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# **Urban Growth Management in New Zealand**

What factors have influenced urban growth management policies in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions over the period 1986 to 2009?

*A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of*

*Master of Resource and Environmental Planning*

*at Massey University, Manawatu, New Zealand.*

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**2013**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to thank Dr Matthew Henry for his continuous supervision and support over the last 2 years. Thank you for the time and effort spent reviewing chapters and consistently meeting with me via Skype to discuss the ins and outs of this project. Without this support this thesis would not have been possible.

I would also like to thank my parents and my sister, Laura. Your support and encouragement over the past two years have kept me going, and you have all boosted my motivation at various points throughout the project. Laura, it has been so great undertaking this project at the same time you are completing your own thesis, celebrating the little milestones and seeking advice and reassurance throughout this journey.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues and Managers at Hastings District Council for allowing me the opportunity to complete my Master's degree. Thank you for granting me a couple of hours off work each week to meet with Matt and 'chip away' at this thesis. This has been invaluable to the completion of this project.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Urban growth management is a planning concept that emerged in the 1960s, and is mainly associated with planning in the United States at that time. It is linked with concerns around urban sprawl and more recently sustainability. Urban growth management has been utilised extensively in the United States, in particular in Portland, as well as Australia and New Zealand. However, it is reasonable to say that the focus on sustainability in the last two decades has given more impetus to the notion of urban limits, and the question of density (Williams, 2004).

The purpose of urban growth management policy or ‘urban containment’ as it is often termed is largely to curb urban sprawl, retain rural land for productive use, reduce travel time and costs, and in some cases maintain the economic vitality of the urban core. Typically, policies will advocate the development of brownfield sites over greenfield sites on the periphery (Williams, 2004). The smart growth concept is a more recent form of urban growth management, influencing modern planning since its emergence in the 1990s (Gillham, 2002).

The research question is thus:

*‘What factors have influenced urban growth management policies in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions over the period 1986 to 2009?’*

It is believed that this work has not yet been undertaken in New Zealand, and therefore this topic was seen as an ideal contribution to the planning subject. Both areas have recently developed urban development strategies, in a sub-regional context. Moreover, both regions have experienced high rates of population growth over recent decades (Hamilton City Council., Waikato District Council., Waipa District Council., & Environment Waikato., 2009; Tauranga City Council., Western Bay of Plenty District Council., & Environment Bay of Plenty., 2007). The research seeks to find out how each region’s approach to planning for urban development has changed over time.

The urbanisation of productive land or the conversion of high quality soils to urban uses reduces the potential for those soils to be utilised for production. Subsequently there will be a potential reduction in primary production exports which contribute significantly to the national economy. Rutledge et al. (2010) analysed urbanisation trends and their impact on soil resource availability in New Zealand and found that the highly versatile soils (Land Use Capability Class 1 and 2 soils) were experiencing the highest percentage of conversion to urban use. The Waikato is one of four regions where these classes of soils are predominant in New Zealand. Rutledge et al. (2010) argue that if the trends they observed continue, huge losses in the availability of these soils will occur over the next 50 to 100 years. Moreover, the effects of climate change, population growth and other resource capacity issues are making access to this type of land even more important, particularly for food production.

Urban growth management is the aperture to urban change, and as such is highly relevant for planning now and in the future. Urban growth strategies are intended to have a significant influence over land use planning, directing development into certain areas with a future state in mind. In the New Zealand context, this would typically translate into planning provisions in the District Plan as the primary means of regulating land use. Secondly, an analysis of such strategies over time can assist today's planners and policy makers to see what did or did not work in the past thereby influencing present planning policy.

Essentially this thesis describes how urban growth management policies have evolved temporally. Different cities have different issues, political, social and economic contexts which influence the development of policy, and the content of that policy.

An important consideration in undertaking research on how planning concepts are carried out in practice is the context. Healey (2013) highlights this point in discussing how planning ideas and practices are developed in a particular context, and travel into other contexts where they may not be easily applied. These ideas must therefore be situated in 'specific contexts' and one should 'understand the

complex dynamics of competing sources of ‘systemic power’ as these co-evolve with the capacity for localised learning and experimentation’ (Healey, 2013, p. 1523). In other words, it is necessary to critically reflect on how a particular idea or concept will be applicable in the current context and whether the social, political and economic environment is comparable with that of the origin of the concept.

Of key importance are the actors involved and the institutional context and how this may influence policy development. Indeed, in providing an explanation for their interest in the implementation of Smart Growth planning Knaap and Haccou (2007) highlight that while European and American cities have similar values in terms of land ownership and property rights, their histories, government structures, and roles and responsibilities differ. The context itself shapes the use of ideas, such as Smart Growth, such that the concept can include a plethora of policies tailored to specific contexts. Therefore, while comparisons can be made, the differences in circumstances must be acknowledged.

### **Methodology**

The research topic and methodology emerged after reading the research of Diana Maccallum and Diane Hopkins (2011), which looked at the plethora of urban growth strategies for the city of Perth over the period 1955-2010, and that of Daniel Galland (2012) which looked at the contextual driving forces in spatial planning in Denmark over a 50 year period. Maccallum and Hopkins’ (2011) research was based on the idea that there has been a ‘paradigm shift’ in modern planning such that the traditional notion of zoning, and space as a function for land use, has been usurped by the concept of space being influenced by social developments (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011). Galland’s (2012) research was based on the notion that spatial planning has evolved from a regulatory position towards a more strategic role in the planning field. Hence both pieces of research contribute to the overarching theme of evolution in planning policy. The exact methodology is outlined in a later chapter; however the key aspects of analysis can be highlighted here.

The primary research method of this thesis is discourse analysis of a range of strategies and plans for the two case study areas. Maccallum and Hopkins (2011) have developed a framework for the analysis of such plans. First, the framework analyses the substance of the plan. A key question is the role of the plan, and how it justifies certain policies or directions. Further points of analysis of substance include how the content portrays causal and other relationships between certain phenomena and investigating what information is considered important in the plan, or problematic. The framework then looks at the participants in the plan development and implementation, from its authors through to analysis of the involvement of the public and other stakeholders. The third aspect of the analysis is structure. This involves investigation of the how the plan is organised. Finally, the framework analyses the presentation of the plan – its lay out and the use of images, text and maps.

The methodology also drew on Galland's (2012) framework to provide a more in-depth analysis of the contextual factors that were evident in the different growth strategies over the period 1986-2009. Galland's framework has three main categories of analysis being contextual driving forces, parameters of state spatial selectivity and layers of policy discourse. Contextual driving forces include the economic, political and environmental forces at play in a given context. 'Parameters of state spatial selectivity' refers to the scale at which a particular intervention has been targeted, thereby excluding certain spaces or locations from the policy framework. Finally, layers of policy discourse relates to the actual dialogue or terminology that is utilised in the document, the origins of that terminology, and how certain concepts are portrayed and given meaning.

### **Structure**

The report is structured as follows. First, there is a review of the relevant literature on urban growth management. Following this, there is a brief background chapter outlining the two case study areas, the legislative context and the structure of governance in New Zealand. Then the report presents the research methodology, leading into the results of the case study research. The case studies (Bay of Plenty and Waikato) each have their own chapter in which the results of

discourse analysis are set out. Following the case study chapters is a wider discussion of the case studies drawing on the literature in order to make some final conclusions. Finally, the report draws on the discussion chapter and the review of literature to make some closing conclusions.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Introduction**

This chapter of the thesis reviews the relevant literature on the topic of growth management. The literature reviewed here has been selected on the basis of the research question which seeks to analyse how growth management in the Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions has evolved over time. It is important to note that in this research the concept of 'growth management' is used in a wide sense with 'smart growth' viewed as an approach to growth management, rather than a separate entity. As such in some cases the terms are used interchangeably.

### **Urban Sprawl**

It is appropriate to begin with an account of urban sprawl as this is commonly a driver of growth management policy. Over the years, the term 'sprawl' has taken on different meanings for different people, and what constitutes sprawl has evolved over time (Gillham, 2002). Gillham (2002, p. 8) states that 'Sprawl (whether characterised as urban or suburban) is the typical form of most types of late-twentieth century suburban development'. Gillham (2002, p. 8) also uses the term sprawl interchangeably with 'suburbanisation' which he defines as follows: 'Suburbanisation is the spread of suburban development patterns across a region or a nation – that is, the proliferation of sprawl forms of urbanisation across a region or nation.'

An alternative definition of sprawl is provided by Squires (2002, p. 2) who states that sprawl is 'a pattern of urban metropolitan growth that reflects low-density, automobile dependent, exclusionary new development on the fringe of settled areas often surrounding a deteriorating city.' The term sprawl has been developed by academics and public officials who are dealing with the challenges brought about by uneven development (Squires, 2002). This type of development has characterised urban and metropolitan development in the United States for many decades.

Sprawl is said to occur for several reasons, some of which are covered by Gillham (2002). First, the private ownership of land means it can

easily be sold and subdivided and subsequently developed. Second, the evolution of transport technology and the ease of movement provided by the car and highways enable development at a distance from key amenities and services. Third, modern telecommunications allow residents and businesses to be located outside the central city as communication is now predominantly via phone or internet in the absence of face-to-face meetings. Finally, Gillham (2002), along with Gordon & Richardson (1997), cites zoning and planning regulations as key drivers of sprawl as traditional zoning laws have segregated land uses in order to protect land markets and public health.

Gillham's (2002) work is largely based on the United States but nevertheless provides general insight into the evolving phenomenon. Whereas sprawl was previously conceived as a suburban phenomenon, and the flight of people from the central city to the suburbs, now the situation appears to be one of polycentric cities or regions, whereby suburbs are largely self-sufficient rather than simply residential areas (Gillham, 2002). This in turn means that economically speaking, cities and suburbs are not the economic centres, it is in fact 'metropolitan regions' that are significant. These regions are multijurisdictional, and are made up of many towns and suburbs with their individual economies and social fabric. However, these towns and suburbs are part of a greater 'regional matrix of political, economic, infrastructure, and ecological systems' (Gillham, 2002, p. 20). These metropolitan regions are now merging, spatially, with neighbouring regions (Gillham, 2002).

Urban sprawl can take different forms depending on the location, but three forms are suggested by Ewing (1997):

- Leapfrog or scattered development;
- Ribbon or strip commercial or other development; and
- Large expanses of predominantly low-intensity and single-use development

However, Ewing (1997) does state that this definition is perhaps an oversimplification, and that in fact sprawl is a matter of degree; there is a fine line between scattered development (sprawl) and polycentric

development (which is a form of compact development). Furthermore, it is the impacts of development that are cause for concern, not the pattern of development itself (Ewing, 1997). Ewing (1997) adds two additional indicators of sprawl to the above list: poor accessibility and lack of public open space. Poor accessibility relates to the condition whereby residents live a great distance from non-residential activities (such as employment) with the result being poor residential accessibility; further, non-residential activities are located a distance from each other, causing residents to have to use their vehicles to move between activities (poor destination accessibility) (Ewing, 1997). Both conditions cause the travel patterns of residents to be inefficient (Ewing, 1997).

Peiser (2001) states that it is clear that the term ‘urban sprawl’ is used to refer to a wide number of situations of urban spread, and:

*‘...is used loosely to refer to all that is bad about urban growth, and narrowly to describe specific aspects of urban growth which are considered undesirable, such as discontinuous growth in advance of urban infrastructure. The problem with some of these definitions is that they are based on misconceptions about how the land market operates. Since their premise is wrong, the policies they engender are often counterproductive’ (Peiser, 2001, p. 279).*

The ‘misconceptions’ Peiser is referring to relate to how communities and planners react to urban sprawl through ‘Not In My Backyard’ (NIMBY) responses and zoning out higher density development. These mechanisms do not prevent sprawl they simply push the problem elsewhere (Peiser, 2001).

In the United States, urban sprawl is rife in many cities (Gow, 2000). According to Wilson and Song (2011) there has been a continual increase in developed land over the last two decades with an 8.3% increase between 1982 to 1987, a further 9.2% increase from 1987 to 1992, a 12.8% increase between 1992 and 1997, a 9.9% increase between 1997 and 2002, and 6.9% between 2002 and 2007 (U.S. Department of Agriculture., 2009; Wilson & Song, 2011). In 2000,

Gow (2000) reported that land areas had increased at a rate almost twice that of population growth with housing, industrial and commercial services spreading into the countryside.

The causes of urban sprawl are often linked to the development of an automobile-dependent society, the desire for more spacious living environments, and a change in demographics with more single-person households and smaller household sizes (Ewing, 1997; Gillham, 2002; Gow, 2000; Grant, 2006; Reeds, 2011; The Urban Task Force, 1999). The car in particular has made it possible for people to live further from the city centre, and commute long distances for jobs. Whereas commercial, administrative and industrial facilities were once centralised, they are now decentralised and spread throughout the city (Gow, 2000).

A further cause is also suggested to be the use of rigid zoning regulations developed and adhered to by planners (Jacobs, 1961; Levy, 2009). The provision of higher density housing in certain zones is frequently opposed by homeowners who are concerned about the effect on property values (Peiser, 2001). This is said to act as a disincentive to planners to change zoning rules to provide for higher density development, along with the reluctance to plan and pay for open space, provide for sensitive commercial development and other features of 'proper urban development' (Peiser, 2001, p. 280).. Peiser (2001) suggests that these rigid zoning rules are so inflexible that there is no room for commercial uses of any form in the residential environment, and vice versa. This of course pushes those uses into other areas.

The term 'sprawl' is commonly regarded as a negative form of urban development, with the term conjuring up notions of low density living on the periphery of cities which is subsequently seen to be an inefficient pattern of urbanisation (Couch, Leontidou, & Arnstberg, 2007). While the idea of low density living is consistent with sprawling cities, it is also reflective of the popular form of living since the 1950s and 1960s. However, Couch et al (2007, p.4) argue that this type of development should be seen as a 'process of urban change', rather than a pattern. This perspective is a more useful one

due to the fact it is the process of sprawling that leads to negative side effects and so the policy intervention must occur at the process stage of sprawl (Couch, et al., 2007). Sprawl is the process of the spreading out of activity to the periphery and away from the central city due to a fall in demand for land in the centre, and a rise in demand for land at the periphery (Couch, et al., 2007). This change in demand is driven by social, economic, and environmental pressures (Couch, et al., 2007).

The notion of urban sprawl as a ‘process’ rather than a pattern, is similar to Peiser’s (2001) argument that the basic misunderstanding of sprawl comes from the conception that land development ‘in-process’ is land development at its final state. Peiser (2001) goes on to suggest that development happens in waves:

- First wave – isolated subdivisions with large-lot homes or ‘gentleman-farms’ on septic tanks and water wells
- Second wave – characterised by fully-serviced smaller-lot subdivisions with internal roads, and some upgrades of major roads
- Third wave – characterised by commercial and industrial uses and begins to fill in the spaces between older developments
- Fourth wave – continues the infill begun in the third wave. Characterised by apartments and higher-density uses as the area is surrounded by newer development further out. Continues through subsequent economic cycles until the area is fully developed.

This process continues through redevelopment phases on brownfield sites for gentrification, higher density uses or changes in use. Peiser (2001) argues that the process of land development occurs when the land is in transition. In the earlier waves, when the land is characterised by low-density subdivisions, the outcomes are not necessarily negative. It is when the entire area is developed into one low-density subdivision that the negative outcomes are observed. Peiser (2001, p. 283) concludes that ‘A healthy land market with proper regulatory mechanisms will foster land use patterns which are

higher density in later stages of growth'. Peiser (2001) argues that too much regulation is just as bad as a lack of regulation. 'Proper' regulation needs to be balanced to ensure the land market operates efficiently (Peiser, 2001). Finally, the present phase of 'sprawl' is considered to be temporary. This suggests that planning policies need to be based on long term timeframes rather than short term reactionary policies which are based on temporary circumstances.

### **Urban Growth Management**

Urban growth management has become an increasingly common tool used by planners in cities around the world. The concept is defined by Levy (2009, p. 266) as '...the regulation of the *amount, timing, location, and character* of development'. The use of growth management plans has often been motivated by environmental concerns, as well as preservation of existing lifestyles and community amenity, providing adequate social infrastructure (for example schools and parks) for future generations, and in some cases financial reasons where communities do not want to be burdened by the costs of new development (Levy, 2009). Growth management is a policy response to urban sprawl and the many negative effects attributed to this type of development (Wilson & Song, 2011).

A further definition of growth management can be found in Gillham (2002, p. 155): '...growth management as it is understood today attempts to use planning, policy and regulatory techniques to influence the allocation of new development across a designated area.' This definition differs somewhat to the definition provided by Levy above. Levy's definition suggests a more regulatory approach to managing growth compared with the indirect approach suggested by Gillham. Regardless, the ultimate goal is to accommodate new development, preserve community character and open space resources and limit new infrastructure investments (Gillham, 2002). Examples of growth management extend back to the 1950s, with the state of Maryland implementing such policies at that time. More recently, Portland is the much-cited exemplar of urban growth management. These definitions of growth management are not wholly different from the traditional concerns of town planning, which grew

out of a concern for the effects of rapid urban growth during the industrial revolution in the nineteenth century (Wheeler, 2004).

