

2 Current Situation



Franklin is a rural district. It has been epitomised for many Aucklanders by the shops of the market gardens along the old State Highway 1 over the Bombay Hills, and the presence of the New Zealand Steel mill at Glenbrook, the largest industrial site in the Region. Over the last 30 years or so, Franklin's position close to growing metropolitan Auckland has seen mounting pressure for rural and coastal living, often in competition for land in pastoral and horticultural use. This growth poses challenges to identity, landscape character, environmental quality, the district's historic heritage, economic productivity and infrastructure like water supply and sewerage and other community services.

This strategy has been developed in response to these urban and rural land development pressures. It reflects the need to proactively manage the expected population growth and its associated demand for a range of housing options, employment opportunities, retail choice, recreational and leisure facilities, entertainment, and social and community-related facilities to meet local aspirations and regional and national responsibilities.

The starting point for strategy development was a stocktake of the current situation. The following sections discuss the District's population, economy, infrastructure, environment, and cultural heritage.

2.1 Population

Franklin is a complex mix of urban, rural and coastal settlements, and rural living with 56,480 people living in Franklin District in 2004 (accounting for 4.3% of the Auckland Region's population). Nearly half (26,017, 46%) lived in Franklin's three main towns of Pukekohe, Waiuku and Tuakau; 19,100 lived in rural areas outside towns, villages and hamlets and 11,410 lived in Franklin's villages and hamlets.

The main characteristics of the population were:

- the majority of residents (64.7%) were in the working age groups (15-64 years), with a further 25.5% children (0-14 years) and 9.8% in the 'retirement' age groups (65 years and over);
- there were proportionally fewer residents aged 15-29 years (17.0%) than in the Auckland Region (21.6%) or the country as a whole (20.1%) This reflects, in part, the absence of large tertiary education providers, and fewer job opportunities for school leavers than elsewhere;
- the District was ethnically less diverse than the Auckland Region. New Zealand European and Maori groups made up 73.8% and 13.6% of the population respectively. Pacific Island, Asian, and Other ethnicities made up 6.5% of the population, compared with 25.4% of the Auckland Region's total population;
- Maori, Pacific Island and Asian populations are more likely to be living in Franklin's towns (30.7% of Tuakau's population are Maori, for example), while New Zealand Europeans are fairly evenly distributed throughout the District;
- Franklin residents had lower rates of tertiary and higher education qualifications than for the Auckland Region as a whole;
- the average personal income for Franklin's residents in 2001 was close to the average for the Auckland Region (\$27,260 and \$27,782 respectively);
- in 2001, one third (16,710, 32%) of Franklin's residents were people who did not live in the District in 1996.

Franklin's residents lived in 19,860 households, about 4.4% of the Auckland Region's households. Nearly half (46%) of these households were located in Franklin's three main towns. About 33% of households were located in Franklin's rural areas, with the balance in Franklin's villages and hamlets (21%).

The key characteristics of Franklin District's household profile were:

- mean household size of 2.84 persons;
- just over half (51.8%) of the District's households were one and two person households; 34.2% were 3-4 person households, with the rest (14.0%) being larger at five persons or more;
- Franklin had more two parent families and couples than Auckland Region (46.4% and 37.6% respectively);
- one parent families are more likely to be located in Franklin's towns (especially Tuakau) than elsewhere in the District;
- the mean household income was \$59,739 in 2001, close to mean household income for Auckland Region residents; and
- a higher share of Franklin's households earned \$50,001 or more per year compared with the Regional average (43.9% and 38.7% respectively) while a smaller share of Franklin households earned under \$30,000 (20.8% and 25.1% respectively).

2.1.1 Population growth

The population of the district grew by 35.8% between 1991 and 2004, from 41,796 to 56,480, Table 2.1. Nearly half of this growth occurred in the towns (48.4%). It is perhaps symptomatic of the development pressure on the District that over one third (35.8%) occurred in Franklin's rural areas outside towns, villages and hamlets.

Between 1991 and 2004, Pukekohe grew fastest of the towns (41.5%) adding 4521 people, while Tuakau lagged well behind the district average with 25% growth, adding 640 people. Nearly one third (30%) of all population growth in the District between 1991 and 2004 was in Pukekohe.

