



BASE CASE REPORT 2009

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Executive Summary

Introduction

Waipa District Council is looking to plan for and manage growth in a co-ordinated and sustainable way. In order to do this the Council has commenced a project called 'Waipa 2050', a key component of which is a 'District Growth Strategy' to identify the community's vision and plan for growth. The Waipa District has been growing quickly and the Council has been struggling to keep pace with recent levels of growth. The Council is now trying to identify the vision for the District and decide how development in Waipa will be actively provided for and managed in a sustainable, integrated and staged manner.

The District Growth Strategy will support Waipa's goal of being the Home of Champions – creating an environment which is a great place to live, work and play. It will do this by:

- n Valuing what makes Waipa a special place and identifying actions or activities to protect and enhance these.
- n Defining the pattern for future growth of settlements in the district (as opposed to growth being market driven)
- n Integrating growth with cost-effective infrastructure provision

The Waipa 2050 project is being prepared at the same time as a broader growth strategy is being prepared for the Hamilton sub-region. That project, called 'Future Proof', includes the Waipa and Waikato District's, Hamilton City and the Morrinsville area. The Hamilton sub-regional area as a whole is predicted to increase its population by 200,000 people in the next 50 years. 27,000 of those people are predicted to settle in the Waipa District, increasing the District's population to approximately 70,000 by 2050. As a District there is a need to think carefully about growth, type, location and provision and plan for it today. What is decided as a District in the Waipa 2050 project needs to be consistent with what is decided at a sub-regional level by Future Proof.

What is the purpose of this Base Case Report?

This "Base Case" report provides a snapshot of the District footprint and current situation. It will be used to inform the development of growth scenarios and the growth strategy (options for where growth and development will happen). This report provides information about the opportunities, constraints and issues the Waipa District face. These have been identified in fourteen profile statement reports which provide information on a variety of topics including demographics, social services, tourism, urban growth, waste water, water supply, stormwater, transportation, other services, economic development, culture and heritage, landscape, the physical environment, and strategic policy.

Waipa's treasured past – where have we come from?

In order to plan for Waipa's future, it is important to have an understanding of the District's past; the people who have settled in the area; where, why and what this has resulted in and the effects on the landscape. That way there is a better sense of what is special about the Waipa District and what, therefore are the elements that require protection and / or celebration.

Tainui Maori first settled in Waipa District in the fourteenth century as the area had excellent growing conditions and river access. The land and waterways in the District continue to hold great

significance to the tangata whenua of the District today, particularly the rivers, peat lakes and prominent landscape features such as Pirongia, Maungatautari and Kakepuku mountains.

For similar reasons, Europeans too were drawn to settle in the Waipa District: the ease with which food grew in the District and the transport provided by key waterways such as the Waipa and Waikato Rivers. However, by the 1860s parts of the District had become a battleground as the Waikato Wars ensued. The Waikato Wars resulted from Maori resistance to selling land to British colonials. The election of the first Maori King (King Potatau I) in 1858 was seen as a threat to the British Crown and sovereignty, and forces soon moved into the Waikato Region. The Waikato Wars were fought fiercely between 1863 and 1864, and today the District's landscape shows remnants of pa sites, redoubts and battlegrounds.

Waipa's towns have colourful histories associated with both Maori and European history.

Missions were set up in Te Awamutu in the 1830s, but by the 1860s Europeans were expelled from Te Awamutu until the conclusion of the Wars when ex-militia and servicemen became the first Europeans to settle in the town. Te Awamutu grew even more rapidly in the 1880s when the railway arrived connecting the town to both Auckland and Wellington.

Cambridge too was established as a military town on the border of the Maori King Country in the 1860s, but soon became a market town as surrounding swampy areas were drained to establish agriculture such as dairy farming.

The main urban centres of Te Awamutu and Cambridge have a number of colonial buildings linking them to their past. Cambridge specifically shows the remnants of a planned 'garden city' with its greenbelt still intact today.