The concept of growth management really spread in the 1970s and 1980s (Burchell, Listokin, & Galley, 2000). Growth management legislation was first enacted in Oregon in the United States in 1973 (Costa, 2005). Originally, the emphasis was on preserving environmental resources by limiting new development (Burchell, et al., 2000; Gillham, 2002). However, since the 1970s the concept is more broadly focused in terms of planning and government approaches to the concept (Burchell, et al., 2000; Gillham, 2002). The aim now is to support and coordinate the development process, with growth management being seen as a positive way of directing development in communities rather than as a method to simply restrict growth (Gillham, 2002).

According to Hamin (2003), growth management policy in the U.S. has had three waves: the first wave of the 1970s contextualised by a strong environmental movement and distrust of local government in terms of protecting existing residents from new development; the second wave of the 1980s characterised by a focus on balancing economic and environmental goals, requiring infrastructure to be available before allowing new development, and the provision of affordable housing; and the third wave of the 1990s which was focussed on the empowerment of municipal planning rather than requirements for local planning.

In terms of growth management being enshrined in legislation, it appears that this has had limited success in the United States at the State level (Hamin, 2003). There are a variety of reasons for this but they largely amount to political and economic opposition to such legislation (Hamin, 2003). Hamin (2003) notes that those States where land use law reform has occurred are generally those with the most growth along the East and West coasts of the U.S, while those where reform has been slow to occur are generally those in the 'centre' of the country where population growth is slow. Hamin (2003) suggests that a possible reason for this apparent lack of reform in the 'heartland' States, such as Iowa, is that there may be a

perception that it is unnecessary given slow population growth rates. However, this is a misconception, as according to Fulton, Pendall, Nguyen and Harrison (2001), slower growing regions urbanise with more land per new resident compared with fast growing regions. As such, land is consumed at a faster rate and density is very low.

In Australia, metropolitan planning strategies have been introduced in recent times for the five main cities (Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, and Brisbane) (Forster, 2006). All were rapidly growing in the late twentieth century and all are highly suburbanised, described as ‘doughnut cities’ (Forster, 2006, p. 173). The Australian examples are all focused on shaping future growth through the principles of containment, consolidation and centres (Forster, 2006). The concepts are outlined as follows (Forster, 2006):

- Centres – this entails concentrating suburban retail and office employment in a number of major nodes at locations well-served by public transport. High and medium density housing are then concentrated in these centres.
- Consolidation – producing higher densities more favourable to public transport than the private car, developing smaller dwellings and blocks that use less reticulated services and reducing the impact of urban expansion on surrounding ecosystems.
- Containment – the plans of Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth all incorporate formal urban growth boundaries that set limits to further development at the urban fringe, and all five plans envisage that new housing developments will make up less than half the needed net growth in dwelling numbers.

Indeed, this latter point – the imposition of urban growth boundaries – is synonymous with growth management. However, it does increasingly come under criticism with many concerned that these boundaries will simply increase house and land prices within the boundary, making housing affordability difficult (Forster, 2006). Many also oppose the idea of increased housing densities, citing the

undesirability of medium and high density housing for many people (Forster, 2006). Indeed, the political and public opposition to such policies is cited as the key reason for many governments at all levels to back down from these goals (Gillham, 2002; McGuirk & Argent, 2011). Cultural preferences for suburban living are also cited by some as a key reason that urban sprawl will not be curbed (Gordon & Richardson, 1997). However, McGuirk and Argent (2011) argue that the success of urban growth management policies is influenced by well-planned infrastructure investment and service delivery in combination with spatial planning. This includes the ability of these mechanisms to allay common criticisms of higher density development (McGuirk & Argent, 2011).

Growth management or smart growth policies are now seen by many as being most effective when implemented at the regional scale (Downs, 2001; D. Fox, 2010; Gillham, 2002). This is taken further by Daniels (2001) who states that smart growth policies will work best when collaboration occurs between the different levels of government within a regional framework. Downs (2001) argues that setting separate limits for individual localities or districts within a region simply spreads sprawl further. Further, development outside the limits must be prohibited otherwise developers will ‘leapfrog’ over the growth boundary (Downs, 2001). Fox (2010) adds to this argument in stating that a government with authority of a large area is most capable of coordinating planning and implementing the necessary regulations.

Wheeler (2004) suggests that such an approach is necessary to overcome issues around piecemeal planning which often do not have the full commitment by political leaders to the concept of planning. Setting broad goals and policy directions at higher levels of government is suggested as a way of achieving more consistent outcomes across the region, and the more detailed policy occurs at the district or local level (Wheeler, 2004). In the United States, such documents are legally binding requiring that different levels of plans be consistent with each other (Wheeler, 2004). This, according to Wheeler (2004, p. 99) puts ‘teeth into planning’.

This regional approach is considered to be a key aspect for successful growth management. Indeed, in the United States, achieving this regional approach has been problematic. The structure of local government in the US means that regional government does not have the same standing that it does in New Zealand. This is highlighted by Porter (2002, p. 158) who states that in many metropolitan regions of the US, the primary function of regional agencies is to provide a platform for the exchange of information and ‘cooperating on various endeavours of mutual interest – not unworthy functions but far short of strategic planning for metropolitan development’. Different again is Australia, where the metropolitan plans are often produced at the State government level.

### **Smart Growth**

The terms ‘growth management’ and ‘smart growth’ are often used interchangeably to mean the same thing. This is largely because many of the techniques used in growth management are tools utilised by the smart growth movement (Gillham, 2002). However, according to Howell-Moroney (2008, p. 679), smart growth is distinct from ‘growth management’ with the latter referring to ‘state-mandated comprehensive planning with some kind of state level review.’ Smart growth on the other hand is much broader in its application in policy, and goes further than this mandatory comprehensive planning (Howell-Moroney, 2008).

The term ‘smart growth’ first appeared in American media in 1997 in relation to debates over ‘Smart Growth Legislation’ in the state of Maryland (Daniels, 2001). The driver of the concept was the desire to control the metropolitan growth of states and to this end the movement sought compact cities, economically efficient urban development, preservation of open space, limited outward expansion of cities, promotion of infill development, and redesigning cities similar to that promoted by the New Urbanism (Wheeler, 2004). A key motivation was reducing infrastructure costs for local government (Wheeler, 2004). Downs (2005, p. 367) confirms that the concept originally emerged in the planning discipline as a reaction to undesirable features of growth including: Unrestrained, ‘leapfrog’

expansion of low density development; the conversion of open space to urban uses; a lack of choice in housing or neighbourhood form; the increased use of private vehicles and subsequent congestion and air pollution; the cost of new infrastructure to service new development; failure to redevelop existing older neighbourhoods; and separation of land uses rather than encouraging mixed use development.

One definition of smart growth is provided by Gillham (2002, p. 156) who states that 'Smart growth is managed growth that attempts to fulfil the need to provide for growth (both economic and in population) while at the same time limiting the undesirable impacts of that growth.' This definition brings to mind notions of sustainable development by referring to both the need to accommodate economic and population growth, while recognising the limits to this growth in terms of its consequences. Similarly, in defining smart growth, Porter (2002, p. 1) highlights the need to balance the different elements of economics, the environment, and social wellbeing by asserting that smart growth is 'development that accommodates growth in smart ways, which is to say in economically viable, environmentally sustainable, environmentally responsible, and collaboratively determined ways. Smart growth calls for building communities that are more hospitable, productive, and fiscally and environmentally responsible than most of the communities that have been developed in the past century'. This definition is written from the perspective of community development, rather than solely a planning perspective.

Howell-Moroney (2008, p. 678) captures the evolution of approaches to growth management and defines smart growth primarily as 'a philosophy of how to do planning and development that promises to remedy, or at least to not repeat, the mistakes of the past'. This definition suggests that previous approaches to managing growth, or simply 'doing planning and development' have been essentially flawed. By referring to smart growth as 'a philosophy' however, Howell-Moroney suggests that the concept is more of an 'idea' or 'opinion' rather than best planning practice, in contrast to planning concepts such as sustainable development which are engrained in the planning discipline. This could be in reference to the assertion by

some authors that there are different approaches to smart growth, depending on the discipline (Downs, 2005).

Interestingly, these definitions do not focus on the form of development, or the need to control the urban footprint, and in this respect appear to take a more holistic view of smart growth. By contrast, Connerly (2007, pp. 103-104) asserts that smart growth is a concept that ‘attempts to shape the form of urban development from one which features sprawling, low-density communities consisting of uniform land uses, in which individuals ride alone in their personal autos to and from work as well as other destinations’. This definition highlights the key features of smart growth, particularly concerns with the urban footprint, the form of development and dependence on the private vehicle. The definition encapsulates only some of the aspects of smart growth, however, and is not as wide as Howell-Moroney’s (2008) definition outlined above.

Several principles underpin the smart growth concept including the preservation of green spaces; use of infill development to create a sustainable urban core; creating compact settlements by increasing residential densities; reducing travel times and improving opportunities for mass transit and a variety of transport options; the creation of ‘liveable’ communities that are sociable with a high quality of life; efficient use and development of infrastructure; creating regions that are competitive and vibrant; mixed land uses and pedestrian focused urban form; and the use of impact fees to target the costs of new development to those who directly benefit from it rather than burdening the wider community with these costs (Downs, 2005; Howell-Moroney, 2008; Porter, 2002).

The concept of ‘liveability’ is a fundamental component of smart growth and is described by Porter (2002, p. 78) as ‘a subjective but very real concept that is perhaps what smart growth is all about. It involves housing choice, educational opportunity, jobs and the balance of jobs and housing, essential facilities and services, and community identity.’ This aspect of smart growth is what contributes to the concept being referred to as ‘a bold new horizon’ in the United States (Burchell, et al., 2000, p. 846). In the US, the underlying

components of the smart growth theory, in particular the revitalisation of urban areas, evolution in urban design concepts and acknowledgement of the influence urban form has on quality of life, make smart growth appear as a revolutionary concept in terms of growth management. Although Burchell et al. (2000) suggest that smart growth still has some way to go to be a truly 'bold new horizon', the point is that these components of the concept have not been a feature of growth management practice in the past.

'Intergovernmental collaboration' is an essential component for the success of smart growth efforts (Porter, 2002, p. 165). Such collaboration has been difficult to achieve in the US, with relationships between federal and local government being an issue (Daniels, 2001; Gow, 2000; Porter, 2002). Porter (2002, p. 165) suggests that this is to do with the narrow focus of the federal agencies and subsequently collaboration is 'the exception rather than the rule'. State level government appears more inclined to collaborate, though this is possibly due to their closeness to local level governments (Porter, 2002). Moreover, Daniels (2001) points out that in the US the numerous units of local government who are unwilling to cooperate with one another has been a key contributing factor to the proliferation of urban sprawl. Successful smart growth requires collaboration and a regional framework involving all levels of government (Daniels, 2001)

Smart growth does encounter criticism on several grounds by a number of scholars (Howell-Moroney, 2008). One criticism is that it is a vague concept which can only be defined through examples (Gearin, 2001). A further suggestion is that the concept has become 'substantially diluted' because it is open to interpretation and as 'no one wants to be accused of contributing to 'dumb growth'' a diverse range of professions and stakeholders claim to support the concept (Smirniotopoulos, 2003, p. 16). According to Gearin (2001, p. 3) the ambiguity of the smart growth concept prevents it from becoming a 'progressive movement'.

Growth management more generally has been criticised for its negative influence on housing affordability. The suggestion is that as

limits are put on urban expansion, housing supply is reduced and unable to meet demand, thereby increasing the price of houses (Addison, Zhang, & Coomes, 2013). Addison et al (2013) argue that while smart growth strategies are often designed to promote affordability by increasing density, providing a variety of housing typologies, and promoting quality urban design, they also put limits on growth and reduce the land supply. In the U.S. failure to emphasise housing variety, a lack of regulatory consistency or limited collaboration between levels of government in growth management programs have all served to influence housing affordability (Addison, et al., 2013; Carruthers, 2002). This was the case in Florida, Georgia and California (Carruthers, 2002). Conversely in Oregon, the growth policy has not had any effect on property values, a likely explanation being the inclusion of the issue of housing supply within the growth management policy (Carruthers, 2002).

Peter Gordon and Harry Richardson (1997) question the emphasis being placed on 'compact cities' in the planning profession highlighting the varying interpretations of the concept. The authors present several counter-arguments to common justifications for compact cities (Gordon & Richardson, 1997). These counter arguments can be summarised as advocating a 'hands-off' approach to managing urban growth and leaving it to the markets to determine urban form. A key argument is that people have chosen a low-density lifestyle and as such the market rather than regulation should determine whether compact development should occur (Gordon & Richardson, 1997). The authors advocate for suburbanisation, which will assist in reducing traffic congestion (Gordon & Richardson, 1997).

Grant (2009, p. 13) provides an account of the challenges of implementing new urbanism, smart growth and sustainability principles in Canada and suggests that evaluations of Canadian practice have 'questioned the ability of governments to achieve smart growth objectives'. The divergence of several factors has hindered the implementation of smart growth, new urbanism and sustainable development in Canadian cities, particularly as a result of consumer preferences, political and socio-cultural barriers (Grant, 2009).

## **Intensification & Compact Cities**

The goal of compact cities goes hand-in-hand with intensification policies, and is closely related to smart growth (Abrahamse & Witten, 2011). Such strategies are developed with the aim of increasing levels of population density and activity in existing urban areas (Davison, 2011). In terms of the built environment, intensification would involve increasing the density of dwellings within existing urban areas (Abrahamse & Witten, 2011). More compact environments are linked to the aim of reducing private vehicle use, increasing public transportation, and creating mixed use centres (Abrahamse & Witten, 2011).

The concept of intensification was discussed by Jane Jacobs writing in the early 1960s. Jacobs (1961) highlighted the issue of concentration and the need for intensification of both residential and non-residential activity in cities. This would go a long way to creating diversity in the city district. Jacobs (1961, p. 202) notes, however, that this idea of concentration does not mean ‘...that everyone can or should be put into elevator apartment houses to live – or into any other one or two types of dwellings. That kind of solution kills diversity by obstructing it from another direction.’ Not only does this idea of concentration from Jacobs (1961) highlight the need for increased density for the purpose of diversity and vitality, but also the diversity that is brought to the city centre means that residents can live and work in the city centre, thereby reducing car travel, and development beyond the bounds of the urban area. It also suggests a balance between different densities of development.

But intensification policies are controversial. As Abrahamse & Witten (2011) report, the environmental outcomes of such policies may not always be as successful as hoped. An increase in population density will increase public transport use and lessen car use, but overall population growth or socio-demographic changes can impact on travel demand and may even result in an increase in congestion (Abrahamse & Witten, 2011). A further criticism is the social outcomes associated with intensification which may be negative if the planning and design phases do not involve the community

(Abrahamse & Witten, 2011; Davison, 2011). Moreover, intensification policies will often receive opposition from residents who prefer the low density environment and existing character of the place (Davison, 2011; Gordon & Richardson, 1997).

Giles-Corti (2011) warns of the need to consider the social and health effects of intensification as a solution to urban sprawl. Several factors should be considered when designing and identifying locations for higher density housing including their location near transit and commercial areas, avoiding exposure to noise and pollution, locations near public open space, schools and child-care, the design of housing including provision for privacy and territoriality (Giles-Corti, 2011; Marcus & Sarkissian, 1986).

These urban design considerations of the smart growth concept come from the New Urbanism theory that emerged in the United States in the 1980s and since the late 1990s has aligned itself with the implementation of smart growth policies (Trudeau, 2013). A definition of new urbanism is provided by Trudeau (2013, p. 435): ‘New Urbanism is a movement to reduce sprawl and improve societal wellbeing through changes in the built environment that produce compact, socially diverse, and pedestrian-oriented settlements’. From this definition then it is clear that the goals of both smart growth and new urbanism are closely aligned, and their key elements are somewhat intertwined.

Podobnik (2011) highlights a further goal of New Urbanism – increasing social interactions within neighbourhoods through design. The concept has been promoted on the basis that this approach to design underpins ‘...a fundamentally new form of urbanisation, which is more socially cohesive and environmentally sustainable’ (Podobnik, 2011, p. 105) The concept has not only been influential in the United States, but has also spread to Europe, Australia, and beyond (Falconer, Newman, & Giles-Corti, 2010; Podobnik, 2011). For example, the New Urbanism principles have been incorporated into policy in Perth, Western Australia, known as ‘Liveable Neighbourhoods’ which was envisioned as a performance-based

policy to meet the objectives of the State Planning Strategy (Falconer, et al., 2010).

In the United States, the New Urbanism concepts have been incorporated into developments in Portland, Oregon, an example of which is Orenco Station where there is evidence of increased social interaction compared with typical suburban development as well as high resident satisfaction with the physical design of the place (Podobnik, 2011). However, in both the Perth and Portland examples, the implementation of new urbanism does not appear to have met the aspirations for reduced car travel and increased use of alternative transport modes. Falconer et al. (2010) highlight that this may not be a flaw in the theory itself, but more an issue with how the theory is translated into practice.

