

## **Appendix B**

### **S42A Right of Reply Version – Chapter I - Introduction**

# Chapter I: Introduction

## Proposed Waikato District Plan Stage I

**S42A Right of reply version  
(amendments not marked)**



# Chapter 1: Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

- (a) The Waikato district plan is a document prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991 in conjunction with the community. It sets out a framework for development and the management of resources in the district in a manner that meets the goal of sustainable management of those resources.
- (b) The district plan includes objectives, policies, and rules to manage the environmental effects of land use activities. It defines the activities that can happen in each zone and gives methods for implementing the policies for the district. Effects are managed differently around the district to reflect the local environmental issues.
- (c) Matters included in the district plan relate to land based activities, consideration of future population changes, avoidance of natural hazards, energy and waste management, the effects of housing, business and rural activities, neighbourhoods and communities, recreation and open spaces, transportation and utility services, residential and business design, heritage, district growth and subdivision.

## 1.2 Description of the District

- (a) The district covers an area of 3,188 square kilometres, 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. The district is located between two large urban centres - Auckland to the north, and Hamilton to the south. These population centres have both positive and negative influences on the district.
- (b) In November 2010, Waikato District Council inherited a part of the Franklin district as result of the 'super-city' changes for Auckland city.

### 1.2.1 Demography

- (a) Waikato district has a population of 73,600 (2017) 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<sup>1</sup>.
- (b) Even though the population of the district is ageing, the total population is projected to continue to grow over the next thirty years due to natural increase and in-migration.
- (c) The spatial distribution of growth is expected to be very uneven over the next twenty years, with higher rates of population and dwelling growth in the northern urban towns of Pokeno, Tuakau, and Te Kauwhata, and in the south, in Tamahere and the 'Hamilton-periphery' area. By comparison, the central area of the district is projected to remain fairly static. People are drawn to the greater economic opportunities, connectivity, and access to services of urban areas, and particularly to larger urban areas.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics New Zealand (2014), Infometrics for E Tu Waikato (2014) and the National Institute for Demographic and Economic Analysis

### **1.2.2 Economic growth and sectors**

- (a) The Waikato Region contributes about 9% to New Zealand's gross domestic product (GDP) and has grown by 2.1% p.a. over the last decade.<sup>2</sup> Of New Zealand's regions, Waikato makes the fourth-largest contribution to the New Zealand economy behind Auckland, Canterbury, and Wellington respectively. Economic growth in Waikato district has averaged 0.8% p.a. over the past decade. The economic growth can be largely attributed to primary industry, which as of 2014 accounts for more than a third of the district's GDP.<sup>3</sup>
- (b) The tourism industry contributed 1.4% to Waikato district's economy in 2016, which was up on the previous ten years. The economic output in Waikato district's tourism industry increased by 1.2% in 2016, against a 3.1% increase in New Zealand. The growth of the tourism industry in Waikato district has averaged 5.7% over the last ten years, compared with only 1.6% in New Zealand as a whole.
- (c) 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.
- (d) Auckland and Hamilton have long been the destination for much of Waikato's primary production – to be processed together with that from other rural economies in the Waikato region – and the large service centres from which the Waikato community draws many of its retail goods and the household services. Only those services for which proximity to the resident population is important – school education and health services – have a moderate presence in Waikato itself.
- (e) From an economic perspective the district has a number of strategic advantages, including:
  - (i) good 'locational efficiency' in relation to distance from and accessibility to the proposed Ruakura hub;
  - (ii) main north-south transport corridor (road and rail); and
  - (iii) the ports of Auckland and Tauranga.
- (f) There is a sizeable domestic market of 1.7 million people within an hour's drive of the centre of the district. There is a reasonably high employment growth (1.2% over past ten years) which is consistent with the national average, and relatively good housing affordability well above the national average and with an improving trend.
- (g) There is a strong cultural identity in the district and the emergence of Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated – (Waikato-Tainui) as a major economic player is an advantage. Further advantages will become evident with the emergence of other post settlement iwi.

