresses@linz.govt.nz](mailto:addresses@linz.govt.nz)

or call the Toitū Te Whenua Customer Support Team 0800 665 463.