There is some difference between Europe and North America in terms of the compact city concept. The compact city approach has been in European planning discourse since the early 1990s, with growth management and new urbanism being at the fore in North America (Hague, 2007). It is argued by Hague (2007, p. 19) that ‘...the compact city can credibly be argued to be part of a European identity, whereas in America the case for urban containment has to be made as a counter-proposition to the urban form that most defines American identity.’ This shows how the context is very much a determinant of how these policies are received (Searle & Filion, 2011). Nevertheless, it is arguably quite likely that an attempt to fit higher density housing into a low density suburb will always come with opposition, typically in relation to the design and compatibility with the surrounding environment. Examples of this situation are found in Sydney (Searle & Filion, 2011) and in Vancouver (Davison, 2011).

In the Sydney example, attempts to allow medium-density housing in low-density residential zones was controversial, and resulted in a back down of the policy and its replacement in the form of targets for medium-density housing which were poorly enforced (Searle & Filion, 2011). As a result intensification progress was minimal. In contrast, in Toronto, intensification began in the 1950s and 1960s in response to a severe housing shortage and an influx of immigrants

(Searle & Filion, 2011). Whilst intensification did slow for a period after some changes in government structure, and some opposition to high density redevelopment in the inner city, planners re-focused the intensification policies to the central city downtown area to ensure the city was not 'mono-functional' in office blocks and transforming the downtown area (Searle & Filion, 2011, p. 1427).

Furthermore, some strategies that have been introduced to create more compact cities have been the subject of some criticism for not achieving their goals, and in fact increasing development of the urban fringe. It has been shown that in Melbourne, the planning regulations in the 2002 'Melbourne 2030' metropolitan strategy were too subjective and lacked any real tools for directing development into defined 'Activity Centres' (Woodcock, Dovey, Wollan, & Robertson, 2011). It was found that although the strategy identified centres for intensification, these areas were not developing as quickly as the outer areas and overall intensification was slow (Woodcock, et al., 2011). Woodcock et al. (2011) argue that this was largely a result of the easily contestable performance-based planning provisions, the 'ambit claims' of developers and the resulting resident opposition to development and an increase in vacant sites.

## **Summary**

Urban growth management policies are a response to the threat of urban sprawl. Local or state governments develop policies (regulatory and non-regulatory) to allocate land for future urban development within specific timeframes and often with a desired form of development in mind. The aim is to have a more coordinated urban form. Growth management has typically sought to promote compact cities or intensification of existing urban areas through higher density housing and provision of alternative transportation modes. This has been reinforced in recent decades with the emergence of Smart Growth, a new form of growth management which focuses on mixed land uses, urban design, liveability and wider quality of life issues than traditional growth management approaches. The New Urbanism movement has brought about a new focus for growth management on the design of cities and this has fed into growth management policies.

Additionally, a regional approach to growth management is promoted in order to develop and implement policies in a holistic and coordinated manner. The next chapter provides a contextual background for the chosen case study areas for this research.

## CHAPTER 3: BACKGROUND

### Introduction

This chapter of the report provides a background context for the research. First is an outline of the two case study areas – Bay of Plenty and Waikato. This outline specifically describes the location of the study areas which in both cases is limited to sub-regions. An analysis of population data is also provided. Following this is an outline of the relevant legislative context and how this has evolved over the last two decades. Finally, there is a brief discussion of the New Zealand economy and how urban growth management is inextricably linked with this economic base.



Figure 1: The location of the Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions in the North Island of New Zealand (GoogleMaps., 2013).

## Case Study Area 1: Bay of Plenty Sub-Region

### *Location*

Located on the east coast of the North Island, the Bay of Plenty Region spans 21,836 square kilometres 12,253 square kilometres of which is land. The remaining 9,583 square kilometres is within the coastal marine area (Bay of Plenty Regional Council., 2013).

The Western Bay of Plenty sub-region is the focus of this particular research, which comprises Tauranga City and the Western Bay of Plenty District. The sub-region covers an area of 2289km<sup>2</sup> from Ohinemuri to the Whakatane District Boundary (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007). The Kaimai Range lies at the western-most extent of the sub-region, and the eastern boundary is the Pacific Ocean (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007). The extent of the sub-region is shown in Figure 2 below.



Figure 2: Western Bay of Plenty Sub-Region (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. xxi)

### ***Population***

Since 1950, the Western Bay of Plenty sub-region has been growing rapidly (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007). In 2001 the population of the sub-region was reported as 129,138, a 14.5% increase in population from the 1996 Census and by the 2006 Census this had grown a further 12.8% to 145,710 (Ralph & Martelli, 2012). The 2013 Census revealed that over the seven year period<sup>1</sup>, the population of the sub-region had reached 158,484, an increase of 8.7% (Statistics New Zealand., 2013b, 2013e)

**Table 1: Census Population Figures for the Western Bay of Plenty Sub-Region 1991-2013 (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013b, 2013e, 2013h, 2013k)**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2013
<b>Tauranga City</b>	66,738	77,781	90,912	103,632	114,789
<b>Western Bay of Plenty District</b>	29,871	34,965	38,226	42,078	43,695
<b>TOTAL</b>	96,609	112,746	129,138	145,710	158,484 <sup>2</sup>

Table 1 shows the consistent increase in population in the Western Bay of Plenty Sub-Region, the largest increase occurring between 2001 and 2006, with an increase of 16,572 people. The areas of Minden and Omokoroa in the WBOP District received the greatest increases in population since 1991. In Tauranga City, Bethlehem and Bethlehem East have received a significant amount of growth (increases of 3210 and 2814 respectively) over the 1991-2013 period. Since 2001, Papamoa has received significant growth with the Census Area Unit of Gravatt having grown 189% since 2001. Papamoa is a coastal community on the periphery of Tauranga, while Gravatt adjoins Papamoa and is semi-rural in character.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that due to the Canterbury Earthquakes of 2010 and 2011 the 2011 Census was postponed to March 2013. As such the data presented here should be viewed carefully given the seven year period in between Censuses (compared with the standard five year period).

<sup>2</sup> As above

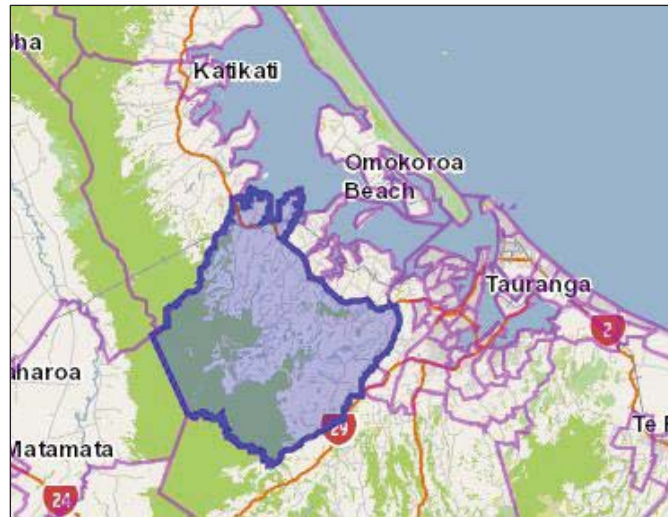


Figure 3: Map showing the location of Minden Census Area Unit, Western Bay of Plenty District (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)

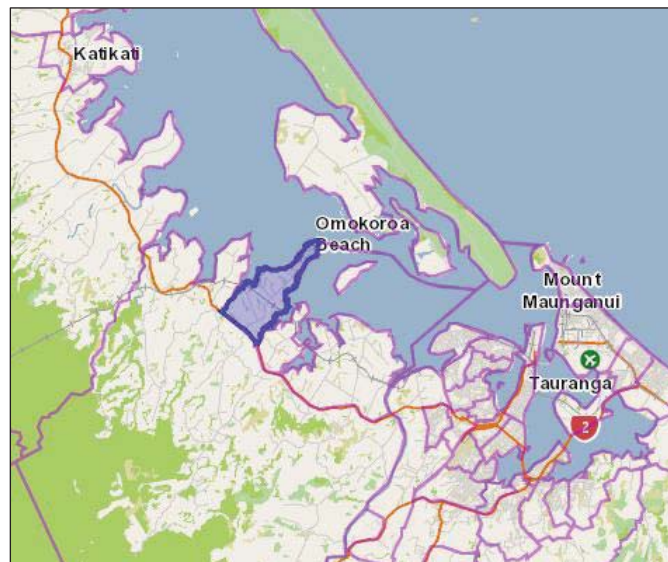
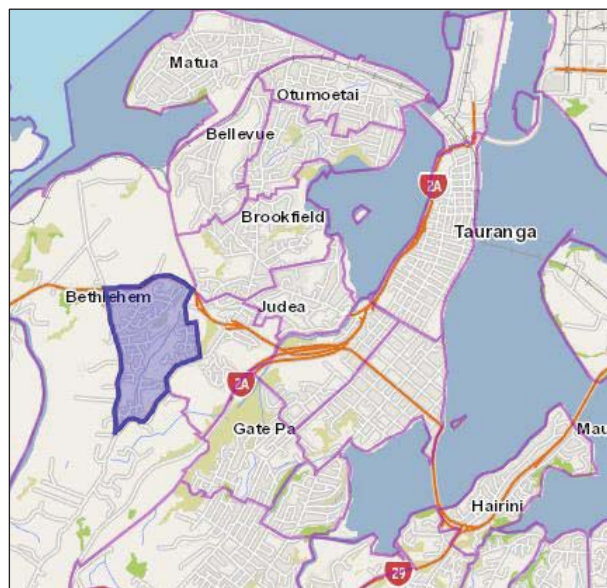


Figure 4: Map showing location of Omokoroa Census Area Unit, Western Bay of Plenty District (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)



**Figure 5: Map showing the location of Bethlehem Census Area Unit, Tauranga City (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)**



**Figure 6: Map showing the location of Bethlehem East Census Area Unit, Tauranga City (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)**



**Figure 7: Map showing the location of the Gravatt Census Area Unit, Tauranga City (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)**

The most recent population projections in the SmartGrowth Strategy show that by 2051, the population of the sub-region will be approximately 275,652 people, an increase of 117,168 people from the 2013 population.

It is estimated that the Western Bay of Plenty Sub-Region will become one of the top five most populated regions in New Zealand, and this population will mainly consist of the elderly and young families (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007). Projected changes in household structure will place significant pressure on the region in terms of urban growth. Furthermore, there is pressure from landowners on the periphery of the main centres to subdivide, and this appears to have been an on-going driver of growth management strategies in the Bay of Plenty over the last 20-30 years.

### ***Land Use & Economy***

In 1984, economic forecasts were positive for the Western Bay of Plenty, and this formed the basis of the 1986 Western Bay of Plenty Urban Development Strategy Study which was completed in 1986. However, by 1991, the national economy was in recession and a wholesale scaling back of government activity ensued, along with increased rates of unemployment. In terms of growth management in the Bay of Plenty this meant a change between the assumptions and the approach of 1986 to that of the approach in 1991. By the 2000s

the economy had recovered and population growth and demand for housing and business land put pressure on the sub-region and fuelled urban sprawl. Despite the recent economic recession, the Western Bay of Plenty Sub-Region is one of New Zealand's fastest growing regional economies from recent years (Priority One., 2012). This growth has been based on land development, residential development, growth in the retirement sector (retirement villages), resurgence in the agricultural and horticultural sectors, and significant growth and development of the Port of Tauranga (Priority One., 2012).

The horticulture sector underpins the Bay of Plenty economy. Kiwifruit orchards are particularly prevalent, accounting for 77% of the total area in New Zealand that was planted in kiwifruit orchards in 2007 (Statistics New Zealand., 2007a). The Bay of Plenty region also accounts for the largest area planted in avocado plantations, accounting for 55% of total avocado crops in New Zealand (Statistics New Zealand., 2007a). Despite this, it is predicted that there will be a decline in the agricultural/horticultural sector over the next 40 to 50 years, while food, transport and wood and paper export industries are expected to increase (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007).

## **Case Study Area 2: Waikato Region**

### ***Location***

The Waikato Sub-Region incorporates Hamilton City, Waikato District and Waipa District. As such the focus of this research is not on the entire Waikato Region but has been limited to these particular areas in line with the recent Future Proof growth strategy for the sub-region. The Waikato sub-region comprises 475,000 hectares of land. The sub-region is shown in Figure 8 below.

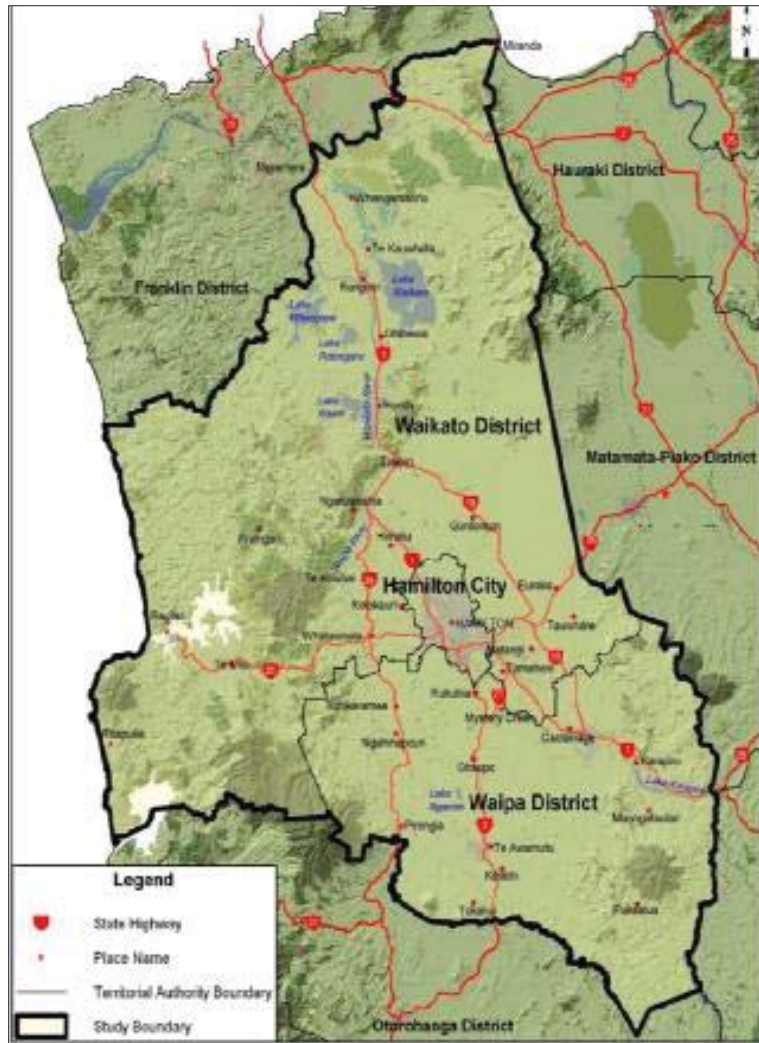


Figure 8: Future Proof Sub-Region (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 4)

### ***Population***

Table 2 shows the increase in population in the Waikato Region over the last five Censuses. These figures are stated here to demonstrate the rate of population growth in the sub-region over the last 22 years. It is acknowledged that the projections used in the Future Proof growth strategy are based on Statistics New Zealand's Subnational Population series data which uses adjusted Census figures<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> The Census night population counts are adjusted to account for net census undercount, residents temporarily overseas on census night, births, deaths and net migration between census night (7 March 2006) and 30 June 2006, and reconciliation with demographic estimates at ages 0-4 years. The Future Proof figures are therefore based on population estimates as at 30 June 2006.

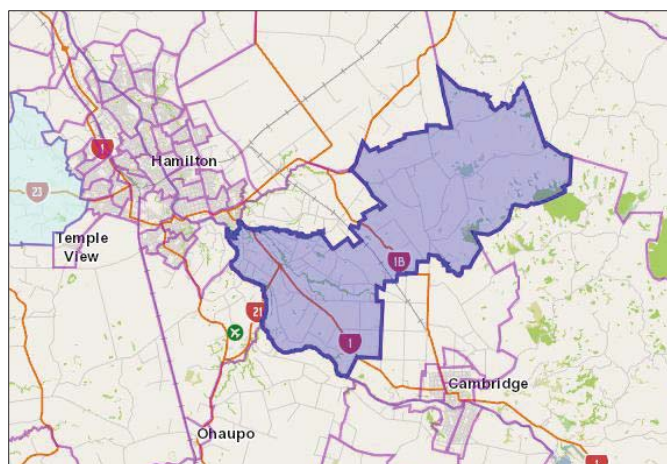
**Table 2: Census Population Figures for the Waikato Sub-Region Territories  
1996-2006 (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013g, 2013i, 2013j)**

	1991	1996	2001	2006	2013
<b>Waikato District</b>	37,413	39,138	39,855	43,959	63,378
<b>Hamilton City</b>	99,414	109,785	116,256	129,249	141,612
<b>Waipa District</b>	36,693	37,497	38,958	42,501	46,668
<b>TOTAL</b>	173,520	186,420	195,069	215,709	251,658

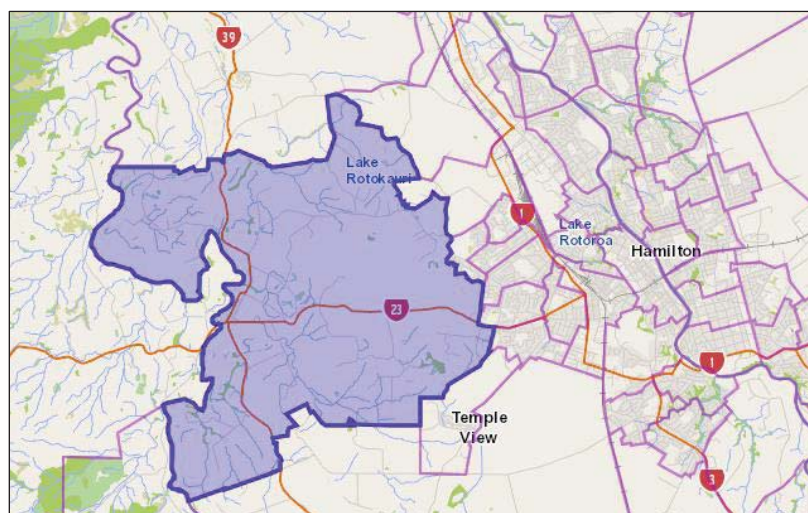
Over the 50 years from 2009, the population of the sub-region is expected to double (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009). As

Table 2 shows Hamilton City accommodates the highest proportion of the population of the sub-region and a significant population increase is expected for the city over this 50 year period. According to the projections of Future Proof, by 2041 it is expected that Hamilton will experience an increase in population of 88,000 people from its June 2006 estimated population of 134,000, and a further 55,600 over the period 2041 to 2061. The rate of population increase in Hamilton has therefore grown over the last two decades as in 1991 an increase of 11,000 people was expected over a nine year period (Hamilton City Council., 1991).