Kihikihi was the primary home of Ngati Maniapoto, however when the New Zealand Wars ended many ex-militia were given land in the town. Ohaupo was never a major town but more a stopping point between Kirikiriroa (Hamilton) and Te Awamutu. Pirongia established as a frontier garrison town (then called Alexandra) providing a boundary between the predominantly European lands to the north, and the predominantly Maori lands to the south. The town grew rapidly until the promised railway was routed to Te Awamutu instead, and the garrison withdrawn.

Waipa's rural areas were drained and gradually developed as important agricultural areas providing both employment and food to the surrounding area. The introduction of commercial refrigeration in the 1890s, significantly boosted Waipa's economy as dairy products could be exported overseas.

Where are we now - Waipa today

Waipa's People: Living and Working

Today agriculture is still an important part of the economy and character of the Waipa District.

The District is experiencing high population growth, particularly in the rural areas, but also in Te Awamutu and Cambridge. The population is ageing and tends to be older than both the Waikato Region and New Zealand generally with higher percentages of residents over 65 (14%) than found nationally (12%). The proportion of the population with Maori ethnicity is also increasing. Employment rates (being the % of the population employed) are similar for the District when compared to the region and country as a whole.

As the population increases so too does the demand for land for housing, for employment, and for services (such as retail space and offices). Waipa and New Zealand have generally experienced

strong economic growth over the past five years. This has created a strong demand for retail, office and industrial property.

n Residential

- Between 200-300 new houses per year have been added to the District over the last 10 years but this is likely to increase to even higher levels after 2011 – we need to find room for these dwellings either within existing communities and towns (through infill) or on greenfield land.
- By 2050 it is estimated that there will be an additional 12,700 dwellings in the District. Recent trends show that about 40% of houses have been built away from existing towns with Cambridge and Te Awamutu receiving about 120 and 80 extra houses each per year respectively.

n Industrial

- An additional 28 hectares of industrial land is required between now and 2026 and an additional 60 hectares by 2050. This is expected to be catered for in planned developments including the industrial land at Hautapu (Cambridge), and Bond Road (Te Awamutu).
- 117 hectares of land is currently being rezoned around the Hamilton International Airport as part of the Titanium Park development, however this development will serve the wider region and is not expected to contribute to satisfying the local district demand of 60 ha over the next 50 years.

n Retail

- By 2056 an additional 65,000m² of retail floor space could be needed throughout the District with some additional retail required in Ohaupo, Pirongia, around the Hamilton Airport as well as in the two main urban centres of Cambridge and Te Awamutu.
- There is currently more demand than there is supply of retail land which means that business is leaking to other areas, such as Hamilton.
- By 2036 it is estimated that Te Awamutu will require 41,000m² of retail floor space (it currently has 17,000m² of retail floor space and the current demand is estimated at 26,000m²). Cambridge will require 54,000m² (it currently has 21,000m² and the current demand is estimated at 32,000m²).
- There is also considered to be demand for Large Format Retail stores in both Cambridge and Te Awamutu however the need to balance the demand for 'big box' retail with the need to preserve the character and function of the towns existing commercial areas requires that careful consideration is given to the extent and location of such activities.

n Office

- More office space is needed in the District. It is estimated that an additional 17.8 hectares of commercial zoned land will be required by 2026 to cater for this space with 65% of this growth likely to be in Cambridge. The land area required can be reduced by measures such as intensifying office development (i.e. vertically) or by providing office space within mixed use developments.

Visiting Waipa

Most people who visit Waipa are domestic tourists rather than from overseas. Although tourism only provides a relatively modest amount of income to the Waipa economy this has been increasing over recent years. In 2000 the District earned \$414 million from domestic visitors and

\$77 million from international visitors, but by 2013 this is forecast to increase to \$741 million and \$300 million respectively. The Fieldays itself is reported to contribute approximately \$250 million dollars to the regional economy.

