

PART 1 DESCRIPTION OF DISTRICT

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- 1.1** Papakura District is unique in that it occupies a strategic position at the interface between the southern-most part of the Auckland metropolitan area, the Clevedon Valley, and the Franklin downlands. It comprises a substantial commercial centre and urban area surrounded by rural farm land. As the southern gateway to metropolitan Auckland it accommodates the major transport corridor of the State Highway 1, the North Island Main Trunk railway, the Watercare Services water mains from the Hunua Ranges, the energy corridor for the Kapuni and Maui natural gas lines, and the high voltage electricity transmission lines. It also contains Ardmore Aerodrome. This is a general aviation airfield which has had in the recent past, the greatest number of air traffic movements of any airfield in New Zealand and is still, by any measure, a very busy airfield.
- 1.2** Papakura’s “gateway” and “corridor” function is emphasised by its position between the Manukau Harbour and Hunua. These two features are of great cultural and historic significance and are the main physical structuring elements in the District.
- 1.3** The total area of the District is approximately 120 sq km of which about 100 sq km is rural. Of the rural areas about 40 sq km lie east of the Drury faultline, comprising the Hunua foothills. The land is rolling to steep with extensive indigenous forest areas. It is a significant landscape feature which forms a bulwark between the Drury and Ardmore lowlands and Hunua. The north-west slopes facing the motorway are particularly prominent features which are favoured for rural-residential development. The other significant feature is the presence of mineral resources which are being exploited by the Stevensons’ and Winstones’ quarries for high grade metal aggregate.
- 1.4** The balance of the District (approximately 60 sq km) is mainly gently undulating to flat, good quality pastoral land, generally comprised of high quality soils. About 5% of this area is being used for horticultural purposes, with particular emphasis on the greenhouse vegetable and floricultural activities. Other features of the lowland parts include the Ardmore Aerodrome (mentioned above), Drury Gliding Field, Karaka Horse Sales Centre, Takanini Training Track and associated activity. About one third (approximately 20 sqkm) of this land will be progressively urbanised. Management of this land will have regard to its expected urbanisation.
- 1.5** Pastoral farming remains a significant, though declining, activity in the lowland part. Less than 30 dairy farms remain. The character of the lowland part as expressed in the interaction between land use and landholding patterns, varies considerably in the District and tends to reflect the different planning strategies of the former Manukau City and Franklin County District Schemes. The area south of Drury, Takanini, and to a lesser extent the Karaka and Hingaia areas, has been fragmented into 2 hectare to 4 hectare lots. While the landholding pattern in Karaka is still weighted towards holdings 20 hectares and greater, underlying this is a pattern of Certificates of Title which is more fragmented. This is also a feature of parts of the adjoining northern Franklin District. The Ardmore-Clevedon Valley is of a different character with relatively larger holdings in an open landscape still predominating.

- 1.6** Much of the land in the lower reaches of the Papakura Stream, Slippery Creek and Hingaia Stream is subject to flooding and requires special consideration in terms of the type of activities which are permitted. In the north of the District (especially in the Takanini area) a high water table on the peat lands contributes to the likelihood of surface water retention near Papakura Stream.