### **1.2.3 The rural and urban environment**

- (a) The district benefits from an extensive rural area which contains a range of attributes necessary for productive rural activities, including a variety of soils, mineral resources and landscapes that are able to sustain a diverse range of economic activities. A productive rural area is important to the economic health of the district and wider subregion, and needs to be recognised as a productive resource.
- (b) The rural parts of the district are valued for their landscape, character and amenity values.
- (c) The relatively sparse population supported by the hill country in the west, and the natural orientation to towns outside the district for farming areas in the north (Pukekohe) and east (Morrinsville), together with the presence of the larger urban economies, has meant that Waikato has only six towns of substantial size, and these have predominantly farm and population-servicing roles.
- (d) Rural activities, including dairy, dry stock, horse breeding/training, honey production, horticulture, pig and poultry, mining, and forestry are all significant industries in economic terms for the Waikato district. These activities may also provide tourism opportunities to

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<sup>2</sup> Waikato Economic Development Strategy 2013

<sup>3</sup> Waikato District Annual Economic Profile, Infometrics 2014

showcase the districts rural character and activities. The Waikato district also offers other facilities such as Hampton Downs Motorsport Park, Hampton Downs Landfill, Springhill Prison and Te Kowhai Airfield.

- (e) The recreational use of the rural environment is also important to the district, with activities such as hunting, fishing, tramping, and cycling being very important in terms of tourism, and for the benefit of residents within the district, including those living in urban areas.
- (f) Rural areas are vulnerable to small-scale change that, cumulatively, can have a profound effect on their efficient use for rural production and other rural activities. The continued modification of the rural environment through land use subdivision, and development as a result of residential and commercial growth, can adversely affect their natural and physical qualities and character.
- (g) Activities affecting landscape, historic and amenity values including rural character, recreational activities, high quality soils, significant mineral resources and ecological values need to be managed to avoid, remedy or mitigate adverse effects on the environment, including cumulative effects.
- (h) There is a need to uphold the increased level of control the Council has placed over subdivision activities in the Rural and Country Living Zones, particularly within the north Waikato and around the Hamilton City boundary. Any additional areas for rural residential development should be considered within identified growth areas of towns or villages.
- (i) The finite heritage resources, some of which are often fragile and may be adversely affected by activities, development or lack of care and maintenance. There is a need to allow communities to alter and grow, while ensuring that significant historic heritage resources are recognised and protected so they are retained for both present and future generations

#### **1.2.4 Service and general infrastructure, transport and logistics**

- (a) The district needs to ensure the protection of regionally and nationally-significant infrastructure, e.g. road and rail transport corridors, gas and transmission corridors and water infrastructure.
- (b) There are key transmission lines located in the district. The lines are critical for ensuring an efficient and secure supply of electricity throughout the district and beyond.
- (c) The central geographic location of the district means that it acts as a significant transport network based on road, rail, and air.
- (d) The major routes are State Highway 1, which runs north to south through the district, and State Highway 2, which travels west to east across the Hauraki Plains to Tauranga and beyond. These highways provide for transportation needs in the district, including farming, forestry, and mineral extraction. The highways also carry large daily traffic volumes, and significant numbers of heavy vehicles for the movement of people, goods, and services to the main centres of Auckland, Hamilton, the Port of Tauranga and throughout the North Island.
- (e) The NZ Transport Agency is currently constructing the Waikato Expressway as one of the National Roads of Significance, and this will be completed in 2020. Waikato District Council will have an additional 87km of former state highway network to manage and maintain.
- (f) The district enjoys excellent road connectivity. The travel time from Auckland to Hamilton is expected to reduce by up to fourteen minutes and Auckland to Cambridge by over 20 minutes upon completion of the Waikato Expressway.
- (g) Additional roading capacity and faster travel times will make the district even more 'location-efficient' for productive activities (agriculture, horticulture, and industry) and as a residential and visitor destination.
- (h) The main trunk railway runs parallel to State Highway 1 from north to south, and the East Coast Main Trunk branch line passes east from Hamilton. There is a good rail network for freight, but commuter rail services are non-existent, so Council is advocating with Auckland Council, Auckland Transport, and the New Zealand Transport Agency for consideration to be given to the extension of passenger rail transport between Pukekohe and Pokeno in the near future