The fastest growing villages between 1991 and 2004 were Waiuku Beach, Clarks Beach, Onewhero and Buckland. Bombay was the only village in which the population fell (-5.0%), while several other villages had below average growth, most notably Kingseat (3%) and Glenbrook Beach (13%). Most hamlets experienced growth that was slower than the District wide average or population decline, with the notable exceptions including Hunua, Te Toro, and Te Hihi. Growth in four of the rural areas was ahead of the district average with North Coastal (63.2%) and North East Inland (57.1%) between them adding 2001 people, 14.3% of the growth in the District.



Table 2.1 Population growth 1991-2004

	Population			Growth %	% District Growth
	1991	2004	Growth		
Pukekohe	10890	15411	4521	41.5%	30.8%
Waiuku	5487	7433	1946	35.5%	13.3%
Tuakau	2532	3173	641	25.3%	4.4%
Towns	18909	26017	7108	37.6%	48.4%
Clarks Beach	813	1,231	418	51.4%	2.8%
Pokeno	438	584	146	33.3%	1.0%
Waiau Beach	264	413	149	56.3%	1.0%
Onewhero	552	799	247	44.8%	1.7%
Buckland	243	346	103	42.4%	0.7%
Patumahoe	447	633	186	41.6%	1.3%
All Villages	4677	6123	1446	30.9%	9.8%
Hunua	123	337	214	173.7%	1.5%
Te Toro	105	190	85	81.1%	0.6%
Te Hihi	516	740	224	43.4%	1.5%
All Hamlets	4413	5287	874	19.8%	6.0%
North Coastal	1617	2640	1023	63.2%	7.0%
North East Inland	1887	2965	1078	57.1%	7.3%
South East Inland	759	1,096	337	44.4%	2.3%
East Coastal	165	237	72	43.5%	0.5%
All Rural	13797	19053	5256	38.1%	35.8%
District	41796	56480	14684	35.1%	

2.1.2 Age Structure

Significant changes can be anticipated in the age structure of the Franklin population. The natural ageing of the population can be expected to result in strong growth in the older age groups. This would result in corresponding changes in household consumption and expenditure patterns, particularly in terms of health services. The ageing of the population is also expected to see greater propensity to live in towns rather than smaller settlements or rural areas, to ensure ready access to hospital and health services, other household services and public transport.

2.1.3 Household composition

While the population is increasing, the average household size is decreasing, falling from 2.86 in 2001 to 2.80 in 2004. This trend is expected to continue, meaning that in future Franklin will require more dwellings than in the past for a given increase in population. The decreasing household size is due to a range of factors including an aging population, and smaller family sizes.

2.1.4 Lifestyle Trends

Changing lifestyle and community expectations throughout the Auckland Region will continue to impact on future growth within the Franklin District. The District continues to experience significant pressures from the Auckland population and other areas wishing to live in a rural or coastal setting. Significant population growth has been occurring in northern areas of Franklin.

Changing lifestyles will also change the type of houses people want to live in, the location and demand for services such as shops, schools and recreational facilities. It may also result in changes to the shape and make-up of Franklin's rural communities. Farming communities have been focused on rural villages such as Patumahoe, Onewhero, and Mangatangi. These villages have typically had basic community facilities such as a school, community hall and a church. Other needs and requirements have generally been sourced from the larger towns such as Pukekohe.

2.2 Economic Activity

2.2.1 Structure of the Franklin economy

The structure of the Franklin economy reflects its role within the regional economy, and its local resources. Franklin is economically strong in horticulture and pastoral farming (reflecting its land resource), in manufacturing (in particular, the Glenbrook Steel Mill and adding value to farm produce), and in construction (supported by population growth). The economy is weaker in the service sector.

Overall, the District is a net exporter in agriculture and horticulture, forestry and fishing, mining and manufacturing, as well as utilities and construction. However, across all other sectors, Franklin is a net importer, and has employment levels considerably below self-sufficiency, indicating leakage of demand outside the District.

This leakage of demand is particularly evident in retail and wholesale trade, accommodation, transport, business and household services, and government services. It is, however, predictable given that:

- the economy is relatively small (with only three rural service towns);
- Franklin is close to the very much larger economy of metropolitan Auckland;
- many of the Franklin workforce are employed elsewhere in Auckland Region.