Cambridge and Te Awamutu contain most of the visitor services such as retail and accommodation but tourist attractions are spread throughout the District, including:

- § ecotourism activities, for example walks at Pirongia, Maungatautari and Ngaroto.
- § major events such as Fieldays, WRC Rally, and the Parachute Festival;
- § sporting events are also a significant attraction to the District, for example international events at Lake Karapiro / Karapiro Domain and Kihikihi Equestrian Centre; and events at Mystery Creek and Te Awamutu Events Centre; and
- § heritage and cultural tourism is also becoming an important element of the District's tourism potential.

Servicing Waipa

To sustain the population, businesses and industry in the Waipa District a number of services are required, for example water, disposal of water and other waste, a supply of energy, telecommunications, and transportation.

Three waters – water supply, waste water and stormwater - Like many areas, Waipa faces some challenges in terms of water – too much in some places, sometimes causing flooding; too little in other areas; and issues around disposing of water.

Water demand in the District is higher than average and so too is water loss from the water supply systems. Cambridge, with its proximity to the Waikato River, Lake Karapiro and other springs has a reasonable supply of water. Water supply in Te Awamutu, on the other hand, is over-allocated and some issues exist around the age of pipes supplying both Te Awamutu and Pirongia. Kihikihi and Ohaupo also receive reticulated water. A further water source needs to be identified for Te Awamutu and storage capacity increased. Some improvements to water quality are needed within the District's supplies.

Waste water from Waipa's main towns and reticulated areas is treated at Waipa's waste water treatment plants (WWTP) located in Cambridge and Te Awamutu. The Cambridge WWTP is in need of upgrading and is struggling to cope with the level of waste water it currently receives. Te Awamutu's WWTP processes waste water from both Te Awamutu and Kihikihi and was recently upgraded in order to cope with predicted growth in that area for the next 10 - 15 years.

In terms of Waipa's stormwater, drainage in the District is founded on three main catchments: the Waikato River in the north of the District, The Waipa River and its tributaries in the south and west; and the peatland plateau in between the two river valleys. The peat lakes are sensitive receiving environments whereas the Waikato River's water quality is more affected by surrounding rural land uses than by stormwater runoff. Te Awamutu does not have a full stormwater reticulation system, and catchments in Te Awamutu are known to have some flooding problems. Ponding is also known to occur in Pirongia.

Power and Gas - Power is supplied to the District from the national grid at four exit points located in Te Awamutu and Cambridge, and two feeding into the District at Hamilton and Hinuera. The main source of power from the national grid is generated from hydro power, with some additional

power being sourced from thermal, geothermal, wind and coal supply. WEL Networks, Waipa Networks and Powerco distribute power in the District.

There is one power generation source located solely within the District at Karapiro (with Arapuni also being located partly within the District) which is owned and operated by Mighty River Power.

Vector supplies gas to Cambridge, Te Awamutu, Kihikihi and Pirongia.

Waste – There are three privately owned and operated transfer stations located in Waipa – two in Te Awamutu and one in Cambridge – providing a waste and recycling drop off facility and hazardous waste disposal. The Council contracts out a kerb-side recycling scheme with a weekly collection in the urban areas, and fortnightly collection in the rural areas. Refuse collection is provided by private companies. Agrecovery also runs a national rural recycling programme aimed at providing disposal facilities for all agricultural and horticultural solid waste. The District contains four closed landfill sites but there are no operational landfill sites in the District.

Telecommunications - The entire Waipa District has land line access with an existing copper network supplied by Telecom. The majority of the District also has mobile coverage with exceptions south of Maungatautari, west of Pirongia and northeast of Cambridge.

Broadband is available in the urban areas of Te Awamutu, most of Cambridge, and some smaller centres. However, a number of areas of the District (particularly rural areas) do not have access to broadband.

Travelling in Waipa

Travel in Waipa is dominated by road. The roading network provides efficient access and communication links to, from and within the District. Roads also service agricultural, forestry and tourism industries as well as maintaining access to rural communities and households. State highways 1, 1B, 3, 21, and 39 criss-cross the District and link the urban centres. Freight transport is also dominated by road with a relatively small amount going by rail.

