

TO THE CHAIRPERSON AND MEMBERS OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW PROJECT – UPDATE WAIPA 2050

1 PROPOSAL

Following public notification and the call for public feedback on a series of growth scenarios, the purpose of this report is to:

- Support the hearing of submissions and consideration of public feedback on the growth scenarios;
- Consider feedback; and,
- Seek direction from the Committee to guide the development of a draft District Growth Strategy.

2 SUMMARY

The Growth Strategy is the first stage of the District Plan review project. The Growth Strategy will outline how growth is intended to be provided for and managed in a sustainable manner over the next 40 years. It will provide a planning framework including preferred options for new growth areas and timing of growth cells. It will also include a high level implementation program (timeline and indicative costs, specifically for infrastructure).

A major first step in the development of the Growth Strategy has been the development of scenarios. The scenarios paint pictures of possible futures for the District. Three scenarios have been developed with a common set of criteria. The Scenarios are:

- Business as usual
- Managed growth to urban areas
- Concentrated growth

A common set of criteria enable comparison between the various elements. (Refer Attachment 1).

Stakeholder and public feedback has been sought on the scenarios. This feedback has been obtained at public open days, via general consultation and through an evaluation workshop involving key stakeholders. This feedback is provided with this report.

The majority of the feedback received indicates a general preference for Scenario 2 (Managed Growth to Urban Areas), but with some enhancements reflecting elements from other scenarios.

It had been intended to present tangata whenua perspectives on the growth scenarios, but this has not been possible due to the postponement of the planned hui. The intention is to now present this information as part of the process for finalising Draft District Growth Strategy (February 2009).

It is appropriate that the Committee consider the feedback received and to determine its growth preferences. These preferences will form the basis of a preferred scenario, which will guide the development of a draft District Growth Strategy.

3 RECOMMENDATION

That:

- a) *The information be received.*
- b) *Having regard to the submissions, growth scenario evaluation workshop outcomes, and other supporting information, the Strategic Planning and Development Committee determines its preferred growth scenario and that this information be used to prepare a draft Waipa District Growth Strategy for consideration by the Committee in February 2009.*

4 FEEDBACK RECEIVED AT THE OPEN DAYS

160 people attended the Open Days at Te Awamutu, Cambridge and Pirongia. At the Open Days people had the opportunity to write what they loved about the Waipa District. The intention of asking this question was to gather information about what people currently value about the District. (Refer Attachment 2)

5 FEEDBACK RECEIVED ON THE GROWTH SCENARIOS

Feedback on the growth scenarios has now closed.

39 submissions have been received. Copies of the submissions are attached with this agenda item. Submissions were received from individuals, community organisations, development interests as well as organisations such as the New Zealand Transport Agency, Environment Waikato, Fonterra, and the Perry Group. Submissions have been summarised in the attached table. (Refer Attachment 3).

16 Submitters have indicated that they wish to be heard and will be appearing at the December meeting. A schedule of submitters along with speaking times is attached.

Included below are some common responses to the feedback that was received:

- **What do you like about Waipa District?:** Its central location, landscape, community, rural atmosphere and rural character, natural features and town character
- **The three biggest challenges?:** Maintaining the look and feel of our towns and villages, Providing affordable and sustainable hard infrastructure, and efficient and sustainable transport networks.
- **What would make Waipa a great place?:** Ample provision of parks and reserves, retention of character, better transport linkages, bush corridors, more trees in towns
- **How would it look?:** Retain beautiful landscape, clean rivers and lakes, rural focus, efficient infrastructure and transport networks.
- **Preference for growth scenario:** Of the people who responded to this question most favoured Scenario 2.
- **Growth cells:** People were asked to indicate preference for where Waipa should grow. More people indicated that growth should occur in Cambridge rather than Te Awamutu or Pirongia. Of the individual growth cells more preference was indicated for C1, C2 and C4. There was also a reasonable level of support for P3.
- **Additional growth areas identified:** Pirongia West was identified as a suitable area for rural residential, Ohaupo, Ngahinapouri, a business/industrial growth node around the Airport, part of Maungatautari Road and Lamb Street Cambridge where it meets Maungatautari Road.
- **Other comments:** Consideration needs to be given to transmission corridors, concerns were raised about some growth cells being close to small streams, develop ethic that brings together ethic of sustainability, a number of submitters supportive of growth planning.