For many service activities, the Franklin market is simply not large enough to justify local offices or facilities. It is more cost effective to service Franklin's demand from Manukau City, Auckland City or Papakura. This will change as population grows. However, the general trend in many service industries of increasing centralization of activity and increasing outlet size, means that proportion of service demand met locally is likely to increase only slowly over time.



2.2.2 Key Clusters/Sectors

The combination of fertile soils, climate and the proximity to Auckland, has meant that agriculture and horticulture have long been the main-stay of Franklin's economy. In 2004, agriculture, forestry and fishing employed 31% of the workforce (5,700 jobs) in 2,760 businesses. Vegetable growing accounted for 38% of these jobs, followed by services to agricultural services (19%) and dairy farming (11%).

A range of factors will influence the future profile of agriculture and horticulture activities in Franklin, including:

- world commodity prices,
- exchange rates,
- environmental/climate change,
- Fonterra Company policy and product mix,
- the extent to which productive land is converted to other uses eg lifestyle blocks and urban expansion,
- trends in the horticulture sector towards fewer, larger growers
- the degree to which large and continuous areas of productive land are retained
- skill shortages, and
- seasonal labour challenges.

domestic market

resource management framework

sustainable practices

After agriculture and horticulture, the manufacturing sector is the next largest sector in the District's economy with 17% of employment (3,070 jobs). A significant proportion of manufacturing relates to processing agricultural produce that is grown locally, and is largely dependent on this local supply base. Basic steel and manufacturing is the largest sub-sector, employing just under half (43%, 1,330 ECs) of manufacturing employees in 2004. Glenbrook Steel Mill is the largest single employer in the District, producing for both domestic and international markets.

A range of factors will influence the future profile of manufacturing in Franklin, including:

- the presence and expansion of New Zealand Steel in Glenbrook;
- growth in the residential sector; and
- exchange rates (strengthening of the NZ dollar).

innovation and added value activity

Council land use policy

The activities which serve the local population, such as retail trade (12%, 2,150 jobs), construction (6%, 1,140 jobs) and education (6%, 1,100 jobs) accounted for approximately 25% of employment. Overall, fewer of Franklin's residents are employed in 'white collar' occupations (42.9%) than the Regional average (57.8%).

2.2.3 Niche Clusters

Enterprise Franklin has extensively researched the growth potential of a range of niche clusters. The most significant of these are the automotive and the equine industries. With a long history of motor racing at Pukekohe, there is a greater concentration of automotive activity and jobs in Franklin than would be expected, especially motor vehicle manufacturing, which is twice as likely to locate in Franklin District than the Auckland Region as a whole. There is scope for the cluster to expand further, although the district has lost some profile with the end of the elite motor races (V8 New Zealand Grand Prix) at Pukekohe.

Thoroughbred and sport horses are the two most significant equine industries in Franklin, with high export value, strong infrastructure and a concentration of stakeholders. The New Zealand Equine Industry Training Organisation has also been based in Buckland since 2003. There were 150 businesses employing 88 ECs directly in the horse industry in 2004. However, the industry as a whole is likely to be larger given the supporting industries which are more general in their services, and the large number of smaller enterprises.

Both sectors are small in employment terms, yet contribute significantly to Franklin's economy and have competitive advantages over other industries in Franklin. There may also be other industries that could develop into significant clusters.

2.2.4 Journeys to Work

It is unsurprising given Franklin's proximity to the large metropolitan Auckland economy that in 2001 half (49%) of residents' work trips were to places of work outside the District. Twenty two percent of these 9,810 outward journey-to-work trips were to Manukau City, followed by Auckland City (19%) and Papakura District (12%) while the destination of 46% of trips was undefined.

There was an inflow of 1,870 work trips by people living outside the District (20% of the outflow) in 2001. The majority of workers came from Papakura (34%) and Manukau City (33%), with 22% also coming from Auckland City. Many of the non-residents (40%) worked in Pukekohe, with 16% in Glenbrook and 5% in Waiuku.

