

2006 - 2016

MEREMERE COMMUNITY PLAN

Our future - Our Hope



A Plan for Meremere

What will this Plan achieve?

Your Community Plan is the vehicle for community discussion, on which future outcomes for Meremere can be determined.

This Plan represents the community's shared view on Meremere's future.

It is important to remember, this is not a Council Plan. This Plan is for the whole of the Meremere Community, and is owned by you!

Your Community Plan is a collection of ideas for action. It is a priority list of desired works and activities that has been identified over the past months and years.

As well as focusing community debate and getting people involved in the future of their community, the Plan will help influence Waikato District Council's programme of works during its annual and long-term planning processes.

The process...

The Meremere Community Committee has been in place for some years now. The Committee held a public meeting to discuss the issues in the area and will continue to work with the Meremere community to take forward this Plan.

The Committee will promote this Plan to Council to provide clear direction for the future development of Meremere.

The Plan is a living document and will undergo a regular monitoring and reviewing process.



So where does this Community Plan ‘fit’ with Council Plans?

The Council has a number of other Plans in place.

The *Long-Term Council Community Plan* (LTCCP) outlines the overall direction and expected cost of Council activities over a ten-year period. The LTCCP is prepared every three years. In intervening years, Council produces an Annual Plan, which serves as an update on the LTCCP for that year.

The *District Plan* contains the Council's objectives, policies and rules regarding land use in the Waikato district. The District Plan addresses what individual landowners can do on their properties and how properties can be developed if required.

To assist in determining the desired future look of growth areas, Council is preparing *Structure Plans*. These Plans identify the key infrastructure needs for the local area and are incorporated into the District Plan.

Community Plans capture the shared vision of specific communities, and outline the key issues and projects facing that community over the next 6-10 years. The Plans provide a clear focus for Community Boards and Committees to progress key issues within their area. They also provide localised input into Council's decision-making process and contain community views, **not necessarily Council views**. Council finds the Community Plans a valuable tool in assessing the priorities of local communities, when developing the wider district Plans, such as the LTCCP and Annual Plan.



Vision

To develop Meremere back to its former glory as a community that:

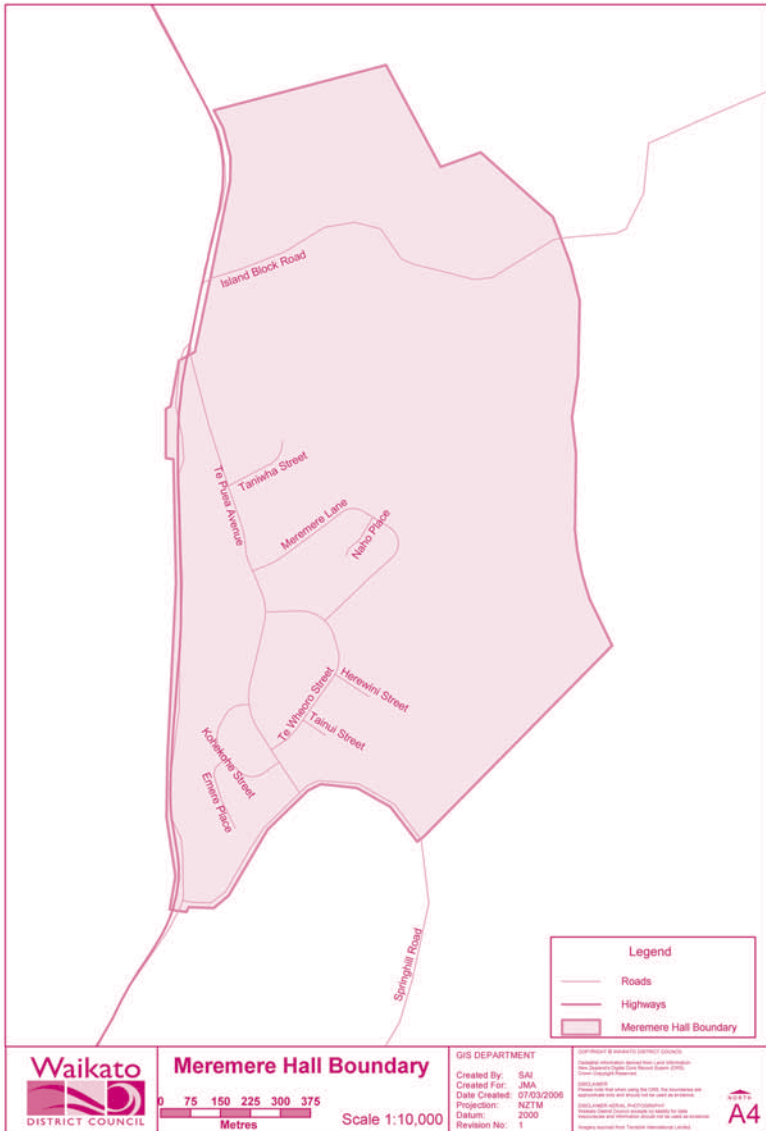
- has pride
- is vibrant
- is a safe place to live
- has a good community spirit
- provides facilities and activities for youth.

Information

	Meremere ¹	Waikato District	New Zealand
Population	354	39,855	3,737,277
Percentage aged under 15 yrs	33.1%	26.9%	22.7%
Percentage aged over 65 yrs	9.3%	9.8%	12.1%
Occupied Dwellings	117	13,530	1,368,207
Ethnicity - Percentage of Maori	73.2	27.1%	14.7%
Post School Qualifications	11.9%	28.5%	32.2%
Unemployment Rate	17.1%	8.6%	7.5%
Income (median)	\$12,100	\$18,300	\$18,500

Meremere¹ These figures are based on Census 2001 data held by Statistics New Zealand.

map of meremere



Snapshot/History

The township of Meremere is ideally located approximately 70 kilometres from Auckland on the banks of the Waikato River. From Meremere, there is easy access to either the east coast at Miranda or the west coast at Port Waikato within 30 minutes.