Spatially, this growth appears to have been accommodated in a few key areas. In the Waikato District, the Census Area Unit of Tamahere-Tauwhare (Figure 9), a peri-urban area on the outskirts of Hamilton City, has had a population increase of 100% over the 1991-2013 period (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013c). This is followed by Whatawhata (Figure 10), another peri-urban area to the east of Hamilton, which has experienced an increase of 75% over the same period (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013c).



**Figure 9: Map showing the Tamahere-Tauwhare Census Area Unit in the Waikato District (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)**

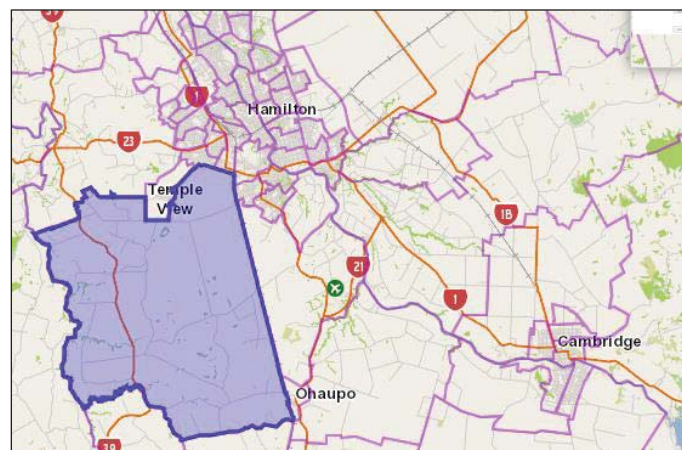


**Figure 10: Map showing the location of the Whatawhata Census Area Unit in the Waikato District (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)**

In the Waipa District, significant growth has been experienced in the CAU of Swayne (Figure 11), which was a new CAU in the 2001 Census. In 2001 this area had a population of 72 people, but by 2013 this had increased to 1461 (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013d). Over the total 1991-2013 period, Ngahinapouri (Figure 12) has grown in population by 65%, with Lake Cameron and Karapiro growing by 58% (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013d). Conversely, two rural areas have declined in population being Tokanui (a decrease of 44%)(Figure 13) and Rotongata (a decrease of -2%) (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013d).



**Figure 11: Map showing the location of the Swayne Census Area Unit in the Waipa District (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)**

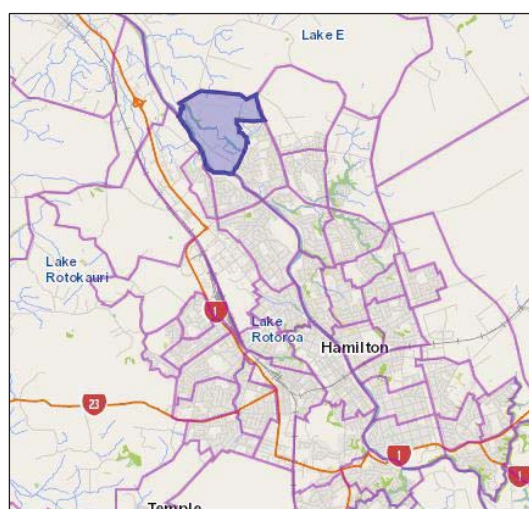


**Figure 12: Map showing the location of the Ngahinapouri Census Area Unit in the Waipa District (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f)**

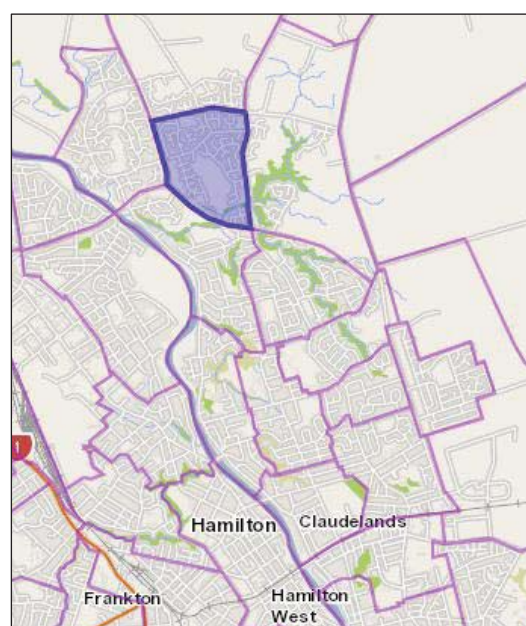


**Figure 13: Map showing the location of the Census Area Unit Tokanui in the Waipa District (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f).**

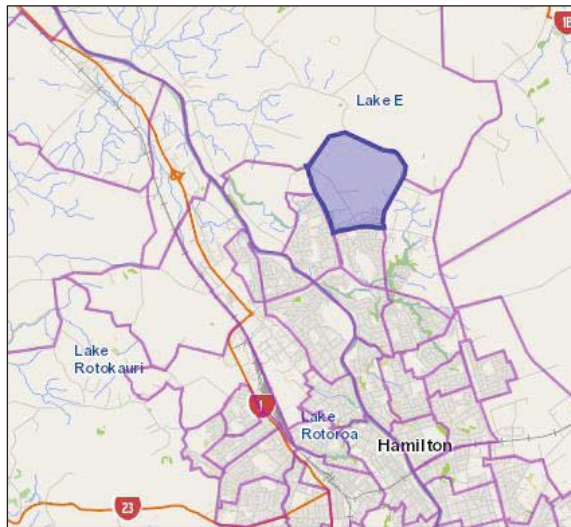
In Hamilton City, over the period 1991-2013 the CAU of Sylvester (Figure 14) has grown by 243% and Rototuna (Figure 15) by 809% (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013a). Since 2001, the areas of Horsham Downs (Figure 16) and Huntington have grown considerably with increases of 471% and 924% respectively (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013a). Three areas have experienced significant decreases in population with Te Rapa (Figure 17) losing 20%, Brymer 41% and Burbush 23% (Statistics New Zealand., 1996, 2013a).



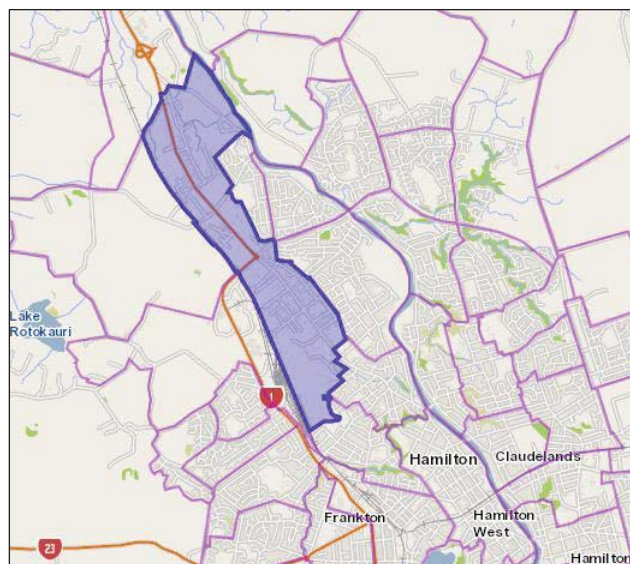
**Figure 14: Map showing the location of the Sylvester Census Area Unit in Hamilton City (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f).**



**Figure 15: Map showing the location of the Rototuna Census Area Unit in Hamilton City (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f).**



**Figure 16: Map showing the location of the Horsham Downs Census Area Unit in Hamilton City (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f).**



**Figure 17: Map showing the location of the Te Rapa Census Area Unit in Hamilton City (Statistics New Zealand., 2013f).**

It is noticeable that a number of the areas which have experienced increases in population growth over the study period are in close proximity to Hamilton City. This population growth means an increase in demand for housing. There is also the increasing demographic trend towards smaller or single person households. The dilemma is therefore accommodating this rapidly growing population within the 475,000 hectares of land and providing a variety of housing options in the sub-region whilst ensuring a viable economic base.

### ***Land Use & Economy***

The 1989 reorganisation of local government (see below) resulted in additional land being incorporated into the Hamilton City boundary in particular. This additional land area was 2500 hectares of predominantly rural land which has formed the basis of the future greenfield growth areas – Peacocke, Rototuna and Rotokauri. These growth areas have been signalled since the boundary adjustments took place and have recently been incorporated into formal structure plans within the District Plan.

The Waikato Region is predominantly rural with Hamilton City being a major service centre for the agricultural sector which accounts for 19% of New Zealand's total export earnings. Farming alone contributes 13.7% of the region's GDP (Hamilton City Council., 2012a; Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009). The Future Proof Strategy highlights the economic and employment benefits of the agricultural base, however it also notes the conversion rate of good farm land to urban and rural-residential development in the Waikato region – approximately 3200 hectares of land between 1991 and 2001. The Waikato Region supports the highest number of dairy farms in New Zealand, accounting for 36% of all dairy farms in 2007 (Statistics New Zealand., 2007b).

## **Local Government Reform**

### ***Local Government Reorganisation 1989***

A significant contextual factor that has influenced the evolution of growth management approaches in the two case studies has been local government reform in the late 1980s/early 1990s and the introduction of the Local Government Act 2002. The former saw large scale changes to local authority boundaries and roles and responsibilities, and the latter significantly altered the purpose and functions of local government in order to adequately address sustainable development goals. Gleeson and Grundy (1997, p. 294) state that 'The decade of political, economic and social upheaval which followed election of the Fourth Labour Government in 1984 saw New Zealand transformed from a welfare-corporatist state... into a neo-liberal, welfarist society.'

According to Frieder (1997, p. 8) the Fourth Labour Government ‘...exploited popular discontent and launched a six year period of radical reform unprecedented in the history of New Zealand and possibly the western world.’ The country had been experiencing significant economic problems originating from the 1970s oil crisis. In terms of local government, Central Government cited issues of ‘duplication of resources, meaningless boundaries, inadequate services, paternalism instead of participation, inconsistent planning, and the perpetuation of oases of privilege’ as reasons for reform (Bush, 1990, p. 234). The new Labour Government’s mandate was liberalisation and this culminated in reform of the State Sector, Local Government, and resource management (Bush, 1990; Frieder, 1997). The review of the Local Government Act 1974 began in 1987 and resulted in the consolidation of more than 800 local authorities, regional bodies, special boards, and elected boroughs into 12 regional councils and 78 territorial authorities (Bush, 1990; Frieder, 1997).

The Local Government Commission identified from the beginning the main requirements to improve local government (Local Government Commission., 1989). These requirements included smaller units which were stronger in terms of technical and managerial expertise, that corresponded with and served existing communities of interest (rather than historical), were efficient and effective, were more responsive to local people, and had multi-purpose functional capacity (Local Government Commission., 1989). In addition, jurisdictional boundaries were to be made common for cost and benefit in relation to functions which serve a community of interest (Local Government Commission., 1989, p. 8).

A key outcome of the local government reforms was the creation of a new regional level of government to replace the existing United Councils. Interestingly, Bush (1990, p. 245) highlights the point that the New Zealand model of regional and territorial government does not match the international models stating that it ‘...does not conform to a basic overseas pattern of opting for either substantial consolidation of territorial units or the creation of a regional tier’. In other words, New Zealand has both functions and both have statutory

backing, rather than having one tier with more authority than the others.

The function of the regional council is primarily resource management and environmental planning functions as well as non-port harbour responsibilities (Bush, 1990). Miller (2011) states that the creation of regional councils was necessary due to the aims of the concurrent planning reforms which sought to create a three-tier planning system. Prior to this regional government had had variable success as the size of New Zealand made this level of governance difficult to justify and the concept had only been introduced through statute in the 1977 Town and Country Planning Act (Miller, 2011). The resource management and environmental planning functions of the regional councils were to be distinct from those of the territorial authorities with a focus on the natural environment – air, water, natural hazards. Existing city and county councils were amalgamated into larger city and district councils or ‘territorial authorities’ based on ‘communities of interest’ and the concept of economies of scale under the reform package (Bush, 1990; Miller, 2011). The new regime was in place by November 1989.

While the reforms instituted a distinct division of functions between regional and territorial authorities, the development of collaborative, sub-regional growth strategies over the past decade shows that both levels of government have contributions to make to the practice of growth management. This is in line with the current theory and practice of smart growth.

### ***Local Government Act 2002***

In 2002 New Zealand local government underwent further significant change with the introduction of the Local Government Act 2002, which replaced much of the previous legislation. It has been described as a ‘pivotal part’ of reforms at that time as local authorities were given a legislative mandate to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities and to make decisions within a sustainable development framework (Borrie, Memon, Ericksen, & Crawford, 2004). This type of legislation was a first in New Zealand (Borrie, et al., 2004). Local Government had a

new purpose, to enable democratic and local decision making and to promote the ‘four well-beings’ – social, economic, environmental and cultural. The legislation required decision-makers to be much more responsive to the concerns of the communities they serve and to do this in a more collaborative and deliberative manner and provide communities with an opportunity to be part of the decision-making process (Borrie, et al., 2004; Plew, 2011).

Since its inception the LGA 2002 has undergone some significant changes. The first of these changes were those brought about to implement the amalgamation of the Auckland regional, city and district councils into a unitary authority (requiring special legislation) in 2010. Then in March 2012, significant changes were made to the Act which saw the purpose of local government change. Most notably the “four well-beings” were removed from Section 10, and local government activities were re-focused to providing its core functions to its communities in an efficient and effective manner.

Given the purpose of local government, as defined in the LGA 2002, the development of urban growth strategies can arguably be considered to be a means of promoting the four well beings. The strategies explored in this research which have been produced in the last decade were established in the context of the LGA 2002. It therefore remains to be seen how the recent amendments to the Act might impact on Council’s ability to establish such strategies, or whether the scope of these strategies may need to be limited to reflect the confinement of local authority functions.

### **Resource Management Law Reform**

The local government reforms of the 1980s and early 1990s were undertaken simultaneously with the resource management law reform process which culminated in the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). Both the RMA and the LGA 2002 reflect the concerns of this period for planning and local government more generally. The reforms came off the back of extensive liberalisation under the Labour Government, and subsequent National Government, in response to dire economic circumstances. Neo-liberal ideals filtered

through into local government policies and strategies, and this is evidenced in the growth management approaches of this time.

The Resource Management Law Reform (RMLR) process began in 1988 and sought to rectify issues associated with the existing approach to environmental legislation and policy which was made up of a multitude of statutes, regulations, principles and procedures and was implemented by a range of different organisations (Frieder, 1997; Miller, 2011). According to Frieder (1997, p. 13) 'the disintegrated framework made environmental management and compliance inefficient, expensive, and in certain cases, grossly ineffective'. The Labour Party of the mid 1980s had recognised the concerns of certain groups, in particular the environmental movement and Maori. While they did not necessarily agree on all the issues, these two groups shared common concerns with regard to the existing approach to environmental management including 'access to information, recognition of Maori and environmental values in economic considerations, the cost of hearings, excessive power of government, failure to involve diverse interests in decision making and overall inadequate protection of resources' (Frieder, 1997, p. 13). Alongside these concerns was the 1986 Brundtland Commission report on sustainable development and the wider reforms that were taking place in New Zealand at the time (Frieder, 1997).

More generally, Miller asserts that the RMLR process took place at a time when New Zealand was becoming more aware of the environment and there was a gradual 'greening' taking place, which had the 'potential to produce a shift in the essential social paradigm that underpinned New Zealand society' (Miller, 2011, p. 18). Interestingly, the RMA was produced at a time where conflicting ideologies were at play – on the one hand the period was essentially a neo-liberal period of reform, yet environmental conservation concerns had also come to the fore. As such, the Act was intended to promote conservation as well as less regulation (Miller, 2011). This somewhat inconceivable juxtaposition is, according to Miller (2011), a common conclusion drawn in evaluations of the Act.