2.2.5 Drivers of Future Economic Growth

Several factors are driving long-term economic change in Franklin including:

- Franklin's proximity to Auckland, and its potential to accommodate a share of Auckland's rapid population growth. The scale and location of population growth is critical. The overall amount of population growth will determine the opportunity for businesses to serve household needs, while the geographic distribution of growth will determine the location of household service outlets. However, changes in the population service sector toward fewer, larger outlets serving larger markets may see an increasing share of Franklin's population needs being met outside the District;
- Franklin's role in the regional economy, including its capacity to accommodate employment growth and/or offer an alternative business location;



- the underlying strength of agriculture and horticulture enterprises, supported by good climatic and land quality, and Franklin's proximity to the domestic market in Auckland and the port facilities for exports;
- challenges to the primary production sector by competing demands for residential and lifestyle land;
- changes in the primary processing and service sectors. Dairy and meat processing is likely to concentrate into fewer, larger plants each requiring large catchment areas. This trend may put pressure on Franklin's processing facilities given the limited size of the farm land resource;
- sectors that have competitive advantages from location, natural resources, or the District's skills base;
- growth in technology and skills which provide greater opportunity to add value to goods and services; and
- changes in the business service sectors, toward fewer, larger outlets or facilities serving larger numbers of businesses, especially based on technological change and economies of scale.

Ability of the District to cultivate, attract and retain highly skilled talent.

2.3 Water supply, wastewater and stormwater

The urban communities in the District are serviced by:

- 13 reticulated water supply schemes,
- ten reticulated wastewater schemes, and
- ten stormwater schemes

Wastewater disposal from rural dwellings and isolated properties not connected to FDC's Reticulated Schemes are mainly handled by traditional septic tank ground soakage systems.

An assessment of the water supplies, wastewater systems and stormwater schemes has highlighted a range of issues related to resource availability, asset development levels, operations and future development.

Perhaps the most significant change will be a need for land based disposal of wastewater, driver for change, arising from obligation under the Resource Management Act to take into account Iwi Management Plans. The "*Waikato Iwi Management Plan, Manuka*", for instance, includes commentary on the issues, policies and implementation matters relating to water. Policy one of this plan is "*Huakina will, to the best of its ability, protect the physical, cultural and spiritual integrity of the waters of the Manuka and its catchments*". In implementing this policy, Huakina will, for example, be guided by these principles:

- "No point source discharges, treated or untreated, are to be discharged directly to waterways";
- "Discharges must go through the land before entering a waterway"; and
- "Stormwater systems must be developed and/or improved to collect and treat pollutants".

2.3.1 Water Supply

The Aqualinc report (February 2006) states that "*Global water balance for South Auckland Region shows it is relatively "water rich" with a positive water balance*". While this applies to the wider area, the situation in parts of Franklin is less rosy:

- the groundwater balance for the Pukekohe water resource zone shows that the sustainable limit on abstraction from the Kaawa formation will be reached by 2025 at the latest. This was based on the ARC medium growth forecast which projected a population of 23,960 by 2025. In contrast the District Growth Strategy uses a projection of 24,786 by 2021);
- four of the six high demand streams within the water resource zones of Kingseat, Pukekohe, Ramarama and Waiuku are fully allocated;
- if the high population growth projections used in the Aqualinc report (which are close to the DGS forecasts) eventuate, then abstraction of groundwater from all known sources would be at sustainable limits by 2035 and could be as soon as 2020 in the high demand zones such as Pukekohe.

Other water resource issues in the District include:

- constrained supplies of some bores where demand can exceed sustainable flow rates during dry periods. Tuakau, for instance, has had daily demand above 2000m³ (about 10% above the resource consents for its two bores, with the balance met by storage) despite an average daily demand over the last three years of 1250m³. This peakiness of demand may hasten the need for upgrading;
- Water quality arising from agricultural activities and land use practices resulting, which lead to, for example, high nitrate levels. Regular monitoring of two artesian springs, which provide indicative nitrate levels of the aquifer, as part of the Franklin Sustainability Project between 1997-2000 revealed nitrate levels of around 85 parts per million, well above the World Health Organization recommended drinking water level of 50 parts per million. Such levels create issues both in terms of potential adverse effects on human health, surface water ecology and for market access for horticultural products.