Walking, cycling and public transport makes up less than 10% of total trips. Passenger transport is infrequent but there are existing services between Te Awamutu/Hamilton and Cambridge/Hamilton and Hamilton, as well as a number of school buses. Waikato's Regional Passenger Transport Plan 2007-2010 highlights several key services to be investigated including more frequent services, park and ride facilities at Hamilton Airport and Cambridge, and an extension of Hamilton's urban bus services to the Airport.

Facilities for walking and cycling too are being encouraged in new developments. The District's walking strategy plans for all urban roads to have footpaths on at least one side of the road, and recreational walkways are being developed in some areas. However, with extensions of rural-residential development semi-rural footpath facilities are likely to become increasingly of concern and many new developments are not currently allowing enough room for pedestrian, cycle or bridle path facilities.

There are no commuter rail services in the District although the North Island Main Trunk Railway does pass through Te Awamutu and Ohaupo on its route between Auckland and Wellington – the nearest stops are in Hamilton and Otorohanga. There is an industrial siding 3.5kms north of Cambridge at Hautapu, but this is only used to transport milk product at the moment.

Hamilton Airport is the fourth busiest airport in New Zealand and provides the greater Waikato region with direct flights to many domestic destinations. Regular international flights have also been a feature from the airport since the mid 1990's, however there are currently no regular

international flights on offer. Airlines operating from Hamilton Airport include Air New Zealand, Origin Pacific and Sun Air.

Learning, Playing and Health in Waipa

Learning – Early childhood, primary and secondary education is provided throughout the District in the main urban areas and rural areas, including one private secondary school at Cambridge – St Peters School, which attracts pupils from outside the District. Approximately half of the schools are “enviroschools”. A number of towns also provide kohanga reo. Te Wananga o Aotearoa is a public tertiary institution which provides some courses in Te Awamutu. Private training facilities are provided in Kihikihi (GSHTC Limited); Cambridge (Caernwaray Bible Schools, Waikato Apprentice Jockey School and Computer Education Solutions Limited); and CTC Aviation Training (NZ) Ltd and Waikato Aero Club are two private training establishments located near the Hamilton Airport.

There are no current plans to upgrade any of the schools, close schools or provide for new schools though role increases are expected in existing schools. However, Cambridge is expected to require additional classrooms to cater for the 11-13 Year group by 2026 and by 2050 new schooling (particularly within Cambridge and Te Awamutu) will be likely.

Playing – There is widespread satisfaction with parks and reserves provided in the District. It is estimated that additional land will be required for active reserves, conservation reserves, and sports reserves with the increasing population. However, the longer term changing pattern of demographics predicted in the District indicates that there may be additional requirements for different types of reserves and facilities that are more popular with an ageing population, such as bowls, golf, indoor activities, swimming pools, gardens, and walking tracks.

Te Awamutu has an aquatic centre and plans are in place to upgrade the existing Cambridge Pool in order to provide an indoor pool and aquatic centre. The Trust Waikato Te Awamutu Events Centre provides facilities for a range of activities. Mystery Creek is a venue located in the District catering for major activities such as Fieldays and national and international indoor sporting events. Lake Karapiro provides a Sports and Recreation centre which mainly provides for a number of water and land based activities. It is also being upgraded and additional facilities provided to cater for the 2010 World Rowing Championships, whilst leaving a superb legacy for all domain uses. It is also the site for one of three high-performance sports centres in New Zealand, currently being built.

There are two libraries in the District – one in Cambridge and one in Te Awamutu. Thirty-two community halls and other meeting places are spread throughout the District’s rural towns and areas. Cambridge and Te Awamutu also have museums.

There are a number of dog exercise areas, but with the growth in Cambridge North, further areas will be required.

Health - Health facilities and services including GPs, medical centres, rest homes and retirement villages are mostly located in Te Awamutu and Cambridge with very few facilities in the other rural towns or areas. Te Awamutu also has one continuing care and maternity service at Matariki Hospital. Secondary and specialist health care is provided in Hamilton, and the nearby Waikato Hospital in Hamilton provides the most comprehensive cover.

The majority of growth in over 60-year olds is occurring outside the main urban centres where medical treatment and retirement/rest homes are not widely available, and this may become more of an issue in the future.