The key points of the reform included a more streamlined and less costly resource management decision-making process, greater emphasis on sustainability, effects-based decision making, and a system which promoted a 'win-win' situation for all involved (Young, 2001). The Act was based on the premise that the market would determine resource use conflicts and Maori concerns received recognition (Miller, 2011). However, with its emphasis on the biophysical aspects of planning, urban planning has been largely overlooked in the RMA (Miller, 2011; Perkins & Thorns, 2001). Miller (2011) reports that this has led to a dilemma for planners as there is little guidance as to how the built environment should be managed. This is an issue for urban growth management given that the New Zealand population is highly urbanised with little ability, as far as legislation is concerned, to really manage subsequent urban development through regulation. Even the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment's attempt to provide some guidance neglected the social and cultural characteristics of urban areas (Perkins & Thorns, 2001).

The Act required regional councils to produce a Regional Policy Statement (RPS) which sets out the resource management issues pertaining to the region. This sits alongside the compulsory Regional Coastal Environment Plan (RCEP). District and City Councils are required to produce District Plans which address the issues identified in the RPS and the RCEP. Regional Plans on particular issues, such as water or air quality, are optional. While there is no requirement within the Act to produce a growth management strategy, the development of such non-statutory documents inevitably filters into the plans produced under the Act to ensure that the strategy goals are realised. Moreover, growth management and the reduction of urban sprawl can be seen to be in line with the purpose of the Act – sustainable management of resources. The development of growth management strategies also assists in meeting requirements of other Acts such as the Local Government Act.

## **Integrated Environmental Management and Planning**

A key concept of modern urban growth management in New Zealand is integrated environmental management (IEM). The concept first appeared in the RMA and was intended to 'ensure a unified approach to common issues' (Miller, 2011, p. 47). New Zealand is described as a world leader with regard to the incorporation of the concept into legislation (Peart, 2007). The concept of IEM is described by Frieder (1997, p. 17) as 'a way of thinking about the environment as a whole and managing the environment in a way that recognises links between elements of the whole'. The concept acknowledges the idea that resources are interrelated and use of one resource subsequently impacts on others (Bush-King, 1997; Miller, 2011). However, Bush-King (1997), writing six years after the RMA legislation, notes however that there is some difficulty in determining how integration applies to resource management and that in fact integrated management is simply a catch-phrase. Bush-King (1997) also notes that due to the many interests involved in resource management genuine integrated management is not achievable politically (Bush-King, 1997).

The Ministry for the Environment suggested that integrated management involved four aspects: integration across media – ensuring policies did not conflict with each other and worked together to achieve sustainable management; integration across agencies – this meant ensuring that all agencies with environmental responsibilities worked together to achieve shared environmental goals; integration with other legislation and integration of actions across time – the need to monitor outcomes to ensure that implementation was achieving the goal of sustainable management (Miller, 2011).

Peart (2007) notes the opportunity that exists in New Zealand with the creation of regional councils and their potential for stronger integration. This has taken some time to be realised however, with regional councils reluctant to get involved in urban issues (Peart, 2007). International examples of this form of planning have also been limited in success. Hajer and Zonneveld (2000) provide an analysis of the Dutch planning system, and conclude that the integrated planning

that has occurred has still resulted in a planning system which is still very reactive, rather than proactive.

### **Tangata Whenua**

A theme of growth management and planning in general in New Zealand is the role of tangata whenua and recognition of Maori values. However, the involvement of Maori in planning and policy development has not always been recognised or implemented. While existing planning and local government legislation recognises the importance of involving tangata whenua in all council processes and the development of planning documents, previous legislation (such as the Town and Country Planning Act) lacked this recognition. Even the implementation of the RMA provisions has taken significant time to improve. In terms of the legislation prior to the RMA, Matunga (1989, p. 3) describes legislative changes and court rulings of this period in terms of 'Local government...being compelled to acknowledge Maori values – particularly within its resource management functions'. Matunga (1989, p. 3) also argues that local government at this time was constrained by 'monocultural' legislation and that the focus of the Town and Country Planning Act 1977 at this time focussed too narrowly on land use and Maori and their ancestral land had to be balanced against other issues of 'national importance'.

Of particular concern to Maori is the way in which local government engages with iwi and hapu. In many cases the expectations of iwi and/or hapu and councils differ in terms of how they engage with one another (Neill, 2003). It is suggested by Neill (2003) that, on the part of local government, engagement with tangata whenua is seen simply as an obligation required under legislation or a requirement as part of addressing a specific issue. As such, the relationship between the two parties is rather ad hoc, rather than a continuous relationship (Neill, 2003).

There is an identified gap between the objectives of planning documents and what is actually achieved in practice in terms of the concerns of local iwi or mana whenua (Kennedy, 2008; Neill, 2003). Furthermore, the Local Government Act 2002 was somewhat of a disappointment for Maori, given their expectation that it would

greatly improve the level of engagement with Maori (Webster, 2011). However, this did not occur and there remains concern around lack of capacity of both councils and hapu and iwi to involve Maori in planning and governance under the RMA and the LGA (Webster, 2011). There also continues to be a perceived lack of integration between local and regional councils which hinders Maori involvement in decision-making (Webster, 2011).

All this is despite the emergence of iwi as significant economic players in New Zealand. This is particularly so following the settlement of Treaty of Waitangi claims in recent decades. For example, Ngai Tahu, a South Island based iwi, have emerged as significant investors particularly in the areas of education as well as a partnership with Christchurch City Council as part of the Canterbury Earthquake recovery phase (Pearson, 2012). Waikato-Tainui are also significant players in the Waikato economy since their historic Treaty settlement in the mid-1990s. An example is the iwi's plans to develop an inland port and commercial hub on Tainui-owned land at Ruakura in Hamilton which was reported in 2010 (A. Fox, 2010).

## **Summary**

This background chapter has provided an insight into the context in which the documents that have formed the basis of this research have been developed. Both sub-regions have experienced considerable population growth over the last two decades and this is set to continue for at least the next two decades. Both regions are also key players in the New Zealand export economy largely for the goods produced from agricultural and horticultural sectors. This has been a key driver for councils to manage urban sprawl through urban growth management policies.

Significant legislative reform has also taken place during this period, first with local government reorganisation in 1989 and then the introduction of the Resource Management Act in 1991. More recently, the introduction of the Local Government Act in 2002 and the 2012 amendments to the Act, which have seen a further change to the purpose of local government, have been significant. While urban growth strategies are not mandatory under either the RMA or the

LGA, they certainly assist in meeting the purpose of both Acts, and filter into the statutory planning documents produced under the RMA. However, continued changes to the legislation that underpins local government functions, and the planning functions of local government, has the potential to change the way in which local government approaches the issue in the future. Not only this but these contextual factors feed into the extent and type of growth management policies applied at a particular given time over the study period.

## **CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY**

This section of the report discusses the methods used to answer the research question. The research involved the use of discourse analysis as the primary research method. Case studies were also used as a method and the discourse analysis was applied to those case studies.

### **Discourse Analysis**

Discourse analysis was the primary method used to research the evolution of urban growth management in the two case study areas. Discourse is therefore developed through texts and for the purposes of this research written texts were the primary source materials. Lees (2004, p. 103) discusses two strands of discourse analysis and argues that as an urban researcher, one typically uses a combination of both strands:

- Discourse analysis as a means of revealing certain dominant knowledge about practices that serve particular interests. This strand comes from the Marxist tradition of political economy and ideological critique.
- Discourse as a part of a process through which things and identities get constructed. This strand comes directly from Michael Foucault, and asserts that discourses are not just reflections or (mis)representations of ‘reality’, but instead create their own ‘regimes of truth’ – that is the standard formulation of problems and solutions to those problems. Language, knowledge and power are all seen as linked through discourse.

Whereas the first strand is very detailed in its assessment of who said what, when, where, how and to whom, the second strand is more focussed on the construction of ‘the urban’ or ‘the city’ in language (Lees, 2004, p. 103). This research uses a combination of the two strands.

Regardless of which ‘strand’ research may fall into, discourse analysis is accepted as a useful method for understanding many issues within the planning discipline – power, knowledge, ideology, persuasion, social difference and institutional framing are all issues

that form the basis of discourse analysis within a given planning context (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011). It is ‘...an analytical tool to understand the rationalities behind the arguments that are being used by different policies’ (Galland, 2012, p. 1366). This method has been used recently in relation to spatial strategies at the metropolitan level in both Europe and Australia specifically for comparative examination of such documents (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011). This has revealed ‘interesting trends in thinking’ in the planning profession and planning research (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011, p. 486). For example, the ‘sustainability’ discourse is frequently used within strategic objectives; and public or stakeholder participation is referred to in order to validate plans (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011).

This research drew on the work of Maccallum and Hopkins (2011) and Galland (2012) in order to analyse approaches to growth management in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions. The methodology did not duplicate the frameworks of these authors but instead used the frameworks as a guide to target the analysis on those aspects which were of relevance.

### **The Methodological Framework**

Maccallum and Hopkins’ (2011) research focused on Perth’s evolving growth management plans and strategies over the period 1955 to 2010. Their framework was developed in order to establish what paradigm shifts have taken place in planning for Perth’s growth over time.

First, the framework analyses the substance of the plan. A key question is the role of the plan, and how it justifies certain courses of action (for example controls on land use). A further point is how the content understands and interprets certain causal and other relationships between certain phenomena. Such relationships would include that of planning and the social, economic or environmental context in which the plan is written. The structure analysis also involves investigating what information is considered important in the plan, or problematic.

Following analysis of substance, the framework looks at agency – who is responsible for the implementation of the plan? What rights are conferred and to whom? A key aspect is the author(s) of the plan and what responsibility they take for its recommendations. Maccallum and Hopkins (2011) highlight ‘agents of history’ as an important factor to consider in undertaking a discourse analysis of plans. ‘Agents of history’ refers to who has played a role in the past in order to influence the current situation. This aspect helps shape the plan’s ‘...representation of structural power, socio-natural relations, and opportunities for resistance or intervention’ (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011). Furthermore, this aspect of the analysis must investigate how the plan invokes other participants (the public and stakeholders), how they are characterised, and what types of actions or processes they are linked with. Finally, analysis of agency includes how the reader is treated – are they seen as an active participant in the plan and in what role?

Galland (2012) presents a methodological framework which he adapted from Hajer (2003) and this has also underpinned the research. The framework was utilised by Galland (2012) to analyse the evolution of spatial planning practice in Denmark over the last 50 years. The framework looked at the contextual driving forces behind the development of spatial plans, the ‘parameters of spatial selectivity’ (that is, the chosen scale for the plan and the reasons behind this), and the ‘layers of policy discourse’ which includes a) analysis of ‘storylines’ which are used to explain technical concepts or impose a particular viewpoint and courses of action over alternative options; b) analysis of ‘policy vocabularies’ which are statements or ideas about particular concepts which have been developed specifically for the policy or plan; and c) the analysis of ‘epistemic figures’ which relates to the use of knowledge that reflects the context or period in which the policy or strategy was developed (Galland, 2012; Hajer, 2003).

This research has subsequently drawn on the above literature by focussing on the contextual driving forces of each document, investigating the ‘layers of policy discourse’ (including substance and storylines, policy vocabularies, and epistemic figures), and analysing

the documents in terms of the different agents involved in their development and implementation. The research has drawn on both frameworks to provide a more robust analysis. Galland (2012) views discourse analysis as a tool for understanding the rationale behind certain ideas within policies. The framework by Maccallum and Hopkins focuses more on those involved in the plan development and the 'discursive means' by which these actors and their actions may or may not be given legitimacy (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011, p. 488)

### **Case Studies**

As previously mentioned, case studies will be analysed for this research. The research focuses on the Waikato sub-region (Hamilton City, Waipa District, and Waikato District) and the Bay of Plenty sub-region (Tauranga City and Western Bay of Plenty District). Baxter (2010) states that the use of case studies in research should be seen as an approach to research design or the methodology (that is, a theory of what can be researched, how it can be researched, and to what advantage), rather than a method itself (which is a means of collecting 'data'). As such, case studies are used in research to study a particular occurrence of a phenomenon (or group of occurrences) with a view to exploring in-depth the degrees of that phenomenon and the context in which it occurs (Baxter, 2010).

In short, case studies are useful to validate theories or to develop new concepts: 'Perhaps most important, the case study provides detailed analysis of *why* theoretical concepts or explanations do or do not inhere in the context of the case' (Baxter, 2010, p. 82). For the purposes of this research, it was felt that case studies were an ideal methodology for answering the research question because on a practical level a whole scale analysis of all growth management documents in New Zealand was not possible. The case study methodology also provided insight to how the wider context within which planning operates in New Zealand influenced planning at a local level. Although case studies are not representative in a statistical sense, Baxter (2010) argues that they are generalisable.

A limitation of using the case studies is that the results will not be applicable across New Zealand; they are specific to the Waikato and

the Bay of Plenty sub-regions. They are also not applicable to the entire regions themselves as the focus has been on the 'sub-regions', a subset of the regions. However, a comprehensive discourse analysis of all relevant planning documents in New Zealand would simply be beyond the scope of this thesis. The two regions were chosen as there appears to be little in the way of research undertaken on urban growth management in New Zealand beyond the Auckland region. Moreover, both regions continue to experience high levels of population growth and economic growth is positive in these regions such that urban expansion is a topic of concern and has been for some time.

### **Constraints**

A key constraint with this methodology was that sourcing historical information was challenging. In this sense, the research may not have covered all relevant documents, but the main strategies were utilised. While documents from Tauranga City Council, Hamilton City Council, and Western Bay of Plenty District Council were readily available, the other Councils did not provide historical documents, and there was no indication as to whether there were any such documents of relevance. As such, in the Waikato case study in particular there is a considerable gap in information between the 1991 Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy Discussion document and the more recent Future Proof strategy and its associated district level growth strategies. However, given the planning period for the HUGS 1991 document was nine years, this may explain the dearth of growth strategies or policies in the intervening period for Hamilton.

### **Summary**

So this section has outlined the methodology for undertaking this research. The researcher used discourse analysis within two case study areas as the primary research method. The methodology has drawn on the work of Galland (2012) and Maccallum and Hopkins (2011) in order to provide a robust investigation of the many factors that have influenced urban growth management policy in the two case study areas. This approach enabled an investigation of both context and the actors involved in plan development. The case study areas were chosen as they have both experienced rapid population growth

in recent decades with subsequent urban sprawl a consistent concern of the various local authorities. While there were some constraints associated with this methodology, particularly around the availability of information, this has not hindered the research and clear conclusions can still be drawn from the information that was available. The next two chapters provide an analysis of the documents explored for each case study area.

## **CHAPTER 5: CASE STUDY 1 - BAY OF PLENTY SUB-REGION**

### **Introduction**

This chapter of the thesis analyses growth management practice in the Bay of Plenty region, the first of two case studies used to answer the research question. As outlined previously the region has experienced consistent population growth in the last two decades and plays a significant role in the New Zealand horticultural economy. This chapter looks in detail at four growth management strategies produced in the Bay of Plenty region since 1986. The chapter begins with a discussion of the 1986 Western Bay of Plenty Urban Development Strategy Study (WBOPUDSS). This is followed by the 1991 Tauranga Urban Growth Study and Strategy and then Western Bay of Plenty's 1992 'Towards 2010' document. Finally, the section concludes with the latest growth management strategy for the region, the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth Strategy first produced in 2004 and reviewed in 2007.

### **Western Bay of Plenty Urban Development Strategy Study 1986**

The Western Bay of Plenty Urban Development Strategy Study (WBOPUDSS) was produced as a result of a request by the Bay of Plenty United Council to the Ministry of Works and Development in 1984. The United Council was a regional level body which was made up of representatives of each of the territorial authorities in the area. United Councils were responsible for regional planning issues under the Local Government Act 1977. The document was written by the Ministry's Town and Country Planning Directorate and the Civil Engineering Directorate and sought to investigate 'in detail urban growth prospects and strategy alternatives for Tauranga City and County, and Mount Maunganui and Te Puke Boroughs' (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 1).

The Strategy was initiated as a result of concerns that the existing strategy, which directed growth to Papamoa once supply in Tauranga City and Mt Maunganui was exhausted, 'did not provide adequate or

appropriate development opportunities for the Western Bay of Plenty’ (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 1). The existing strategy was embedded within the Tauranga County Scheme. The new strategy was developed prior to the 1989 Local Government reforms. The document provides an insight into growth management policy at this time, and is also interesting from the point of view of the relationship between central and local government.

### ***Economic Efficiency & Cause and Effect***

The document is written at a time when ‘continued strong economic growth’ was predicted for the Tauranga area (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 1). This is primarily based on the anticipated expansion of the horticultural sector and the forestry sector. As a result, there was an expectation of continued strong population growth ‘possibly in excess of 100,000 by 2011 from 54,000 in 1984’ (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 2) . This set in motion a set of assumptions regarding residential land supply such that in this case there were predictions that land supplies in Tauranga City alone would be consumed by the mid-1990s.