A potential solution for Pukekohe, and other areas, is the use of Watercare's Waikato River water supply pipeline which passes through the District. A future option for rural areas could be to develop piped, low pressure, restricted water supply schemes.

In the rest of the District, about 90% of domestic water supply demand in rural, non reticulated areas is supplied from roof water storage, supplemented in times of drought by tankered water for some properties. No health problems have been reported to FDC in relation to roof water supply. It is expected that roof supply will continue to be the water supply source for most new rural residential development. New residential roof water supplies should however include water quality protection devices including first flush arrangements.

In areas where rural residential development can be economically connected to a nearby township water supply, this arrangement should be investigated. An option worthy of investigation in the more densely clustered rural residential areas is the installation of a low pressure rural water type supply. Assessment of the feasibility and economics of such a water supply standard needs to be undertaken. In both these cases involving reticulated water supply to rural residential development, rainwater tanks could still be required at least for non potable supply.



2.3.2 Wastewater

There is very little spare capacity in the existing wastewater treatment plants despite the significant investment already made in Pukekohe and environs where major growth has taken place. There are a number of issues related to wastewater beyond the discharges into the Waikato River which must be addressed including:

- the need for significant investment in the Pukekohe and Clarks Beach wastewater treatment plants to cater for development;
- in Tuakau the existing wastewater system has limited capacity. Any upgrading of the existing reticulation needs to include the existing reticulation that serves the industrial area in Bollard Road, which currently has no wastewater system. The trunk sewer serving Pukekohe also has limited capacity and will require upgrading in the near future if any significant growth occurs;
- seasonal demands on the wastewater scheme in various locations such as Port Waikato and Awhitu Peninsula which have large influxes of people over summer holiday periods;
- the Council does not have a trade waste bylaw and associated trade waste consenting process to control liquid waste discharges from trade premises; and
- a number of the treated wastewater discharges require new resource consents in the near future.

The lack of a trade waste bylaw will be addressed shortly. The possibility of developing small cluster-type sewerage schemes and associated treatment plants for small communities which might later be integrated into a larger scheme is also being considered.

It is expected that onsite treatment and disposal of sewage from residential dwellings in rural areas will continue to be by way of approved treatment and ground disposal systems. In some areas this is likely to include small package plant treatment plants as well as approved modern septic tanks. The ARC's Technical Publication 58 and the Environment Waikato's Rules in the Transitional Regional Plan will continue to set the requirements for onsite sewage disposal. As an alternative to onsite disposal, small private wastewater schemes may be appropriate in areas where there is relatively dense rural cluster type development. Based on the comments and concerns expressed by iwi, wastewater and stormwater must have contact with land before being discharged into waterways.

2.3.3 Stormwater

Urban stormwater services are provided in Pukekohe, Waiuku, Tuakau, Clarks Beach, Glenbrook Beach. Elsewhere stormwater facilities are "patchy" developed on a case by case basis depending on what is achievable in a specific location.

Stormwater planning is well advanced throughout the District. Initial stormwater management catchment plans were produced in 2001 for Pukekohe North and Pukekohe South catchments, Waiuku, Tuakau, Clarks Beach, Glenbrook Beach and Pokeno. These have all been lodged with the respective regional councils and comprehensive discharge consent conditions have been met. Subsequently, the ARC

has granted consents for Pukekohe North and South although legal processes are still being completed. Current works are underway to upgrade the Integrated Catchment Management Plans in accordance with the ARC's Proposed Regional Air, Land and Water Plan. Rural development stormwater requirements are addressed through FDC's Building Consent and subdivision process.

Outstanding stormwater issues being addressed by the Council include:

- flooding risk has previously been underestimated in what are now new development areas,
- stormwater runoff from permitted activity land use changes.

2.4 Solid Waste

Only part of the District has a solid waste management service. A weekly kerbside collection of household recycling bins is being implemented in Pukekohe, Waiuku, and Tuakau townships and there are transfer stations in Waiuku and Pukekohe. The ARC's hazard waste mobile collection service periodically visits Pukekohe, Waiuku, and Tuakau to collect unwanted domestic hazardous waste. The Council is seeking to extend the duration of stay and number of visits. All solid waste collected in Franklin is taken to the Hampton Downs landfill in the Waikato District.

