Description of the District **[000047, 000055, 000078]**

The District covers an area of 419,000 hectares, extending from Miranda in the northeast to the Aotea Harbour in the south-west. It is located within the greater Waikato Region and has several rural territorial authorities on its boundary. In the north it abuts the Auckland Region and its southern boundary is shared by Hamilton City, Waipa District and Waitomo District. Matamata Piako District and Hauraki District adjoin the eastern boundary.

Waikato District has a population of 81,473 (2020) and the population is expected to reach approximately 147,000 in the year 2063, with a consequent increase in the demand for land, infrastructure, services and amenities (Statistics New Zealand (2014), Infometrics for E Tu Waikato (2014) and the National Institute for Demographic and Economic Analysis).

The Waikato District economy is based around the primary sector, particularly dairying, sheep, and beef farming, together with horticulture, other livestock farming and services to the agricultural and forestry sectors.

The key towns are Pokeno, Tuakau, Ngaruawahia, Te Kauwhata, Raglan and Huntly. Smaller settlements include Gordonton, Matangi, Tamahere, Meremere, Taupiri and Port Waikato. While all the towns are growing and many are facing growth pressures, the towns in the northern portion of the District in particular are experiencing significant levels of growth.

The Waikato River, the tupuna awa of Waikato Tainui, runs almost the entire length of the District before flowing out to the coast at Port Waikato.

The District has a number of important cultural sites and historic heritage which record its history.

The District contains large areas of indigenous vegetation with high ecological values. The landscape is complex and highly variable across the District which is reflective of the coastal and river processes. There are a number of landscape features which are significant for different reasons, for example Taupiri maunga is culturally significant and Mt William is geologically significant.