The document notes that there are ‘economic advantages’ in developing closer to Tauranga itself citing the benefits of infill development and redevelopment in the existing urban areas and the savings this would bring in terms of agricultural opportunity costs, making efficient use of existing services, and high travel benefits as people live closer to facilities and jobs (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). A key remark of this aspect of the document is ‘Even under a slow growth rate, consolidation together with greenfield development on the city boundary, and limited development in the east remains the most efficient option’ (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 13). From this perspective the approach taken in the document is more along the lines of cost savings, rather than any social or environmental advantage of the growth options.

In describing the proposed strategy, the authors remark that ‘The proposed strategy would be both market-led and efficient. In addition, it would allow the market to operate in a relatively unconstrained

way. Careful and regular review of development trends and patterns will show how individual purchasers react to these options in practice' (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, pp. 27-28). It is unclear as to who was responsible for this review, nor is there any clear evidence that such a review was undertaken.

Prior to this strategy, and since the 1970s, the urban growth strategy had been to direct future growth to Papamoa once existing residential capacity within Tauranga and Mount Maunganui was full (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). This is a supply-led strategy is criticised by the WBOPUDSS authors as follows:

*'Failure to modify the existing supply-led strategy is likely to lead to.... market distortions involving significant price increases in the more popular inner suburbs. Housing choices will be limited. This, together with price rises, may act as a disincentive to in-migration, particularly amongst the retirement segment. Industry may have difficulty in attracting labour to Tauranga as housing costs are high and choice limited, relative to other centres' (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 23).*

This statement paints a picture for the reader (presumably planners, engineers, and politicians) that local authorities must act now to avoid dire consequences, again for the economy. This type of description of the future is another aspect of plans that Maccallum and Hopkins (2011) observed in their analysis of the Perth Corridor Plan of 1970. Maccallum and Hopkins (2011, p. 495) refer to this type of description as 'systematic assumptions about cause and effect'. Once again it is the economic consequences rather than the social or environmental consequences that are prioritised.

#### ***Limited Environmental Considerations***

The WBOPUDSS does not address environmental issues (in its broadest sense) a great deal. An Environmental Assessment of the proposed growth options was undertaken as one of several 'technical reports' contributing to the final strategy. This however only features briefly in the final report. For example, an issue raised in the

Environmental Assessment was that urban infill should be managed in order to achieve the high quality design expected by the market. Local councils were encouraged to take a leading role in promoting consolidation in 'infill neighbourhoods' (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). The document suggests a 'design strategy' be developed and incorporated into the District Scheme policies (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). Largely, there is limited discussion of quality of life issues. This is one area where the report deviates from the international literature on the topic which suggests growth management took a broader view in this period to include these quality of life concerns (Burchell, et al., 2000)

#### ***A Broadening of Approach to Growth Management***

The report is consistent with the 'trend-based' planning of the late 1970s which was focussed on the 'coordination of land release and infrastructure investments' as described by Albrechts (2006, p. 1149). The report is also in line with growth management policy in the US where more attention was given to infrastructure, economic development, housing, community character and quality of life concerns than in the 'first wave' of growth management which was more environmentally-focused (Burchell, et al., 2000). However, references to 'quality of life' appear limited in the WBOPUDSS report, with more emphasis on economic efficiency and the housing market. Nevertheless, the broadening of the growth management approach is evident in the report.

This point from the literature is again highlighted in the document where the requirements of the planning legislation of the time, the Town and Country Planning Act, are discussed. The legislation included consideration of the 'wise use of resources'. The study authors note in this regard that defining this 'wise use' requires 'balances and trade-offs' between different factors (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 22). The study goes on to note that the existing urban development strategy for Tauranga (which was embedded in District schemes) emphasised the need to protect productive land, and to direct growth to areas without significant productive potential (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). However, the study took a wider view and the recommendations

recognised that a sound urban development strategy would be based on a range of considerations including, inter alia, provision for a range of demand (a variety of housing types, locations and prices), to meet community needs, accessibility to key facilities and employment, efficient use of infrastructure, recognition of Maori community values, protection of productive land and recognition and protection of environmental values (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 22). This indicates that the local government approach was viewed as being too narrow by limiting its consideration of resource use to economic or environmental values, whereas the central government view appears to have been much broader. Nevertheless, despite the mention of environmental values, this does not appear to have been a major consideration throughout the remainder of the study.

It is also significant that in discussing the weaknesses of the existing strategy, the authors describe a 'sporadic pattern' of development which is expressed in economic terms. The terminology is used in a technical sense, rather than as a mere descriptor. Notably, the term 'sporadic' was also used in the Town and Country Planning Act 1977 and the term suggests that this style of development is negative. For example, the authors state that this pattern 'does not encourage efficient provision of services or good access to facilities. Emphasis on development at Papamoa may lead to an inequitable distribution of development costs between local authorities' (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 23). There is no discussion of the impact of this style of development on the social or environmental wellbeing of the community. This reflects the thinking of the time where economic gains were a higher priority than environmental or social costs (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011).

So a conclusion to be drawn from this is that the WBOPUDSS represents a transition phase in planning practice from the rational and scientific methods, and a focus on efficiencies, to a broader recognition of the need to reduce sprawl and, as the report states, 'sporadic' development.

### ***Neo-Liberal Underpinnings***

The neo-liberal underpinnings of the time are clear, with phrases such as ‘unconstrained’ and ‘market-led and efficient’ in use throughout the report (Allmendinger, 2009). Indeed, Allmendinger (2009, p. 108) argues that under neo-liberalism ‘if any planning is required....it would be to support the market not supplant it.’ For example, there is little emphasis in the report on land use regulation. It is certainly a high level strategic document and this demonstrates an element of what Albrechts (2006, p. 1149) describes as a ‘retreat from strategic spatial planning fuelled by neo-conservative disdain for planning, and by postmodernist scepticism, both of which tend to view progress as something which if it happens cannot be planned’.

Also evident through the continuous reference in the WBOPUDSS document to ‘efficiency’ and economic gains, rather than to social and environmental issues, is what Maccallum and Hopkins (2011, p. 496) describe as ‘a significant shift in the objects of planning’. Human beings and the agents involved with planning become abstracted by the document such that ‘the plan itself becomes the agent of future actions’ by guiding (or enabling) development in certain forms. In the case of the WBOPUDSS the report highlighted the need to provide choice and meet the demands of the ‘second-home’ and retirement segments of the housing market, but again this description is objective and described in terms of the *market*, not the *people* themselves.

### ***Central Government ‘Guidance’***

It is noted that this is a study and strategy developed by central government rather than at the local level. This was at the request of the Bay of Plenty United Council, but it is interesting in itself that the Council requested the assistance of central government. The Ministry of Works and Development was a department of central government whose principle function was that of road building, power generation and similar large scale infrastructure projects (Miller, 2011). The Town and County Planning Directorate, located within the Ministry, worked in the Crown’s interest (Miller, 2011).

Miller (2011, p. 14) notes that the Directorate had no status beyond the role of an objector, though it took on the role of reviewing district

schemes and producing ‘helpful publications’. So it is surprising that the Ministry would take on the role of undertaking an urban development study, although it supports the previous argument that planning during this period was focussed on the relationship between land development and infrastructure capabilities (Albrechts, 2006). This contrasts with more recent planning issues where Central Government involvement has been lacking (Miller, 2011).

The report was arguably written at a point of change in political ideology where Central Government was driven by the ‘hands-off’ ideas of the neo-liberal movement. The 1984 general election had seen the Labour Party elected to Government, bringing with it a raft of reforms that emphasised the free market (Marsh & Miller, 2012). By the time the WBOPUDSS had been completed, the Government had been in power for two years, and the ‘hands off’ approach of the report is evidence of these policies.

#### ***Tangata Whenua Considerations***

The impact of urban development on tangata whenua is considered under ‘Taha Maori–Maori Perspectives’ (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). At the time the WBOPUDSS was written, planning operated under the Town and Country Planning Act 1977, the first planning legislation to acknowledge the relationship between Maori and their environment (Matunga, 2000). Provisions in the Act recognised that a ‘special relationship existed between Maori, their culture and traditions and their ancestral lands and that this relationship was of national importance’ (Matunga, 2000, p. 41). However, the way in which these provisions were interpreted and implemented by local authorities and the planning tribunal created Maori protest. The WBOPUDSS does not indicate Maori discord with the development options proposed, but it is interesting to note that the development options appear to have already been formulated prior to consultation with Maori.

The ‘special and unique’ concerns of the Maori community were highlighted to the study team at an early stage of the process and local expertise was engaged to provide a ‘Maori perspective’ to the assessment of development options (Ministry of Works and

Development., 1986). The strategy highlights several concerns which were raised by individuals and at hui, including the impact of urban development on Maori land holdings, the financial pressure placed on Maori as a result of higher rateable values, and the alienation of Maori land (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). The report does not provide much guidance around the form of involvement, nor the provisions required to address the concerns raised by Maori at hui. This is left up to the local authorities to determine.

### ***Justification of Growth Areas***

The preferred growth option in the study was infill development close to Tauranga City in order to save on agricultural opportunity costs, make efficient use of existing services, and have high travel benefits because people would be living closer to facilities and jobs (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986). As noted above, the consolidation approach was consistently couched in terms of the economic benefits to the area (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986).

The report notes that the existing strategy would have been inadequate in meeting the demands of the future housing market stating that ‘The diversity of this market is more likely to be satisfied by a broader range of growth alternatives, which include areas where existing preferences are evident. This is particularly on the periphery of the Tauranga City’ (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986, p. 22). The justification for the chosen strategy was that it was necessary in order to meet market demand and efficiency goals (Ministry of Works and Development., 1986).

### **Tauranga Urban Growth Study & Strategy 1991**

The Tauranga Urban Growth Study was undertaken by planning consultancy Beca Carter Hollings and Ferner Ltd, and culminated in the Tauranga Urban Growth Strategy (TUGS 1991). The focus of this section of the research has been on the former document as this provides more insight into how the latter document was formulated. It should be noted that the Study was commissioned and produced after the 1989 amalgamation of parts of Tauranga County, Mount Maunganui Borough and Tauranga City Council into the Tauranga

City Council. This amalgamation ensured that Tauranga City and the areas intended for its expansion in the future were brought under one council (Ericksen, Berke, Crawford, & Dixon, 2004). The documents are written specifically for the Tauranga District (which became 'Tauranga City' in 2003) to inform the formulation of the new District Plan. The documents were also written around the same time the Resource Management Act 1991 was being formulated.

The aim of TUGS was to 'identify the best urban growth option for the 1990s and adopt a strategy which will co-ordinate urban development in terms of the chosen option' (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991, p. 7). This tied in with the study's description of the WBOPUDSS and its shortcomings and the need to produce a growth strategy that is relevant to the context. The study notes that the WBOPUDSS recognised the uncertainty of predicting future growth rates and needs. As a result, continuous monitoring of certain assumptions was required along with the actual growth that occurred.

### *Context*

The study highlights the fact that the previous study (the WBOPUDSS) was undertaken 'during a positive economic growth period and under a different local government regime' (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991, p. 7). At the time TUGS was being undertaken, the economic climate was less positive and therefore refinement was required. New Zealand was indeed experiencing an economic recession at this time.

Aside from, but closely linked to, the economic climate, it was during this period that there was much concern in the Tauranga community about the rate of urban growth and the 'need to control growth' (Ericksen, et al., 2004, p. 233). Ericksen et al. (2004) note that in 1990 there was pressure from land owners who sought to subdivide their kiwi-fruit farms into residential lots. Subsequently there was a sense of urgency around preparation of the new District Plan due to the high rate of urbanisation on the periphery and the desire to manage this growth (Ericksen, et al., 2004). The preparation of TUGS was part of the wider plan preparation tasks culminating in the final District Plan which was publicly notified in 1997. In contrast to the

1986 WBOP UDSS, the assessment of the impacts of the growth options included environmental and social considerations.

TUGS was formulated after 18 months of public consultation, which again is something that was not evident in the WBOPUDSS (although may have been carried out later by each of the local authorities). However, the Strategy appears to retain the approach of the WBOPUDSS, in that it is intended as a 'general direction and framework implementing future studies, consultation, changes to the district plan and programming the provision of capital works and services' (Tauranga District Council., 1991n.p.).

As the RMA was being formulated at this time, the new growth management policy needed to somewhat reflect the new legislation. Sustainable management would have been part of the context of this strategy. The terminology of the RMA is evident in several policies in the Strategy, in particular 'avoid, remedy or mitigate' is used on several occasions in the text. For example, in relation to the protection of natural and physical resources, a policy action is to 'identify in detail physical and natural (including landscape) resources within areas selected for immediate urban development prior to rezoning and take appropriate actions to, in order of priority, avoid remedy or mitigate the effects of urban development on those resources' (Tauranga District Council., 1991, p. 8).

A goal of TUGS was to identify areas requiring further study under the requirements of the RMA (Tauranga District Council., 1991). The language is technical and the aims of the Strategy are partly to meet obligations under the new legislation. The motivations of the strategy are arguably more to do with statutory obligation (formulating the new District Plan) rather than a response to pressing growth issues. One must bear in mind that the previous growth study (WBOPUDSS) was undertaken only five years prior to this with a planning period out to 2011, while the 1991 Strategy had a planning period of only ten years to 2001. As the life of a District Plan is ten years, it is assumed that TUGS would cover the life of the first generation District Plan.

### *Involvement of iwi*

The document notes the difficulties in liaising with the Maori community in undertaking the study. The Maori Consultative Committee was intended to be the link between the local iwi and Council. The committee would liaise with the various marae and report back and/or make submissions to the TUGS team within a similar timeframe to that given to the general public (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991). However, this process took much longer and even then only one such meeting was held. The study report states that 'Council has taken the view that it is in the public interest to publish the growth strategy report on the assumption that the dialogue with marae will continue and that specific studies on the future of Maori land holdings and marae development will be undertaken by council' (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991).

During District Plan preparation in Tauranga there was reportedly 'considerable delay' in consulting with iwi over these matters, but council then offered funds to iwi for writing iwi resource management plans (Ericksen, et al., 2004, p. 235). One group took up this offer, and a plan was produced later in 1995. Despite the 'positive relationships' that the document helped build, 'political resistance to the idea of any sort of partnership or formal role for tangata whenua in council's formal decision-making processes' undermined those efforts (Ericksen, et al., 2004, p. 236).

Miller (2011) notes that Treaty settlements prior to the RMA had enabled iwi to play a bigger role in the economy and society and as such the legislation better incorporated Maori values. Certainly the Act required much greater input from iwi and hapu in decision-making and plan formulation. However, Matunga (2000, p. 43) states that despite the recognition of the Treaty of Waitangi in the resource management law reforms of the late 1980s and early 1990s, Maori were simply viewed as 'participants or consultees'. If this was indeed the thinking of the time at a central government level it is plausible that such thoughts would permeate local government politics and decision-making on who should be involved in planning policy development. It is clear that little effort was made to include iwi as a partner in the development of the growth strategy.

### ***Consultation with the Public***

The TUGS document involved consultation with the public during 1990. This took the form of a flyer enclosed with the local Timescan publication in 1990 and other newspapers, public notices, and four public meetings. The purpose of the flyer was to encourage public feedback on six growth options. These growth areas had already been subject to a preliminary assessment, but the intention was that more detailed analysis would occur after the consultation process. The flyer, entitled ‘Which way for growth – a planning discussion paper’, stated that ‘The Council recognises that it is important to apply and understand the community’s values and priorities for the future direction and form of urban growth within the Tauranga District’ (Tauranga District Council., 1990 para. 3). As such, the six options are signalled ‘as a starting point’ (Tauranga District Council., 1990 para. 5). The flyer lists the criteria used for looking for future urban areas, such as ‘a desire to provide a range of housing environments’, ‘recognition of maori land titles and the need for a consultation process to determine the desire for urban use’, and ‘retention of significant environmental features’ (Tauranga District Council., 1990 para. 5).

A significant point is the way in which the discussion paper appears to direct the reader’s thoughts by stating that priority was given to existing residential areas that could be close to or adjoin onto existing suburbs and that ‘the Council does not want to create new suburbs with no shops or schools within the early years of establishment’. The paper also notes that the assumptions used to project population growth can change as a result of political and economic decisions. The Council states that its preferred three growth areas are Papamoa, Welcome Bay-Waikite Waitaha, and Cambridge Road West-Orange Lane, but notes that the other three (Hollister Lane-Ohauti, Kaitemako and Pyes Pa) could be long term options ‘and the community’s thoughts on their priority are sought’. All six options were then outlined with their various opportunities and constraints.

The flyer does also address ‘Maori Heritage’ noting that Maori land has generally been excluded from consideration. Further consultation is signalled with iwi to determine whether the existing approach of

special zones for marae is still desired or whether there are other options. It is noted that ‘past experience has shown us that urban development is not necessarily compatible with marae activities’ (Tauranga District Council., 1990 para. 43).

The public were invited to attend the public meetings, and to make written submissions to the Council on these options. The submissions received are addressed in the Study document. Despite the Council’s stated preferences, it appears that the Strategy does incorporate the desires of the community as outlined in submissions. For example, Pyes Pa was not in the Council’s preferred list of growth areas as it was physically separated from the rest of the City and was not self-sufficient in terms of community facilities. Nevertheless, 550 households were provided for at Pyes Pa ‘principally because of the keenness of the residents’ as well as a need to offset loss of a residential proposal at Bethlehem (which submitters sought to retain as a rural environment).