Waipa's Environment – Land, Water, Air

Waipa is predominantly flat and basin-like with some rolling hills and mountainous areas. The iconic volcanic peaks of Mt Pirongia, Mt Maungatautari and Kakepuku dot the landscape. Flooding events and subsequent drainage has also shaped the landscape with the Waikato and Waipa rivers carving out channels.

The Waipa District has highly productive soils with few limitations making it an ideal place for agriculture – Waipa's dairying and the equine industry are nationally important from an economic perspective. As a result most of the District is pastoral land, giving it a very 'rural' feel.

Waipa also has ecological areas of regional and national significance. For example, native forest surrounding the volcanic mountainous regions and kahikatea swamp stands such as Yarnley's Bush. Peat bogs, lakes and wetlands are also a unique and special feature of the District. The District's peat lakes represent one of the largest collection of these types of lake in New Zealand. The Moanatuatua Scientific Reserve is one remnant of what was a much larger peat bog east of Ohaupo.

The waterways passing through the Waipa are lowland rivers and streams which naturally flood during winter months. Managing increased runoff following vegetation clearance represents a challenge to the District. Water quality has been adversely affected by landuse, for example, peat soils tend to be naturally low in pH and some nutrients so requires the addition of lime and fertiliser to achieve full productivity. However, this can adversely affect lake and waterway quality downstream. Agricultural and stormwater runoff needs to be managed in order to minimise eutrophication and sedimentation of the District's waterways, and subsequent effects on water supply, ecology and water based recreation opportunities.

A number of landscapes and landscape features in the District have been identified in the District Plan for special care and protection. These include the vegetated volcanic cones, Lakes Karapiro and Arapuni and the Waikato River including river terraces, peat domes, views of peat lakes from State Highway 3, and steep hillsides.

Preservation of Waipa's archaeological landscapes also presents an opportunity as some of the landscapes are iconic. Viewshafts which once linked pa / redoubts to another place, and links between pa sites and volcanic cones are still evident in the District. Many areas have remnants of European and Maori defensive military sites associated with the Waikato Wars which occurred here in the 1860s, for example Rangiaowhia.

As population and employment growth continues in the Waipa District pressure to develop in the rural areas will also increase. Such growth and development needs to be balanced against the need to protect highly productive soils. Ecological areas too, such as remnant bush stands, the margins of peat lakes may also come under pressure to be developed.

Air quality in the District is high but does have the potential to be affected by activity from an increasing population. The main source of air pollution is domestic home heating, but vehicle emissions, outdoor burning, and discharges from industrial activities also play a part. As the population increases and industry grows air quality has the potential to worsen and this needs to be managed carefully.

Other Considerations

Further regional guidance exists such as the Waikato Regional Policy Statement which identifies the significant resource management issues in the region, and the Waikato Regional Plan which

sets objectives, policies and methods to address these issues. The Waikato Region has its own Transport Strategy.

Waipa District Council too has a number of documents which have played a part in managing growth and need to be considered in the context of the Waipa 2050 project. These include:

- § Operative Waipa District Plan;
- § Code of Practice for Land Development and Subdivision;
- § Waipa's Action Plan for the NZ Urban Design Protocol;
- § The 2009-2019 Long Term Council-Community Plan (currently draft);
- § Waipa District Promotion Strategy,
- § Heritage Policy and Implementation Strategy; and,
- § Waipa Urban Growth Strategy 2003.

All these documents get reviewed and change as time passes. The main challenge for the Waipa 2050 project is to identify a series of principles to guide development in the district over the next 40 years that are practical, cost effective and achievable. These are key elements to provide for the achievement of sustainable development in the district.

What drives growth in Waipa today?