New facilities and services will be provided in rural areas as the rate of rural development dictates in accordance with the Council's *Draft Solid Waste Management Plan 2006*.

2.5 Electricity

Electricity is supplied to all areas of the District. Currently the power companies are obliged to provide power to consumers even when it is uneconomic to do so. In the medium-term future this requirement may be removed. The current strategy of the power provider is that they will not reduce service, but there will be areas where the cost to the consumer for supply may be higher than in the past.

The District is crossed by transmission lines linking Huntly and Auckland and a major transmission corridor through Hunua for existing lines between Otahuhu and Whakamaru. The Council has sought to have its sustainable development obligations and aspirations recognised in planning for a new line between Otahuhu and Whakamaru by undergrounding the lines through much of the District.

New technologies for the sustainable generation of power are being advanced globally with the emphasis on renewable resources. In the future (given Franklin's proximity to metropolitan Auckland), Franklin may be identified as a desirable location some of these emerging forms of power generation. Any proposal will need to be assessed on its merits and against a range of criteria.



2.6 Telecommunications

Most of the District is serviced by land telephone lines, except where the land owners and occupiers have chosen not to seek a connection. The District also has partial coverage of mobile phone services.

The main issue for the future development of telecommunication in the District will be the coverage and quality of broadband internet services. There are two providers with Telecom using its existing lines across the District and Wired Country providing high capacity fibre and wireless connections to a significant portion of northern Franklin (there is no coverage in the Hunua Ranges, the East Coast, North-west Awhitu or south of about Opuatia).

2.7 Gas

Gas reticulation in Franklin is modest. The Natural Gas Corporation (NGC) has major transmission lines through the District and but the NGC/Vector-owned local gas lines are mainly limited to the Pukekohe, Tuakau, and the Kingseat and Ramarama areas. NGC have tentative plans to install another transmission line through the same corridor as the existing line. Generally, if the demand is large enough to provide an economic return for the supplier, then infrastructure may be provided (with it clearly being more economic to service areas close to the main transmission lines).

2.8 Transport

The transport system in Franklin probably meets quite well the Community Outcome of "Franklin: Easy to get around" for those with cars and the money to meet rising fuel bills. The long term sustainability of this position, however, is questionable in the face of predicted further rises in oil prices, and the impact of vehicle emissions.

The dependence on the car, which is used for 95.5% of all trips in Franklin, is high even for a rural area. It reflects, in part, a public transport system that is virtually non-existent and a footpath and cycle network in urban centres which is modest and haphazard.

Overall the transport system currently fails to achieve a significant number of the community outcomes particularly:

- 2.2 **Public transport is available that meets the District's needs and encourages patronage**
- 2.2.1 Regular services to meet commuter and resident needs;
- 2.2.2 Rail stops are provided where people need them;
- 2.2.3 The use of public transport is built up to reduce road congestion;
- 2.2.4 Train and bus stations are well designed, safe and comfortable, with secure parking available;
- 2.2.5 Council will take a regional approach to District transport.

(Footnotes)

¹ The main characteristics of the Local Connector Network are that it provides "All stops" services that generally connect residential areas with their local centre; provides connections to Rapid Transport Network (RTN) and/or Quality Transport Network (QTN); emphasises coverage and accessibility from low-density areas; connects rural towns and settlements; and operates 5.30am-12.30am for services feeding the RTN and QTN and 6.30am sdd-11.00pm for other services

2.3 The District and its amenities are easily accessible to all groups

- 2.3.1 Adequate and secure public parking is available in towns;
- 2.3.2 Footpaths are safe, suitable for all users, and maintained;
- 2.3.3 Town centres are accessible to all;
- 2.3.4 Buildings are designed to be accessible for all users.

2.8.1 Public Transport

Public transport, both bus and rail, is almost non-existent in the District. This is reflected in the mode share figures with the public transport mode share at slightly over 1% (with the walk/cycle share at 3.4%).