#### ***Core principles for decision-making***

The study involved the use of ‘Guidelines for Preliminary Assessment’ and recommendations for residential, rural-residential and industrial land use were utilised to engage the public early on. The guidelines were established as a basis for looking for future urban areas at the preliminary stage. The criteria are technical with many based on scientific facts rather than principles of design or community input. Indeed the preceding chapter of the Study is devoted to facts and figures around ‘Growth Projections and Market Trends’. This is consistent with the rational approach to planning, which was typically associated with planning of the 1960s, where decisions and implementation was based on quantifiable data (Taylor, 1998). Much of the criteria used for the preliminary assessment of options are quantifiable criteria, rather than qualitative or high level goals. The effect of this is that the reader may not question evidence that appears to be objective.

In addition to these criteria, the study also applied ‘planning principles’ as the basis for developing the appropriate growth strategy. These principles are arranged under the headings of

residential, industrial, non-urban/greenbelt, rural, and future urban principles and reflect the neo-liberal principles of the time (Allmendinger, 2009; Miller, 2011). There is little evidence in these principles of the concepts related to smart growth. For example, under the 'Residential Principles' heading, the focus is on what the market demand is in terms of location – in this case 'a spread of geographical and physical locations is desirable'.

There is no reference under any of the principles to controlling the spread of the urban area, except a statement referring to encouraging 'sensible patterns' of development. This does not suggest a desire to control urban sprawl or encourage a compact urban form. There is no indication of what constitutes 'sensible' and the underlying consideration seems to be of cost savings. There appears to be an element of managing the symptoms of growth, rather than actually managing the growth in the first place, this is particularly evident where there is reference to creating green belts between suburbs to 'relieve the visual form of the city as it grows' (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991, p. 76).

A further point to note is that there is no reference to encouraging a mix of uses. In fact, the notion of separating uses is quite clear, though understandable in relation to the industrial-residential interface. Separation of residential and commercial uses remains the norm. If there is a desire to live in suburbs 'contiguous to the city' the study suggests this is because residents have a 'sense of belonging' rather than a desire to be close to services and building a more compact form (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991, p. 76).

Productive land is also a consideration of the study, and it is stated that:

*'It is not in the public interest to allow non-productive use of good agricultural land in a term of some 20-30 years in anticipation of urban development....It may be the desire of these land owners to continue in rural production for the foreseeable future.... It may be that ultimately the district has permanent productive rural lands within the built up urban area acting in effect as a*

*green belt*' (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991, p. 77).

The concept of 'greenbelts' has been in use in post-War Britain and has been incorporated into statute, thereby recognising the importance of such areas but not actually developing any planning strategy around them (Gallent, Bianconi, & Andersson, 2006). Gallent et al. (2006) note that in Britain it is the 'rural-urban' fringe that is subject to greenbelt designations, being the transition between the built up urban area and farmland. In TUGS, the concept of greenbelts is utilised in relation to stream valleys where they dissect residential areas, the protection of habitats and water quality, landscape enhancement and controlled subdivision within greenbelt areas in providing for rural residential development. The concept is in a way formalised through the introduction of a 'Greenbelt Zone' which is illustrated in maps showing the overall strategy area. So whereas in the UK the concept is used to provide for green space in public ownership, in the Tauranga example the concept simply means natural barrier to urban growth.

### **Towards 2010 – A Strategic Plan for the Development of the Western Bay of Plenty District, 1992**

The 'Towards 2010' document was produced in 1992 by Western Bay of Plenty District Council as 'a policy document for addressing matters that affect the District and its community' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. ii). The plan was developed with significant involvement from the community, and the Council acted as a facilitator. Therefore, this is more of a strategic community document and does not go into great detail regarding urban growth as the previous two documents have done. The impetus for the Strategy was a realisation that the recently formed Council did not have a 'visionary document' to inform its statutory documents such as the Annual Plan and the District Plan (New Zealand Local Government., 1992).

#### ***Context***

The document was written at a time when New Zealand was experiencing an economic downturn, thus there is an emphasis in this

document on economic development and ‘broadening the District’s economic base’ (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 10). The document notes that the dairying and pastoral origins of the local economy had developed into a broader agricultural base, along with associated industrial and commercial infrastructure and an emerging tourism industry. The document highlighted the rural economy’s vulnerability to economic decline and regarded a broader economy as a way of strengthening it. An overarching goal was therefore: ‘To improve the economic base of the District through supporting and encouraging existing and new economic activities and the promotion of sustainable full employment’ (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 10). The phrase ‘flexible approach’ is also used in the Plan in relation to economic imperatives and how the District Plan could be written to reflect such an approach. This may be a reflection of broader political ideals of the time, where a neo-liberal ideology prevailed (Miller, 2011).

The document focused on the natural and physical environment, an overarching goal being ‘To conserve and enhance the physical and natural environment of the Western Bay of Plenty’ (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 8). Words such as ‘protect’, ‘conserve’, ‘identify’ and ‘ensure’ are used in the objectives to reach this goal. The physical environment is described as the District’s ‘most important asset’ (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 8). Although there is an emphasis on the protection and enhancement of the physical environment, it is not stated as to what it was to be protected from. The document does not really deal with the growth issue itself, more the symptoms of it. Instead of providing direction as to where growth should occur, it deals with how to protect the existing environment from growth and development.

The Plan does however note under the ‘Housing’ section that ‘It is appropriate that choices continue to be provided as long as appropriate checks are put in place regarding the unnecessary use of productive rural land for purely residential purposes, and that the environment is protected’ (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 14). The Plan goes on to state that ‘It is important to ensure that the pressure of growth does not destroy the attributes that

provided the attraction in the first place. This also applies to the social fabric of the District whereby the different rural and urban communities have distinctive characters that are valued by those communities' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 14). The objectives for Housing include avoiding hazard areas and productive land, as well as consolidating existing settlements.

***Community, collaboration or compromise?***

The Council appears to be at pains to point out that this Plan has been written by the community and that it 'represents what the community wants for its District, not what it wants from its Council.... The Plan is about the District, not the District Council' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 2). The Council then positions itself as one of several actors who could be involved in the implementation of the Plan by stating that 'the Council could choose whether it wished to address the concerns raised directly, take on an advocacy role for the community, or pass them on to the relevant agency(s)' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 2).

The development of the Plan was community driven, rather than Council-driven. It is interesting that although the Plan was being developed just after the RMA was enacted, and the Council was fairly new (given amalgamation occurred in 1989) this Plan does not state a Council direction on development, or even who is responsible for the various strategic actions that have been identified. Greater input from the community into the matters that affect them is desired the Council must 'acknowledge the many and varied overlapping communities that exist within the Western Bay of Plenty District and to maintain and enhance such communities with leadership that envelopes consultative and participatory principles' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992). A key objective is also recognition of the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Indeed it is noted in a secondary source featuring the Towards 2010 strategy that the document was notable for its 'unprecedented degree of community involvement' and that it was 'refreshingly different' from typical local authority documents of the time (New Zealand Local Government., 1992, p. 28). Essentially, the Towards 2010

document was going to be a 'visionary document' and the aim was to produce a comprehensive strategic plan for the development of the district for the following 20 years (New Zealand Local Government., 1992, p. 28). A working party of 9 nominated representatives of the community (whose names are listed but there is no indication of their role in the community), 2 iwi representatives, and 2 councillors developed the strategy which involved identifying issues, determining priorities, developing objectives and an action plan (New Zealand Local Government., 1992). It is stated that 'The Strategic Plan, therefore, has been developed by the community's representatives and uses their wording and expresses their ideas. While Council staff were involved in the process, their role was principally that of facilitators' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 4). Again, it appears as though the Council distanced itself from involvement. It is stated that 'invitations for nominations were sent out to the full range of clubs, organisations, and interest groups throughout the district' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 4).

This approach to the development of the Plan could be characterised as a mix of the 'Partnership' and 'Delegated Power' levels of Sherry Arnstein's 'Ladder of Citizen Participation' (Arnstein, 1969). The partnership model of participation involves the citizens and the power holders sharing power, thereby power is redistributed between the two parties. However, in the case of the working party for Towards 2010, the group was dominated by the 'citizens' (9 community representatives and two iwi representatives were selected) rather than the 'power holders' (the two councillors). In this regard then, it can be suggested that the group was akin to having delegated power, where citizens may achieve dominant decision-making power over public officials or in this case, the council (Arnstein, 1969). What remains to be seen however, is how influential the final document was in reality. Although the Towards 2010 document was community driven and developed, it was a high level strategic document with little in the way of policies around directing development to certain areas of the district.

### ***Environmental Focus***

This document is said to have had a ‘strong environmental bias’ which was explained by the Planner involved as follows: ‘People in the Western Bay of Plenty are very aware of the natural assets of their district’ (New Zealand Local Government., 1992, p. 32). The conclusion being that people are ‘happy to encourage development, but not if the cost is going to affect the lifestyle they enjoy...’ (New Zealand Local Government., 1992). It is also noted that this was the first time Council had adopted a ‘hands off’ approach to developing strategy. It is interesting that there is an apparent shift in focus when compared with the earlier strategies and that clearly the environmental issues are valued by the community. This was not apparent in the earlier strategies which were produced by ‘experts’.

This environmental focus could be seen more broadly in the context of notions of ‘sustainable development’ though the focus was largely on the physical environment. A core feature of sustainability planning that is discussed by Wheeler (2004, p. 38) is ‘acceptance of limits’ meaning that society cannot continually grow quantitatively without regard for consumption of resources. Furthermore, the focus on the ‘intrinsic qualities’ of Western Bay of Plenty reflects a further feature of sustainable development – a focus on place (Wheeler, 2004). This focus on place encompasses ‘nurturing the health and distinctiveness of specific, geographical locations’ (Wheeler, 2004, p. 39). This is certainly the tone of some of the terminology in the Towards 2010 document. For example, the Plan uses the term ‘intrinsic qualities’ in relation to the qualities that make Western Bay of Plenty a ‘desirable’ place to live.

### **Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth – 50 Year Strategy and Implementation Plan**

The Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth Strategy is arguably a sea change in terms of growth management for the Western Bay of Plenty. The Strategy is not only a reflection of smart growth being practiced in New Zealand, but it is a comprehensive *regionally* based strategy that is longer term than any of the previous growth strategies. The document’s name alone speaks volumes, perhaps indicating that the Bay of Plenty is up to speed with best planning practice and its

content reflects wider social concerns around sustainable development, economic issues, and most notably quality of life.

The SmartGrowth Strategy was first produced in 2004 and has since been reviewed and updated. It is currently undergoing another review following monitoring. The Strategy is a collaboration between Tauranga City Council, Western Bay of Plenty District Council, and Environment Bay of Plenty (Bay of Plenty Regional Council). The Strategy covers a broad range of topics relevant to growth, and stands in contrast to those documents produced before it.

***An exemplar of smart growth practice in New Zealand?***

If one were to take Howell-Moroney's definition of 'SmartGrowth', then the Bay of Plenty example would certainly match. According to Howell-Moroney (2008, p. 679), the key tenets of smart growth are: 'Preserving green spaces in the hinterlands; creating viable urban cores through infill development; creating better opportunities for mass transit and reduced commuting times; creating 'liveable' communities that enjoy a high quality of life with more interaction and 'social capital'; saving substantial sums of money on infrastructure costs; and creating more competitive, vibrant regions.'

These points are all evident in the Bay Of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy. Indeed, the Vision Statement of the Strategy outlines each of these points in some form. The vision of the strategy is stated as being (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007):

‘By the year 2050 the western Bay of Plenty will be a unique sub-region, which has:

- Maintained and improved its natural and cultural environment.
- Enhanced the lifestyles of its communities and provided for the social needs of the people.
- Created a thriving sustainable economy.
- Provided an efficient and affordable infrastructure.
- Implemented an efficient and integrated planning process for growth management.’

All that is missing from Howell-Moroney's list of key smart growth points is the concept of sustainable development, which is a major feature of the Bay of Plenty strategy. Indeed, Porter (2002) notes that smart-growth principles echo many sustainable development goals.

#### ***A collaborative effort***

Although not stated in the vision for the Strategy, there is an emphasis in the Bay of Plenty document on economic factors, albeit amongst many environmental and social factors. A key aspect of the document is its collaborative effort between the Tauranga City, Western Bay of Plenty and Bay of Plenty Regional Councils which occurred 'after some years of tension' (Ralph, 2011, p. 97). This collaboration is justified in the Strategy on the grounds that there is a need to align the growth management strategies of the two territorial authorities and the regional council 'to produce an efficient and cost effective development pattern' (Tauranga City Council, et al., 2007, p. 15). The economy of the sub-region is not isolated to administrative or political boundaries, but goes beyond these bounds. There is also recognition of the need for collaboration between all agencies responsible for managing growth, something which had in the past been absent from growth management policies.

Ultimately, the collaborative approach that has been taken by the Bay of Plenty councils is consistent with the argument in the literature that for smart growth policies to be effective, a regional framework that involves all levels of local government is needed (Daniels, 2001; Downs, 2001; Gillham, 2002). The Bay of Plenty example could perhaps be viewed as a paradigm shift in planning practice in New Zealand, such that regional councils no longer feel limited to their core functions of managing the use of natural resources such as air and water but are now involved in managing the built environment across the region. Demonstrative of the concept of integrated management, the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy describes the strategy as an 'Integrated Strategy' bringing together 'all the issues relevant to managing growth in the western Bay of Plenty sub-region. It provides a framework which allows other plans, policies and

implementation to be coordinated efficiently and effectively’ (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 17).

### ***Community Engagement***

Initial consultation on the SmartGrowth strategy began in 2003, with the community being given the opportunity to provide feedback on three growth options. Option 1 was the status quo – a mixture of residential densities in some areas, with expansion of the urban area beyond the existing urban footprint. Option 2 was the ‘low density’ option – this involved retaining densities as they were at the time but with substantial expansion of the urban footprint. Option 3 was the ‘high density’ option – this involved retaining the existing footprint and providing for higher density development through greenfield development and redevelopment. The Strategy states that there was ‘a high level of community support for the high density option’ (Option 3) (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 1). This consultation was carried out via ‘public discussion on alternatives’ and the release of a draft strategy for public consultation (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 16).

The SmartGrowth Strategy also requires specific actions around community engagement under the umbrella theme of Leadership. These actions centre around ensuring the buy-in of the community by maintaining currently high levels of awareness of the strategy, as well as engagement with the community to ensure initiatives are commensurate with the community’s needs and desires (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007)

### ***‘Live, work and play’***

A consistent theme and phrase that features in the strategy is the notion of ‘live, work and play’. This phrase appears to be a ‘catch-phrase’ of the document, but encapsulates the goals of smart growth and sustainable development. The phrase is actually defined in the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy as follows:

*“Live, work, and play” is a concept that emphasises the need for balance within the management of growth. At the sub-regional level, it includes the provision of land and services for housing, business, community activities*

*and recreation. It emphasises the need to consider the interrelationships of these activities to provide for accessibility, minimising energy use and reducing vehicle emissions. At the local level it includes providing the opportunity for people to meet most of their daily needs within their own local community, promoting community cohesion and more harmonious lifestyles. It includes careful design to contribute more to the public realm, provide for privacy, and diversity through mixed use development. (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 192).*

This concept is a way of communicating to the reader in simple terms the aims of the Strategy and is subtle justification for the initiatives contained within it. This concept (or any other similar concept) did not feature in any of the previous growth management documents, and as such can be viewed as another paradigm shift in planning practice.

### ***Protection of Versatile Land***

The Strategy highlights in several places the community desire to protect versatile land. This is an area considered to be of high importance in the Strategy, within the topic of ‘Natural and Cultural Environment’. The protection of this land for production is stated as being a key driver of the community support for a compact form. The strategy refers to this desire as ‘societal value’ in retaining versatile land, but notes that some loss of this land will be ‘inevitable’. This focus on protection of versatile land is not a new concept in terms of the smart growth theory. The protection of productive land was a factor in planning prior to this document, and has been a feature of growth management for some time. However, the language has changed as today the discussion is around ‘versatile land’, whereas in the previous documents discussion focussed on simply productive land or more generally ‘rural land’.

This difference is important, as the term ‘versatile’, in this particular case is the same terminology that is used in the Bay of Plenty RPS

which defines versatile land as including land that is classified under the New Zealand Land Use Capability Classification System. The inference here is that the class of soil actually refers to the range of possibilities from the land, that is the ability of the land to adapt to different uses, in light of certain constraints on that land (such as hazards). So the reference to ‘highly versatile land’ in the Strategy is land that is capable of supporting many activities. In sum, the implications of not implementing the smart growth policies are considered to be even more detrimental now than perhaps they were 20 years ago, now that science has developed and our understanding of productive land has improved.