The Waipa District is an attractive place to live and growth is increasing for a number of reasons, such as:

- n Waipa has iconic landscapes with volcanic mountains, lakes, rivers, rolling farmland and domed peat lands making it an attractive place for people to live and buy property and for tourism.
- n Waipa is in close proximity to Hamilton which is an advantage in that Hamilton provides people in Waipa's towns and rural areas with employment. However, the disadvantage of being so close to Hamilton is that rural industry is able to be serviced by companies within Hamilton.
- n As more people decide to settle in the District's main centres of Cambridge and Te Awamutu, they attract more services and amenities and are able to become self-sustaining towns.
- n High quality educational facilities.
- n The local economy provides employment; primarily in agriculture which is the most significant industry in the District. However, much employment is also provided in manufacturing and retail trade. Key growth areas between 2000 and 2007 included manufacturing, construction, retail, accommodation, cafes, restaurants, property and business service, and personal services.
- n Many people are moving to the District for the lifestyle that living in rural areas provides. People of retirement age are also attracted to live in the District especially within Cambridge.
- n Tourism is a growing industry: the most important tourist attractions in Waipa include horse breeding, training and equestrian events (Kihikihi Equestrian Centre), events at Mystery Creek Events Centre, activities at Lake Karapiro and Domain and more recently the Maungatautari Ecological Island as an eco-tourism destination.
- n Waipa is well connected – transport within the District is dominated by roads such as State Highways 1, 3, 21 and 39, the North Island Main Trunk Line passes through it and there is an International Airport located within Waipa and to the south of Hamilton City.

- n Changing patterns of land use such as providing buffer zones between agricultural activities and waterways and planting of riparian margins; and rural residential lot development being encouraged around peat lakes and their riparian margins.

Planning for growth in the Waipa District cannot occur in isolation of national, regional and neighbouring trends and environments. In this respect there is a comprehensive and changing policy and planning framework that will have influences on the Waipa 2050 Growth Strategy as it evolves and is implemented. For example, national guidance exists for housing, transport, and urban design. A recent agreement over co-management of the Waikato River between Waikato Tainui and the Crown also needs to be considered in terms of the management of the River and surrounding land uses.

Future challenges

Emerging from the investigations to date are eleven key issues or challenges that the Waipa District faces which will have implications for how growth should be provided for and managed. These challenges (in no particular order) are:

- n An increasing and ageing population, and how to best cater for this change.
- n A need to define, retain and enhance Waipa's character and celebrate what makes it special and unique.
- n Protecting Waipa's land-based economy.
- n Pressure on the Waipa's ecology and environment – protect its icons, key sites and biodiversity.
- n Definition of employment type and location in terms of where development should occur.
- n Need to provide 'hard' infrastructure, but what type, where, and how much it will cost.
- n Need to provide community infrastructure (education, health and recreational facilities), but what type, where, and how much it will cost.
- n Maintain and enhance urban amenity, form and character.
- n Maintain and where necessary protect rural amenity, form and character.
- n Maintain, develop and enhance efficient transport networks and improve public transport to provide better access to services.
- n Protection and enhancement of Waipa's culture and heritage.

Next Steps – where to from here?

So far a 'snapshot' of the Waipa District has been taken as it is today. By assuming current growth trends there is a reasonable understanding of how many additional people will be looking to live and work in the Waipa District in 2050. There is also a good understanding of the current challenges facing the District.

The next step following on from this 'base case' work is to consider where and how to sustainably provide for and manage projected growth. That means, where should future houses, businesses and industries be located? The kinds of questions to be considered are:

- § Will Cambridge grow or will Te Awamutu? Or both?
- § Should more rural land be developed or should Council conserve primary agriculture, directing the towns to be more compact?
- § Should a new town be developed?

§ Should all the smaller towns grow and Cambridge and Te Awamutu remain of a similar scale?

§ With extra residents and workers, how will they travel from one place to another?

In order to do this ‘growth scenarios’ have been developed to outline and show how and where growth might occur and how this could influence the “look” and “feel” of the District; the living, working and travelling experiences. The community and key stakeholders such as businesses, industry representatives, education and health providers have provided input into that process to assist Council in determining what the desired option is to sustainably provide for and manage the effects of growth in the District to and beyond 2050. That preferred growth management scenario has provided the framework for the development of a draft district growth strategy.