There is only one functioning railway station in the District (Pukekohe), with limited frequency of services, limited destinations served, and protracted journey times. There is therefore, a great need for improving the rail and bus stations and services in the District. Currently, Pukekohe has a "Local Connector Network" service level planned for 2016 in the ARTA (2006) Sustainable Transport Plan.¹

2.8.2 Rooding network

Franklin District has a roading network of over 1,600 kilometres, of which 253 kilometres are still unsealed. The Council's "seal extension programme" seals 5-7 kilometres of loose metal roads per year.

Franklin has an above-average incidence of crashes at intersections. Transit New Zealand, which is responsible for SH1, SH2 and SH22, also recognises that limited passing opportunities on parts of the rural state highway network lead to driver frustration and accidents. Transit plans to add one passing lane on SH22 north of Pukekohe over the next three years and is undertaking significant improvements on SH2 near Mangatawhiri.

Transit has also indicated that SH22 will eventually need to be four-laned between Drury and the turn-off to Glenbrook and Waiuku, but, at this stage no provision has been made for this project in its 10-year plan.

2.8.3 (In)Accessibility to the community

It has been recognised in Franklin's draft Walking and Cycling Strategy that the existing footpath network within urban centres is minimal and haphazard. At present it is highly evident that town centres are accessible by car only. Mobility issues are difficult to deal with retrospectively so they need to be dealt with a part of an integrated approach to land use and transport planning. The availability of footpaths and cycleways and the suitability of roads for all users (not just motorists) will be key considerations for future planning to integrate alternative modes of transport.

Pukekohe was nominated as one of 18 town centres in the Region intended in the Regional Land Transport Strategy to be made more walkable by 2016. Pukekohe has subsequently been identified in the ARTA (2006) Sustainable Transport Plan as one of the town centres where walking, cycling and travel behaviour change initiatives are most likely to be successful.



It is intended that these centres will be given a high priority for walking improvements and will also be priority areas for Travel Plans for workplaces, schools and institutions in the vicinity, and for the preparation of Town Centre Plans. It is also intended that any safety problems identified within the town centre and on key walking and cycling routes to the centre will be addressed to remove actual and perceived barriers to safe and secure travel.

2.9 Environment

2.9.1 Landforms

Franklin is endowed with a rich and diverse variety of natural landforms, geological features and soils. Important features of the District include:

- its extended coastlines including the Awhitu Peninsula, Seagrove on the Manukau Harbour, and the Miranda area which has Ramsar status;
- the Waikato River;
- the Hunua Ranges;
- wetlands, including the Whangamarino Wetland which has Ramsar status;
- the Chenier plain at Kaiaua; and
- the volcanic relics including cones, tuff rings, and soils.

The natural landscapes of Franklin are of significant value to Franklin's community. However, the history of settlement within Franklin has had little regard for retaining the natural features of the landscape. Areas such as Pukekohe Hill, for example, are under strong pressure from development. Other areas of high amenity, including the coasts, have been subject to development that is having an impact on the very ecological and aesthetic quality that attracts people these environments in the first place (at the same time endangering/destroying significant cultural sites).

2.9.2 Development threatening environmental quality

It is evident that development in the District has impacted on natural environments. As development intensifies, open space and natural habitats are lost. These adverse effects can be summarised as:

- destruction of natural resources such as streams, ecosystems, habitats, amenity, and landscapes through land clearance and development;
- earthworks resulting in erosion, and sediment deposition in water bodies.
- increase in stormwater run-off duration and intensity directly due to the increase in impermeable surfaces;
- urban expansion encroaching on prime agricultural land with loss of productive soils and reduced visual separation between rural and urban areas, adversely impacting on both urban and rural amenity; and
- intensification of rural land use with pollution of waterways, riparian zone destruction, soil disturbance, chemical use, and irrigation.

2.9.3 Development threatening rural character

One of the main issues of concern identified by Franklin District is the increasing fragmentation of land and loss of rural character. This issue has been raised by the community through a number of forums and processes, but most notable is Franklin's Vision, Mission and Outcome Statements. The value of a countryside environment comes through very strongly, particularly the Mission Statement which makes the distinction between settlements, and the surrounding countryside, and the Vision, which highlights the importance of a rural environment.