6 EVALUATION WORKSHOP

6.1 Introduction

An Evaluation Workshop was held on 17th November. The purpose of the workshop was to assist in identifying a preferred growth pattern for the Waipa District, or series of elements for the District to establish a preferred scenario.

Workshop attendees were advised that their role was to provide thought and comment on the suggested growth options from different perspectives and to help Council identify a preferred scenario for wider public consideration. They were also advised that the Council will ultimately make the final decision on a preferred scenario.

People representing different stakeholders participated in the workshop including community groups, development interests, New Zealand Transport Agency, Environment Waikato, Hamilton City Council, Community Boards, New Zealand Historic Places Trust, Chambers of Commerce, Vision Groups, Waikato District Health Board, Ministry of Education, Hamilton Airport, Biodiversity and Heritage Councils and the Senior Council. 41 people attended the workshop. Workshop attendees represented a wide range of community interests.

Overall there was a high level of enthusiasm and engagement by those present. Most people agreed that the scenarios were plausible. Some commented that the scenarios in themselves were not plausible but a combination of the elements were. Two possibilities for further scenarios were suggested:

- A third town
- Growth in the district's towns and villages thereby creating a variety of villages with different character interconnected by roadways.

Prior to the workshop attendees were sent out a package of information which included the evaluation criteria to be applied at the workshop. The criteria have been developed by BECA and have taken the following into account:

- Council's vision of Waipa being the 'Home of Champions'
- Relevant Legislative Requirements (i.e. Local Government Act 2003, Resource Management Act 1991, Historic Places Act 1991, Land Transport Management Act, etc);
- Identified Local Community Outcomes;
- Key evaluation elements and development principles identified by Environment Waikato for the joint Future Proof Study (Hamilton Sub Regional Growth Strategy); and
- Eleven key issues / challenges identified to date in the Waipa 2050 Base Case Report;

A copy of the evaluation criteria is attached. (Attachment 4).

The workshop was divided into 3 sections:

- Feedback on evaluation criteria and weighting of criteria
- Scoring of growth scenarios (based on how well the scenario met the evaluation criteria)
- Feedback on growth cells (the purpose of which was to capture information on what people considered to be fatal flaws)

6.2 Feedback on criteria and weighting

The evaluation criteria contain an explanation of each element as well as outlining matters for consideration. Feedback was received on a number of the criteria.

A summary of the points raised is as follows:

- New development should be required to reinforce the positive characteristics of existing urban form
- Important to include significant landforms and other natural habitat not just the mountains
- Bring built heritage and streetscapes to the fore
- Hautapu and areas in the vicinity to the Airport were requested to be particularly highlighted as employment areas
- There is a need for green engineering measures
- There is a need to recognise the advantages of local employment opportunities
- The need for vibrant town centres and mixed use concepts retail / employment / residential needs to be recognised

Comments from the workshop on the criteria have been annotated in Attachment 4.

Attendees were then asked to weight each criterion in terms of their relative importance and this was aggregated across the workshop. The weighting was relatively evenly spread with most weight being given to urban, rural, biodiversity and soil protection, and heritage and culture. Indicating that urban and rural character, the importance of the rural environment, biodiversity and heritage and cultural environments were considered the most important elements by the workshop.

The weighting placed on the top 4 criteria was close and for that reason it is difficult to draw a distinction between them.

Collective weighting of the criteria from the workshop was as follows:

Criteria	Description	Weighting
Urban	The impact of development location and scale on urban amenity and character	17%
Rural	The impact of development location and scale on rural amenity and character.	16%
Biodiversity and Soil Protection	The ability to minimise impact on primary agricultural or mineral soil resources and the natural environment	15%
Heritage / cultural environment	The opportunity to protect, enhance and restore the cultural and heritage environment	14%
Travelling	The ability to maintain, enhance or develop efficient multi-modal transport linkages between settlement areas	12%
Working	The affect of the growth scenario on employment rates and location of employment	11%
Hard infrastructure	The ability of the growth scenario to provide cost effective hard infrastructure. The ability of the growth scenario to provide practical hard infrastructure connections	11%
Soft infrastructure	The ability of the growth scenario to provide cost effective soft infrastructure The ability of the growth scenario to provide practical hard infrastructure connections	5%

