

### **3. COUNCIL DECISION ON FUTURE PROPOSALS**

At the Strategy and Community Committee meeting of 5 June the Committee considered an agenda item outlining the Waimauku Structure Plan process to date, including the recently completed Phase 3 consultation on the future proposals.

The Committee passed a resolution on how to develop the draft Structure Plan for the rural area surrounding Waimauku and the Waimauku township itself (*Minute number 608/06/08*).

#### **3.1 Surrounding Rural Area**

The Committee resolved “That the Council base the draft Waimauku Structure Plan for the rural area on No Rural Rezonings.”

The resolution was based on the following:

- There is more than enough capacity in the existing rural zonings and vacant sites to meet this forecast growth in the entire rural area in the district.
- Further countryside living areas are considered to be an unsustainable development pattern for accommodating growth as the dispersed growth form has effects on amenity, transport networks, and other infrastructure.
- Lifestyle block subdivision is also recognised as a threat to genuine agriculture activities in terms of land prices and reverse sensitivity. There is also a loss of economic value to associated industries that rely on agricultural land/activities to provide an amenity of open countryside as a reason for tourists to visit the area.
- No areas in the surrounding rural area have been identified that would require further zonings or rules (over and above that already included in the Proposed District Plan) for outstanding landscapes, bush areas or soils.
- The surrounding rural area is expected to keep its rural character and function as part of a greenbelt. The exact nature of how a greenbelt will work is being currently dealt with on a district-wide level by the development of the district’s Rural Strategy.
- The proposal is consistent with Vision Rodney and the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy.
- The feedback from the community supports the retention of the rural activities in the surrounding rural area around Waimauku.
- The proposal will maintain green rural surrounds and Waimauku could continue to have a country community identity and spirit. This might not be possible if much of the surrounding land was zoned for lifestyle blocks rather than agricultural activities.

### 3.2 Waimauku Township

The Committee resolved “That the Council base the draft Waimauku Structure Plan for the township on Structure Plan Proposal 1 for the first decade and then Structure Plan Proposal 3 (staged over approximately years 10-20). That is:

Stage 1 (approx 1-10 years): Low density township (required as no public wastewater scheme available). This is essentially Structure Plan Proposal 1, which would see minimal growth for the township to potentially allow a population of approximately 1,300 people.

Stage 2 (approx 10-20 years): Some infill of the existing urban area and limited urban expansion. This is essentially Structure Plan Proposal 3, which would see the township grow to potentially allow a population of approximately 2,600 people.”

The resolution was based on the following:

- Public feedback has favoured Structure Plan Proposal 1. This proposal is tenable in the short to medium term with the use of onsite wastewater treatment. Therefore, it is recommended that Structure Plan Proposal 1 be implemented for approximately the next 10 years.
- A reticulated public wastewater system is likely to be available for Waimauku in the medium/long term.
- The pressures for urban growth will continue to affect Waimauku over the next 20 years due to its proximity to Auckland. Therefore, a realistic and measured plan for limited growth (complementary to the existing township) is needed to ensure that growth is well planned rather than ad-hoc. It is considered that Structure Plan Proposal 3 is such a plan in the longer term.
- Public feedback has overwhelmingly rejected significant urban growth because of negative impacts on the character of the area and concerns about pressure on infrastructure and the environment. The recommended proposal instead allows for slow growth of the township over 20 years with limited urban expansion (in stage 2 when wastewater is available). Under this proposal, the character of the township would be able to be largely retained and any impacts on infrastructure and the environment would be of a scale that could be avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- The proposal would see gradual growth over a 20 year period that would be able to maintain a rural village in green rural surrounds. Waimauku could continue to have a country community identity and spirit.
- The area of the stage 2 urban expansion builds on the existing structure of the township and focuses growth in areas within walking distance of the commercial shopping centre, reinforcing it as the focal point of the township. The growth is also in proximity to the railway station and the bus ‘park and ride’ to enable and encourage use of the public transport system.

- The proposal is consistent with Vision Rodney and the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy (ARGS). The ARGS generally limits urban expansion beyond the current Metropolitan Urban Limits. However, the stage 2 urban expansion is small in terms of area and retains Waimauku as a reasonably compact settlement located around a public transport/commercial centre node.
- The proposed Stage 2 urban expansion is into an area that has been identified as generally suitable for urban development in terms of the constraints and opportunities land mapping (subject to further detailed investigation in some areas).
- The level of growth in terms of balancing the infill and urban expansion can be worked through in more detail at the next stage of the Structure Plan process. This can consider the density and character of the stage 2 infill and urban expansion using the Township Policy Zone (800m<sup>2</sup>) as a guide. Further work can also occur with regards to refining the new stage 2 urban boundary. This work will go towards meeting the standards for urban extensions in 2.6.2.2 of the Auckland Regional Policy Statement.