- (i) Walkways and cycle routes supplement vehicle transport routes and provide recreational opportunities, especially by road through-routes and walkway shortcuts. Council is supporting the development of the Te Awa River Ride, which will form part of a nationwide cycle network. Hamilton Airport, located just outside the district, provides national passenger and freight services.

### **1.2.5 Natural Environment**

- (a) Conservation issues addressed in the plan (as part of sustainable management) relate to preserving significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna in existing ecological linkages along the Waipa and Waikato river catchments, hill country bush between Miranda and Aotea Harbour (including the Hunua, Hapuakohe, Taupiri and Hakarimata ranges and Mounts Pirongia and Karioi) lakes and wetlands, including “Ramsar” wetlands. Attention will be given to managing the biodiversity of remaining indigenous vegetation, including wetlands and gullies.
- (b) Territorial authorities have responsibilities to provide for indigenous biodiversity. A key focus area of biodiversity management in the district plan is the management of indigenous vegetation.
- (c) There is increasing demand and competition for water from the Waikato River. There is an obligation to continually improve water quality in the river in accordance with the ‘Vision and Strategy’ for the river in the Regional Policy Statement and Regional Plan, as well as in terms of the Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan.
- (d) The west coast is a wild and scenic coastline and has limited road access. Raglan Harbour (Whaingaroa) and Aotea Harbour are more sheltered and are ecologically and culturally important. In the east of the district, the Miranda coast has a low-lying more sheltered character, is important to Tangata whenua and is an internationally significant habitat for migratory birds. In the north, the small holiday town of Port Waikato is on the south bank of the Waikato River at its outflow into the Tasman Sea. Waikato District Council is also a member of the Hauraki Gulf Forum, which is a statutory body, that promotes and facilitates integrated management and the protection and enhancement of the Hauraki Gulf, under the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000.

### **1.2.6 Ngaa Iwi o Tainui ki te Waikato Takiwa**

- (a) After 1300/1400AD the descendants of the Tainui waka began to spread inland and populate Hauraki, Waikato, Maniapoto and Raukawa areas. In the Waikato takiwa(district) there became two distinctive landscapes from Aotea Harbour to Te Puaha o Waikato (mouth of the Waikato River at Port Waikato), and the Waikato River landscape that follows the river from Tamahere to Te Puaha o Waikato. The archaeological evidence of the settlement pattern on the west coast and along the banks and tributaries of the Waikato River pointed to the rich resources that sustained the Hapuu of the Iwi.
- (b) Today there are 33 iwi/hapuu in the Waikato takiwa who have mana whenua as part of Ngaa Iwi o Tainui.
- (c) Te Whakakitenga o Waikato Incorporated Society (Waikato-Tainui) is the Iwi authoritative representative of the 33 hapuu, 68 marae and supporters of the Kingitanga movement. The name Te Whakakitenga o Waikato represents the future “pathway” of Waikato’s social, cultural, environmental and economic wellbeing.
- (d) Waikato District Council has boundary relationships with the following Iwi authorities:
  - Hauraki Collective
  - Maniapoto Iwi Trust Board
  - Raukawa Settlement Trust