6.3 Scoring of Growth Scenarios

Attendees were divided into groups and were asked as a group to indicate how preferable each scenario was in meeting each of the criteria. The groups then reported back to the workshop. The results of this discussion indicated the following:

Criteria	Scenario Scoring
Urban	Most groups favoured a variant of Scenario 2. With higher density development being provided in appropriate locations close to CBD's. There was less common ground over the level of infill development envisaged in Scenario 2. Some groups clearly preferred the Scenario 1 outcome of limited intensification within the existing urban area while others preferred Scenario 2. Clear direction was given that infill development was not favoured in Pirongia

Criteria	Scenario Scoring
Rural	Clear preference for nodal rural residential development and for rural residential to be identified and planned for. Papakainga development around marae was also identified.
Working	Preference was indicated for both Scenario 2 and 3A. People commented that local opportunities for employment should be actively sought and provided for in the planning context.
Travelling	Scenario 2 and Scenario 3A were favoured with reduced car dependence and a focus on better bus transport in particular. Development of key arterial routes was also favoured. Scenario 3A identified the potential for a third river crossing in Cambridge. Scenario 3A also identified the potential for active transport modes such as cycling and walking.
Hard Infrastructure	Scenario 2 and 3A were favoured. Focus on provision of service to current reticulated networks, improved water quality to meet drinking standards and water conservation measures being encouraged. Sub regional provision of wastewater treatment was also identified as a favoured option.
Soft Infrastructure provision	Scenario 2 was clearly favoured. Continued reliance on Hamilton as major healthcare provider but with secondary services in Cambridge and Te Awamutu, provision of community halls, ecological corridors forming part of reserve network, pools and active areas increased
Biodiversity and soil protection	Scenario 2, 3A and 3B were favoured with more interest shown in Scenario 3A and 3B. Scenario 3A and 3B placed higher emphasis on sustainability outcomes. The higher level of scoring on Scenario 3 reflects the weighting score that the workshop placed on this element. The scenario suggests that rural activities occur in accordance with an approved inventory of land uses. Biodiversity corridors are identified and linkages between ecological areas are promoted. It also suggests that buffers are required around Peat lake areas.

6.4 Feedback on Growth Cells

Two new growth cells were identified:

- Cambridge northeast was identified by a few people in the workshop as having the potential as a growth cell
- Fonterra land on the northern side of the Cambridge bypass for industrial purposes.

The following matters were raised about the potential growth cells:

- Cambridge C1 – C3 seen as appropriate but reliant on the Cambridge bypass, C1 identified as having possibilities for mixed use with opportunities for commercial / residential and perhaps industrial. C3 river corridor and pylons identified as potential constraints
- Cambridge C5 main restriction is relationship to existing horse studs
- Cambridge C4 and C5 main restriction is location on the other side of the Waikato River from Central Business District and the majority of schools in the town. Some groups suggested that C5 could potentially be extended closer to Karapiro.
- Pirongia all plausible. P2 seen to be less likely for residential because of distance from town centre but may have merit for light industrial.
- Te Awamutu support for no growth cells around the dairy factory.
- Te Awamutu T2 and T4 supported for good road access and availability of sewerage infrastructure.
- Te Awamutu T7 identified concerns with flooding some groups saw the area as having potential for recreation.
- Te Awamutu T8 and T9 need to align with greenbelt. T8 identified as having potential for commercial

7 A PROPOSED WAY FORWARD

7.1 Scenarios

From the feedback received there is a general preference for the elements contained in Scenario 2. This scenario is called Managed Growth to Urban areas and focuses an increased proportion of growth into the towns and rural villages in the District. Under this scenario it is envisaged that 27,000 more people will call Waipa home by 2050 as distinct to consolidated scenarios (3A and 3B) which envisage growth of only 22,500. A key theme of this scenario is to actively plan for and manage growth in a co-coordinated way.

It was also clear from the feedback received that a strict adherence to all of the elements in Scenario 2 is not likely to provide the optimal outcome for the District. For some aspects of the elements there was preference shown for the outcomes in Scenario 3 and to a lesser extent Scenario 1. It is considered that this direction could form the basis of the development of a preferred growth scenario for the District. Some initial work on the costings of the Scenarios has been completed, with further information to be provided.