Meremere was a significant site in the early development of New Zealand and through the Maori wars. In July 1863, General Cameron invaded the Waikato, with the first major engagement staged at Mercer where approximately 300 Waikato Maori supporters of the King Movement had fortified their position. The Maori objective was to delay and frustrate British Troops at Mercer, however this campaign was not as successful as Maori had hoped.

Further South along the river, waiting for them at Meremere were approximately 1000 Waikato Maori supporters of the King Movement, occupying ridges behind the Meremere landing.

On 6 August 1863, from the Meremere position, the first shots were fired. Maori supporters were eventually driven back in one of the most intense and bloodiest battles in New Zealand history, leaving the gateway to the Waikato open.



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The name Meremere means evening star. The name “Meremere Tu Ahiahi” translates to ‘Venus the Evening Star’.

The township grew up as an electricity centre with the main industry being the Meremere power station, built in the 1950s. The power station was decommissioned during the 1990s and is in the process of being dismantled.

Plans were developed for a further power station (Meremere B) and this project could be put into action at any time, particularly in light of the energy crisis in New Zealand.

The town grew with the power station and declined with its closure. Meremere is a tight knit community with a significant number of long-term residents.

The proximity to Auckland and the development of the Expressway has generated more interest in Meremere as a place to live. Employment opportunities are seen as improving with the development of the Department of Corrections facility, Hampton Downs Landfill and the proposed Hampton Downs motor racing track in close proximity to Meremere.



Issues

- Infrastructure is in need of upgrading.
- The Council and Community Committee are seeking to improve the sense of pride and belonging of the town.
- The town has two Halls, a gym, tennis courts, playgrounds and a green belt area. In comparison to other towns, Meremere has excellent community facilities.
- The Council and Community Committee recognise that employment opportunities are important to the town. New facilities opening close to Meremere are seen as a positive move offering employment opportunities for residents.
- It is important that Meremere residents have access to health and wellbeing services.
- Meremere is a close-knit community where people depend on each other. Community spirit and a positive supportive culture are necessary for the long-term development of Meremere.
- Education is valued and community support for Meremere School will ensure that children have the opportunity to develop and grow.
- As part of community development for Meremere, it is important to develop clubs and social activities which support the town and our youth.

Your Community Committee

Jack Martin	Chair	025 337 252
Jim Katu	Deputy Chair	09 232 6724
Barbara Brocas	Secretary	09 233 6213
Sonia Katu		09 232 6724
Pat Carr		09 232 6731
Linda Christine		09 233 6512
John Ngatai		09 233 6887
Lesley Sherwood		09 232 6535
Irene Mtakwa		09 233 6566

Community Outcomes

Under the Local Government Act 2002, Councils are required to facilitate the identification of, and report on the achievement towards Community Outcomes for their residents. Having consulted with the Waikato District community, the following Community Outcomes have been identified:

- Accessible Waikato** A district where the community's access to infrastructure, transport and technology meets its needs.
- Active Waikato** A district that provides a variety of recreation and leisure options for the community.
- Educated Waikato** A district where education options are varied, and allow our community to be skilled for work and life.
- Green Waikato** A district where our natural resources are protected, developed and enhanced for future generations.
- Safe Waikato** A district where people feel safe and supported within their communities, and where crime is under control.
- Sustainable Waikato** A district where growth is effectively managed.
- Thriving Waikato** A district where business and industry are encouraged and supported and employment contributes to a successful local economy.
- Vibrant Waikato** A district where our heritage and culture are recognised, protected and celebrated.
- Well Waikato** A district where people can access quality community health and care services.

Key Projects

The following projects that have been identified are consistent with the nine Community Outcomes. Projects that would be considered through the Long Term Council Community Plan process include:

Roading - links to *Accessible, Thriving and Vibrant Waikato*

- Upgrade kerb and channel to acceptable urban standard.
- Renew all substandard driveways in the village.
- Additional money for footpaths as a one-off for Meremere.
- Reseal whole village upon completion of works.
- Look at methods for controlling speed in the area.

Social - links to *Active and Vibrant Waikato*

- Fence and upgrade junior playground.
- Upgrade facilities in small hall – showers/sleeping area.
- Reseal area next to tennis courts.
- Continued support and development of the Meremere newsletter.
- Upgrade entranceway to rugby grounds and car park.
- Paint small hall.
- Fence around half court.
- Investigate the need for, and feasibility of a Recreation Centre.
- Provide facilities and activities for youth.
- Ensure general upkeep and tidiness of the town.
- Extend skate park – look at grants.
- Planting should be undertaken to improve the town and surroundings.



Cultural - *links to Vibrant Waikato*

- Reflect the heritage of the area by upgrading the Pa site and erecting a suitable plaque to commemorate the history of Meremere.
- Look at signage for Meremere, which is visible from the State Highway.

Advocacy Role of Council - *links to all Community Outcomes*

- Council to establish contact with, and facilitate discussion about Meremere issues with key groups, including:
 - Waikato District Health Board and other health providers
 - New Zealand Post
 - Transit
 - New Zealand Police
 - Ministry of Education
 - Ministry of Social Development
 - Key employers in the area

This Community Plan has been drafted by the Meremere Community Committee as a starting point for the area.

While some of the ideas and priorities listed in this document will take a lot longer than a few years to realise – and require more resources than are available at the moment – at least there is a Plan.

The Community Committee will work with Council to prioritise issues and projects.

Please contact the Meremere Community Committee, or the Waikato District Council if you would like any further information.





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Raglan Area Office

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Hamilton Agency

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