## **1.3 How the Plan works**

### **1.3.1 Statutory context**

- (a) The contents of this district plan are largely the result of the statutory provisions of the RMA, in particular sections 31 (functions), 74 (matters to be considered by a territorial authority), 75 (contents of district plans) and 76 (district rules).
- (b) The district plan must give effect to any National Policy Statements, the New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement and the Regional Policy Statement. The district plan must not be inconsistent with the Regional Plan.
- (c) A statutory acknowledgement is a means by which the Crown has formally acknowledged the statements made by Iwi on their cultural, spiritual, historical and traditional association with a statutory area. Section 74(2A) of the RMA requires a territorial authority to take into account any relevant planning document recognised by an Iwi authority when preparing or changing a district plan. Statutory acknowledgements relevant to the Waikato district are as follows:
  - a. Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010
  - b. Ngaati Koroki Kahukura Claims Settlement Act 2014
  - c. Ngaati Hauaa Claims Settlement Act 2014
  - d. Raukawa Claims Settlement Act 2014
  - e. Waikato-Maniapoto Maori Claims Settlement Act 1946.
  - f. Ngati Tamaoho Claim Settlement Act 2018

### **1.3.2 Cross Boundary Issues**

- (a) There are numerous situations where a resource management issue occurs across the administrative boundaries of two or more councils requiring intervention by the respective councils. It is important that cross-boundary issues are dealt with in a coordinated and integrated manner by the territorial and regional authorities involved. Sometimes this means that applicants must apply to more than one authority for consent, and coordination between those authorities is necessary for integrated decision-making.
- (b) Cross-boundary issues impact the Waikato district by virtue of it being located between two growing cities – Auckland in the north and Hamilton in the south. Where an application for a resource consent, plan change, variation or resource management policy proposal includes a cross-boundary issue, the Council will inform and liaise with the other affected Council. Some types of infrastructure raise cross-boundary issues where they traverse the boundaries of district or regional councils.

### **1.3.3 National Direction Instruments**

#### **1.3.3.1 National Policy Statements**

- (a) At a national level, the RMA provides for National Policy Statements, which set out objectives and policies for resource management matters of national significance that are relevant to achieving the purpose of the RMA. Such statements guide subsequent decision-making under the RMA at national, regional and district levels. The Ministry for the Environment holds a comprehensive listing of all current national Policy Statements.

#### **1.3.3.2 National Environmental Standards**

- (a) National Environmental Standards are technical standards relating to the use, development and protection of natural and physical resources and are a form of regulation. Methods for implementing these standards are prescribed by the legislation, which promotes consistent standards, requirements or recommended practices. National standards override existing provisions in plans that have a lower standard.
- (b) National Environmental Standards are regulations issued under sections 43 and 44 of the RMA and apply nationally. This means that each regional, city or district council must enforce the same standard. In some circumstances, councils can impose stricter standards.
- (c) Currently the following six standards are in effect:

- (i) National Environmental Standards for Air Quality
- (ii) National Environmental Standard for Sources of Human Drinking Water
- (iii) National Environmental Standards for Telecommunication Facilities
- (iv) National Environmental Standards for Electricity Transmission
- (v) National Environmental Standard for Assessing and Managing Contaminants in Soil to Protect Human Health, and
- (vi) National Environmental Standard for Plantation Forestry.

#### **I.3.4 Monitoring**

- (a) Monitoring of the district plan is part of a comprehensive monitoring requirement of Waikato District Council, specified in section 35 of the Resource Management Act. The RMA provides for the plan to state the procedures used to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the policies, rules or other methods contained within it.
- (b) A monitoring strategy that has been developed as a separate document from the district plan will be updated. The strategy states what is to be monitored and indicates priority issues. It will also indicate how monitoring is to be undertaken. Plan monitoring will be closely linked with other monitoring which the Council is required to do under the Resource Management Act, including state of the environment monitoring and resource consent monitoring.
- (c) The results of plan monitoring will be published every five years. The Council will seek to work closely with organisations that hold relevant information. Such organisations may include central government agencies, other local government agencies, and business and community groups. Consultation with the District Plan Iwi Reference Group and Waikato-Tainui will continue to be important, including the effectiveness of monitoring methods and plan provisions.