To assist the Committee direction and comments on each of the elements is included below:

Criteria	Potential Preferred Growth Scenario
Urban living	<p>Focus on Scenario 2 with higher density development being provided in appropriate locations such as close to CBD's.</p> <p>The character and amenity of towns and villages is a key consideration in the feedback. Under Scenario 2 a greater redevelopment of existing urban areas is proposed with an overall average of 12-15 dwellings per ha. A key issue will be how this is achieved while retaining the character and amenity of our towns and villages. Options for consideration are: increasing the minimum section size for a dwelling in some residential areas where character is sought to be retained and / or changing the District Plan rules so that better design outcomes are promoted. While at the same time identifying appropriate locations for higher density. Through such an approach it is envisaged that an overall average of 12-15 dwellings per ha could be promoted but that would be achieved through a range of section sizes in different locations. Clusters of higher density could also be promoted in new growth cell areas.</p> <p>Scenario 2 envisaged 10% of growth being located in Pirongia. From the feedback received it is clear that infill development is not supported in Pirongia. It is further clear that new greenfields development is desired to be at large lot residential scale and to be retained within the existing greenbelt. Under these parameters it is unlikely that the level of growth promoted in Scenario 2 will be achieved within the land available within the greenbelt. These matters will be considered further through the development of the Draft Growth Strategy.</p> <p>It is clear from the feedback received that there is broad support for an active management approach to growth. While the Council has been proactive in the area already the level of direction provided is desired to increase. By way of example through such approaches could be the identification of urban boundaries and active management / requirement for staging of development. This approach will enable the active co-ordination of development in the District.</p> <p>Under this scenario it is envisaged that growth opportunities will be provided in both Cambridge and Te Awamutu with slightly higher levels of growth occurring in Cambridge reflective of present market trends. This approach supports the current infrastructure and investment in the district. An outcome of this approach means that over time a significantly dominant urban centre in the District is not likely</p>

Criteria	Potential Preferred Growth Scenario
	to develop with projected populations in 2050 for Cambridge of 24, 110 and Te Awamutu 19,800.
Rural living	Scenario 2 with some aspects from scenario 1. This scenario envisages a change in opportunities for rural living in the District with the majority of rural residential being identified and planned for in specific locations. Ribbon development between rural residential nodes and along transport nodes is not envisaged. Papakainga development around existing marae is seen to be consistent with this outcome (Scenario 1). This approach looks to define and provide for opportunities for rural living in enclaves as compared to more dispersed settlement patterns. Under this approach the current opportunities for rural subdivision in the District (TDRs, long association lots, ecological protection lots) will need to be reviewed and would become a lot more directive as to what subdivision is permissible and where. This approach provides higher levels of protection for the land based economy.
Working	Scenario 2. Under this scenario it will be important to promote and provide for a range of employment opportunities in the towns and rural villages of the District. This will involve actively identifying and providing for industrial, commercial areas as well as mixed use developments. While this may result in a reduced reliance on Hamilton for employment it is unlikely that it will be a significant reduction to the point where the number of people commuting into Hamilton City for work is in the minority. There is a key relationship between this element and that of travelling.
Travelling	Scenario 2 and Scenario 3A. Under this combination of scenarios a multi modal approach is promoted. This involves reduced car dependence with a focus on improved bus transport in particular as well as the promotion of active transport modes such as cycling and walking. (Scenario 3 promotes active transport modes) Ways of promoting such an approach will be considered through the Town Concept Plans. The construction of key arterial routes is also favoured along with the potential for a third river crossing in Cambridge. The necessity for a third river crossing will be driven by a large extent through the location of future growth cells for Cambridge.
Hard Infrastructure	Scenario 2 and 3A. This approach will involve the continuation of current reticulated serviced but will promote a change in approach with greater focus on water conservation and green engineering. Sub regional provision of wastewater treatment is envisaged (Scenario 3). The economies of scale of such an approach are likely to be beneficial.