The importance of containing urban sprawl and the protection of rural amenity has been highlighted at a regional level - both in the the Auckland Regional Growth Strategy and the Auckland Regional Policy Statement. The rural areas of Franklin have a regional and national role in both rural amenity and as a productive resource.

There can be a tension between private and public interests in relation to rural character and amenity. The challenge of sustainable management and development is to get alignment between public and private. It is often contended that subdivision of a single site has a minimal effect on rural character. However, the cumulative effect of *ad hoc* subdivision (even when undertaken as a response to environmental gains such as riparian protection) is highly detrimental to rural character.

Adverse effects result from the built structures such as dwellings and sheds, additional impermeable areas including driveways, and features like "statement" gateways and urban styles of fencing. On a broader scale the dispersed style of development can result in:

- housing that compromise visual quality particularly on coasts and escarpments, but also over the wider countryside
 - ambiguous neighbourhood forms reducing connections to communities
 - a lack of defining elements in the landscape or streetscape, reducing a sense of identity, and failing to draw attention to the unique qualities of place
- undermining compact settlement objectives
- segregation of uses into isolated pods; and
 - monotonous housing forms.

If not managed, rural lifestyle not only has the potential to inefficiently use good quality productive land, but it will also undermine the very rural character that attracts rural lifestyle in the first place. There are other issues which can accompany this form of development such as reverse sensitivity issues, increased car movements, demand for wider roads, negative effects on landscape, and successive reduction of lot size. However there continues to be the demand for this form of lifestyle and if located in appropriate areas, there is a place for it within Franklin.

The key is locating it in appropriate places that minimize the impacts. However, under the Rural Plan Change, it is proposed that newly created sites of 4000—8000m² lots can be subdivided off the parent lot with very few controls on location in the rural area. While much of the potential subdivision may not be realised in the short term, this poses a significant risk to rural character. In particular, placement of the new dwellings needs to be strictly controlled in relation to the roadways. While locating dwellings along the roads may be cheaper, a line of houses will quickly and irrevocably destroy rural character.



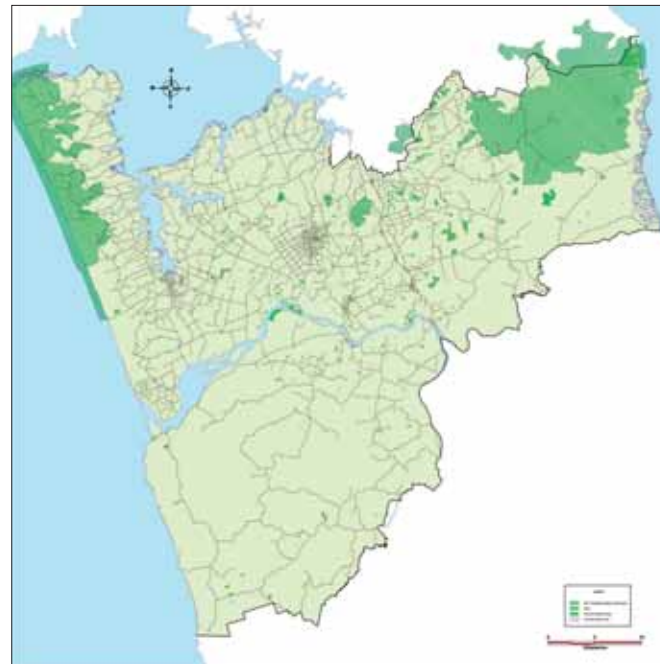
2.10 Historic Heritage

Communities derive much of their identity from their history with tangible evidence including buildings, sites and historic neighbourhoods. Preserving heritage features helps to maintain a connection to the community history in the face of rapid growth.

Franklin has many distinctive places that reinforce a sense of place and identity for local communities through the historic and cultural associations they provide. Traditionally the town centres are symbolic of the historic heart, however these places include natural landscapes, streetscapes, buildings, images and identity, and other structures and forms.

While the District has a rich and varied historic heritage, it has unfortunately been undervalued and is being destroyed, in part, as a result of inadequate survey of historic (particularly archaeological) sites. It has been estimated that perhaps only 25% of the District has been properly surveyed and that many important features go unrecognised.

Map 2.1 ARC Outstanding Natural Landscapes



Map 2.2 Land Use Capacity