Criteria	Potential Preferred Growth Scenario
Soft Infrastructure provision	Scenario 2. The outcome of this approach means that there will be continued reliance on Hamilton as major healthcare provider but with secondary services in Cambridge and Te Awamutu. The continued provision of community halls is envisaged, ecological corridors forming part of reserve network, pools and active recreation areas increased.
Biodiversity and soil protection	Combination of Scenario 2, 3A and 3B. Scenario 3 suggests that rural activities occur in accordance with an approved inventory of land uses. This approach was slightly favoured by the participants at the workshop. It would promote a change in the way rural activities are managed in the District with higher levels of control over the location of rural activities. Scenario 2 envisages protection of prime agricultural land and natural resources is given high importance and is protected from inappropriate development. This would involve actively managing urban and rural living opportunities within the rural environment and the potential for reverse sensitivity effects from incompatible activities. Improvement of rural land practices is also envisaged with better riparian management (Scenario 2). Biodiversity corridors are identified and linkages between ecological areas are promoted (Scenario 2 and 3). It also suggests that buffers are required around Peat lake areas. While buffer areas around peat lakes are considered desirable careful consideration needs to be given as to whether rural residential opportunities are provided around some of the peat lake areas. The pros of such an approach include promoting changes in land use with beneficial effects on water quality. (The business as usual scenario considers that the current approach to the management of peat lakes is not sustainable as further water quality degradation will occur). The cons of such an approach include the effect rural residential developments will have on landscape character of the peat lakes in the District. Careful consideration of this matter is required. The key considerations being the values of the lake, the value of enhancement and the design and location of proposed development.

7.2 Growth cells

The purpose of gathering this feedback was to assess whether any of the growth cells had fatal flaws and as a result should be discounted from further analysis. From the feedback received it is considered that the potential for flooding in areas of T7 (Te Awamutu) could be considered to be a fatal flaw for intensive land uses such as residential, industrial or commercial for that part affected by flooding. This is not to say that the whole of T7 should be discounted. The area affected by flooding does have potential to be used for less intensive uses e.g. recreation.

During the preparation of the Draft District Growth Strategy the growth cells identified as part of scenario development as well as those identified in the feedback received will be evaluated. The feedback received from the initial round of consultation will form part of this analysis. Recommended growth cells and timing of the cells will form part of the Draft District Growth Strategy.

8 ENGAGEMENT WITH TANGATA WHENUA

An initial hui has been held with Tangata Whenua. The purpose of the hui was to arrive at a common understanding as to the process of engagement for the District Plan review and also to present the growth scenarios for feedback.

Representatives from the Council who attended the hui made it clear that the Council was committed to transparent engagement with tangata whenua.

The main outcome from the initial hui was a proposed way forward being to hold separate meetings focusing on Waipa 2050 on the same day as Nga Iwi Toopu O Waipa meetings. In that way there is efficiency particularly in terms of people's time. It is also clear that the tangata whenua representatives who are not part of Nga Iwi Toopu o Waipa can choose to attend the Waipa 2050 hui.

A further hui was planned for 20th November. The intention of this hui was to gather specific feedback on the growth scenarios. To assist in this process Steven Wilson (facilitator) has asked the Council to prepare specific questions. The outcomes from this hui will be of assistance to the Council in reaching a view on the scenarios. It was intended that the outcomes of this hui would be reported at the time of the Committee meeting. However, this hui was postponed and a new date will be set. The intention is now for the outcomes from consultation with tangata whenua to be reported to the February 2009 meeting of the Committee.

9 CONSIDERATION OF SCENARIOS

Direction on the elements that make up a preferred scenario is sought in order to assist in the drafting of the Draft Growth Strategy. Informing that direction will be public submissions, and the outcomes from the workshop.

To assist the Council in the consideration of the scenarios a high level summary of the infrastructure costs associated with the scenarios will be presented.

It must be remembered that the direction will need to be aligned with the outcomes from Future Proof. The deliberations for Future Proof are not programmed to occur until mid-December.

10 NEXT STEPS

In the first quarter of 2009 the Town Concept Plans will be developed including public consultation.

The following are the key milestones for the project over the next few months:

- February 2009 - Consideration of proposed Draft Growth Strategy which will include decisions on growth cells, desirability, sequencing and timing. In a workshop at the Committee's February meeting direction will be sought on these points.
- March 2009 -The Committee will be asked to approve the draft Growth Strategy for Public Consultation
- May 2009 - Hearings on draft Growth Strategy
- June 2009 - Adoption of Growth Strategy

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