***Urban Design, mixed use development, and transport modes***

A further aspect of the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy to be noted is its focus on urban design and associated concepts. References to urban design are made throughout the document, in relation to energy efficiency goals, areas of residential intensification, structure plans for business development, as well as the promotion of alternative transport modes. Urban design is a core feature of smart growth theory, and is now a key feature of planning practice in New Zealand particularly following the release of the Ministry for the Environment’s ‘Urban Design Protocol’ (Weeber, 2011). Of concern is the impact the policy of intensification of development and a compact form will have on urban amenity and quality of life, and this is somewhat addressed through references to quality urban design.

Mixed use development is also a feature of the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy, and is considered to be a key factor in the ‘live, work, play’ theme. In the Bay of Plenty document the idea of mixed land uses relates primarily to the Tauranga inner city, where it is intended to be ‘a vibrant area which has an emphasis on specialty shopping, entertainment, cultural facilities, inner-city residential living and sufficient employment to ensure that there is a strong relationship between work and living’ (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 14).

These aspects of smart growth are intended to contribute to an overall goal of enhanced lifestyles and quality of life in the Bay of Plenty document. These are goals that were not evident in previous growth management documents for the area, and certainly the notions of urban design and mixed uses were not mentioned in those documents. Certainly it appears that while the strategy pushes for a more compact form, and intensification of Tauranga City, there is also an element of how this can be done in a way that is sensitive to urban amenity desires.

Despite this, since the adoption of SmartGrowth, the reality of implementing a high-level strategy has set in, with reflections on implementing intensification policy demonstrating that such a move in terms of land use attracts opposition and needs to be communicated clearly (Ralph, 2011). The SmartGrowth strategy aims to accommodate around 70% of the population growth for the Bay of Plenty sub-region in Tauranga City by 2051 with 29% of this being accommodated through residential intensification and infill in established areas of the city (Ralph, 2011; Tauranga City Council, et al., 2007). Ralph (2011, p. 99) discusses the challenges of implementing these targets on the ground stating that the Council is 'struggling to make a good connection between strategic planning developed at the higher level and the neighbourhood level where change is planned' and that these targets will require 'major change to the existing built environment, and with this change comes community reaction and tension'.

The issue is also around the local community's desire to protect local character and the need to increase densities as well as issues of housing design, intensity and scale that comes with intensification (Ralph, 2011). Ralph (2011) also highlights that simply the word 'density' brings about polarised views which in turn influences political thought processes thereby determining whether the policy is even adopted by the council. In this case, intensification in suburbs was put on hold due to the ground swell of opposition to the Council's plan for these areas.

### ***Tangata Whenua***

A further aspect of the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy that sets this document apart from its predecessors is the level of recognition and involvement of tangata whenua in the strategy. Of particular note is the section in the Implementation Methods, 'Tangata Whenua', within the Enhanced Lifestyles section. This states that first and foremost, there will be 'a commitment to resourcing Tangata Whenua engagement at the Governance level...and participation in growth management policy development and implementation of the growth Strategy' (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 99). The authors also state that the strategy 'promotes the development of effective iwi and Hapu relationships. These are integrated into a governance, management, funding and operational structure that acts as a foundation for the sustainable management of sub-regional resources' (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 3).

The involvement of tangata whenua in this particular growth strategy is markedly different from any of the strategies that have gone before it. The previous strategies portray this aspect of growth management as a part of a process, and simply demonstrate that some effort has been made to consult with Maori. The SmartGrowth strategy goes beyond that, with tangata whenua involvement in all aspects of the strategy implementation, as well as references to local authorities working with tangata whenua to assist them with development of multiply owned Maori land, recognising as well as providing for the relationship of Maori and their cultural traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga. There is also reference to kaitiakitanga, a core principle of the Resource Management Act, which is absent from previous growth management policies. This is certainly a marked change from TUGS 1991 where there was a reluctance to truly engage with iwi and involve them in the development of the Strategy.

### ***Transport***

The SmartGrowth Strategy provides an extensive set of implementation actions under theme of 'Transport', which is part of the wider 'Efficient and Affordable Infrastructure' theme of the Strategy. The underlying premise of the transportation methods is

integrated planning, and as such the specific and ongoing actions of the strategy are set out under the headings of ‘integrated planning’, ‘corridor planning, development and management’, ‘development of alternative modes’, and ‘funding’. There is an emphasis on reducing the dependence on cars, and as such the strategy has identified three Smart Growth Corridors where land use and transportation planning will be focussed. The objectives of these corridors include, inter alia, efficient access to the Port of Tauranga, separating residential traffic from industrial and commercial traffic, accommodating different modes of transport, and contributing to the achievement of an integrated, safe, responsive and sustainable land transport system (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007). These objectives and the underlying premise of this section of the Strategy demonstrate the smart growth theory underpinning the Strategy.

### ***Monitoring and Review***

The Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy refers to the need to continuously review and monitor Smart Growth ‘to ensure that actions are kept up to date, and that the Strategy provides an accurate account of growth management activity in the sub-region’ (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 17). The key implementation methods of Smart Growth includes a monitoring and review method, which includes several key principles such as ‘Commitment to the establishment and on-going implementation of a sub-regional state of the environment monitoring approach by combining regional and territorial authority monitoring and reporting approaches. This is to include social, economic, environmental and cultural monitoring’ and ‘Regional consistency in monitoring and integration of information’ (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007, p. 176).

These principles reflect the integrated planning approach being used. Moreover, underpinning these principles are ‘Specific Action Areas’ which basically require monitoring of key assumptions and indicators that form the strategy, and to ensure consistency of information between the local authorities involved. For example, the first action is to ‘Monitor growth management drivers and trends in demographics, growth and development’ in order to enable continuous review and

improvement of growth management strategies. A mandatory action area is to 'Document and report on natural and physical resource indicators in Regional and Sub-regional State of the Environment Reports' - a requirement under the Resource Management Act

### *Summary*

This chapter of the thesis has presented an analysis of the relevant growth management documents of the Bay of Plenty Sub-Region over the period 1986 to 2007. The analysis has shown that there has been a clear evolution in the approach to growth management over this period. The early documents had an economic focus and limited regard for social, cultural or environmental issues perhaps with the exception of the community-driven 'Towards 2010' document. This reflects the contextual driving forces during this time, with a neo-liberal political ideology and uncertain economic climate prevalent. The more recent Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth takes a much broader approach to growth management incorporating a wide range of issues pertaining to urban growth and reflects the current planning concepts such as sustainable development and urban design. The next chapter will explore the growth management approach in the Waikato Sub-Region.

## **CHAPTER 6: CASE STUDY 2 – WAIKATO SUB-REGION**

### **Introduction**

This chapter provides an analysis of growth management policy in the Waikato Region for the period 1991-2009. The chapter begins with an analysis of the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy Discussion Paper 1991, which had a nine year planning period to 2000. This is then followed by analysis of the Future Proof Growth Strategy, a sub-regional document produced in 2009. That document required the Councils of the sub-region to produce their own growth strategies, and as such the remainder of the chapter is dedicated to discussion of the approach taken by each Council. The sub-region covered the jurisdictions of Waikato District Council who prepared the Waikato District Growth Strategy in 2009, Hamilton City Council, who have produced the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy 2008 (HUGS 2008), and Waipa District Council, who in 2009 produced the 'Waipa 2050' urban growth strategy. The Morrinsville area of Matamata-Piako District also forms part of the Strategy.

### **Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy – Hamilton's Growth to the Year 2000 Discussion Paper and Supplementary Discussion Paper 1991**

#### ***Context***

The Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy Discussion Document 1991 and Supplementary Discussion Document (HUGS 1991)<sup>4</sup> were produced shortly after the reorganisation of local government, which had taken place in 1989. The document notes how the Local Government Commission had recommended during the reorganisation that the boundaries of the Hamilton City Council territory be extended to cater for growth for the subsequent 25 years (Hamilton City Council., 1991). Thus the boundary adjustment took in portions of the former Waipa and Waikato Counties. The specific areas that this adjustment brought into the Hamilton City boundary included the Rototuna area to the North, the Riverlea area to the

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<sup>4</sup> For ease of reference the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy Discussion Document 1991 and the Supplementary Discussion Document are referred to as 'HUGS 1991'. Where necessary, the report distinguishes between the content of the two documents but generally they are treated as one strategy.

south-east, the Peacocke area to the south, two portions of the Rotokauri area in the north-west, and the Whatawhata Road area in the west. These areas were the subject of this particular urban growth strategy.

The purpose of the discussion document is stated as being ‘an informal, non-statutory process’ (Hamilton City Council., 1991, p. 4), providing an opportunity for the public to provide feedback on the strategy. It was the first part of a ‘process’ that would occur in stages, and culminate in changes to the District Scheme (or the new District Plan which was required to be prepared under the Resource Management Act 1991, made statute the same year). The overall intent of the growth strategy and managing growth for Hamilton was to ‘Maximise the benefits to people and the natural environment; minimise adverse effects; and achieve this within practical financial constraints’ (Hamilton City Council., 1991, p. 5). The Supplementary Discussion Document provides more detailed information on each of the study areas. It is understood that these two documents did not progress into a formal growth strategy for Hamilton until 2008, although it is not clear what status the recommendations in these documents had until the 2008 HUGS document.

The discussion paper notes that Hamilton was going through a period of ‘unpredictable and ongoing change’, and that due to the ‘dynamic political, social and economic climate’ of the time it was difficult to predict future trends with any certainty. Although it is not stated explicitly it is assumed that the authors are referring to the economic uncertainty of the time and subsequent legislative reform that had occurred during the late 1980s and early 1990s. As such, the strategy did not set out to provide a ‘detailed plan’ for growth for the total 2500 hectares the city acquired as a result of local government reform. The ‘short term goal’ of the strategy was therefore to simply ‘determine the appropriate urban land uses and subsequent zonings for the newly acquired land’. A key driver of the strategy was also to ‘establish new areas quickly in order to develop a sense of community and to ensure economic return on the initial outlay of public and private funds on services’ (Hamilton City Council., 1991).

***‘A process not a blueprint’***

It is highlighted in the discussion document that, from the Council’s perspective, the strategy should:

*‘Be a process not a blueprint.... It is unrealistic to have a blueprint for the future, covering 25 years of potential urban growth, which also governs present planning decisions. Being a process, the Urban Growth Strategy depends upon regular monitoring of the issues and their associated pressures, constraints, opportunities and relationships. This objective recognises that present decisions influence future growth directions. It also recognises perceptions of the future will change as attitudes to the key issues of the day change’* (Hamilton City Council., 1991, p. 8).

Although the growth strategy does not present ‘options’ or alternatives for accommodating growth, the principle of ‘process’ is consistent with the rational process view of planning; there is not necessarily one plan, or one particular end state, but in fact there is a process of planning and monitoring that needs to be followed in order to manage growth (Taylor, 1998). Urban growth management in Florida was approached in a similar manner during the 1980s to the 1990s and is described as process planning – a modified version of the linear rational planning that dominated the planning profession since the 1960s (Ben-Zadok, 2012). This model of decision-making demonstrated ‘a major rational movement toward goal achievement, combined with minor iterations and feedback loops at every step. This continuous revision and update process responds to social, economic, and political changes during implementation’ (Ben-Zadok, 2012, p. 204). Indeed this theory is ideal in a context of ‘unpredictable change’ and the strategy leaves the door open for changes in assumptions to be accommodated through the monitoring phase, and also due to the ‘high-level’ nature of the strategy.

***Environmental Considerations***

The environmental considerations in the strategy appear to be limited to topographical and natural aspects of the environment, and how these may present a constraint or an opportunity for development. For

example, it is stated that ‘environmental constraints are topographical, geographical and geological features’ and these include inter alia wildlife habitats, soils and gullies. Despite reference in the strategy to ‘sustainable management’ the concept of ‘environment’ appears to be limited compared with how the concept is used in relation to sustainable management as defined by the Resource Management Act. While it is noted in HUGS 1991 that the RMA requires the consideration of a wider range of matters compared with the previous Town and Country Planning Act, there appears to be limited emphasis in the strategy on the social and economic wellbeing aspects of the sustainable management concept espoused in the Act.

The Council describes itself as a ‘facilitator of urban growth’ and this is highlighted in the overall intent of the strategy (Hamilton City Council., 1991, p. 5). However, despite the references to ‘integrated management’ of the land resource, the focus is on the economic aspects of this management. For example, the Council views itself as facilitating growth which is assumed to promote ‘the overall economic and social well-being of the City’ – thus Council is making an investment for economic gains for the City (Hamilton City Council., 1991, pp. 20-21). The Growth Strategy is also seen to work in parallel with the Council’s economic policies such as the Economic Development Strategy ‘by incorporating economic development proposals which are seen to harmonise with overall urban growth principles’ (Hamilton City Council., 1991, p. 30). It appears that the Council is trying to gain a balance between economic growth and its obligations under the RMA, and an adjustment is apparent given the new Act and the broadening of environmental considerations compared with the previous Town and Country Planning Act.

### ***Focus on Greenfield Development***

It is notable that the HUGS 1991 document does not refer to infill residential development but focuses on greenfield growth areas. The assumptions outlined in the document refer to the desire for housing choice, and the use of existing facilities, but the main focus of all these assumptions is that greenfield growth is the priority. For example, one assumption is that ‘...By the time development has reached an occupancy rate of 80% on areas of residentially zoned

greenfield land, and 60% on industrially zoned land, additional land should be zoned to provide for an estimated five year period of growth'. Furthermore, the zones suggested for the new areas are based on existing zones, and there appears to be no plan to encourage infill development. The suggested zone for the first stage of development is 'Residential Low Zone' which has a minimum site size of 500m<sup>2</sup>.

The document does note, however that infill housing had been a trend of the preceding five years, with this type of development accounting for 31-38% of all new housing. However, the document does not define what it considers 'infill' and there appears to be no strategy to continue encouraging this style of development, despite reference to a continuing trend of this for the next five years, other than the provision for continued monitoring of the use of infill sections to identify if there are any changes that may affect greenfield development. It is unclear what this statement means. Overall it appears that the strategy of the Council was to allow the market to determine how development in existing areas would occur.

***Provision for development in the Growth Areas***

The discussion document and the more detailed supplementary discussion document outline the constraints and pressures for development in the growth areas. Five growth areas are discussed along with their suitability for residential development, suggested zones, and sequencing of development. These areas are Rotokauri, Rototuna, Peacocke, Whatawhata Road, and Riverlea. It appears that a significant amount of work was still required following the work undertaken for the Discussion Documents as these three growth areas have only recently been formalised in the District Plan. This highlights the time lag component of growth management.

With the exception of the Whatawhata Road and Riverlea growth areas, the Rotokauri, Rototuna and Peacocke areas have been subject to ongoing planning processes (Hamilton City Council., 2012b, 2012c, 2012d). The Rototuna Structure Plan was originally prepared in 1999, but has been subject of several updates in 2001 and 2004 culminating in the change to the Proposed District Plan being notified

in 2010 (Hamilton City Council., 2012c). The proposed change required to the District Plan to incorporate the Structure Plan is now subject to several appeals to the Environment Court, and as yet has not been incorporated into the District Plan (Hamilton City Council., 2012c).

The Rotokauri Structure Plan and the subsequent change to the District Plan was publicly notified in 2007, and now forms part of the Operative District Plan as of 2011 (Hamilton City Council., 2012b). The Peacocke Structure Plan was approved by Council in 2006, though further work has been undertaken to incorporate the details of the Southern Links roading study (Hamilton City Council., 2012d). The updated Plan was subsequently approved in 2007 (Hamilton City Council., 2012d). The District Plan Variation was publicly notified in 2009, with the Structure Plan incorporated into the Operative District Plan in 2012 (Hamilton City Council., 2012d).

### ***Iwi values***

Tangata whenua and iwi values appear not to be a feature of this discussion document. In fact, in discussing the constraints to development, community and iwi values are suggested as being social constraints (Hamilton City Council., 1991). While this is likely to simply imply that iwi values may limit the areas where urban development is appropriate, the discussion document does not appear to approach this issue in a collaborative manner. In the Supplementary Discussion Document, there is reference to waahi tapu sites and historical features such as Pa sites, which exist in the growth areas, but there is little in the way of discussion around how these features will be managed and protected once growth is signalled for these areas.

The Discussion Document does outline the new responsibilities for the Council under the Resource Management Act, section 6, Matters of National Importance. Section 6(e) requires that the Council recognises and provides for the relationship of Maori and their culture, traditions, with their ancestral lands, water, sites and waahi tapu and other taonga. The discussion document states that ‘The Urban Growth Strategy seeks to identify areas of particular interest to

Tainui people, the tangata whenua of the Waikato. In recommending various options for use of the water bodies, the strategy seeks to take into account Maori cultural values' (Hamilton City Council., 1991, p. 31). It is not clear if Tainui were involved in any workshops or formal discussions. It would seem then that iwi considerations are somewhat overlooked at this stage of identification of growth areas.

### ***Urban/Rural composition of Hamilton City - Protection of Farmland***

Despite the emphasis in the Town and Country Planning Act on protecting farmland and managing urban expansion, it would seem that the RMA did not compel local authorities to continue with this practice (Miller, 2011). There is little emphasis in the 1991 strategy document on this issue, with the focus being on the city. There is passing reference to the 'urban/rural composition' of the city, yet although it is identified as an issue, discussion is limited to managing reverse sensitivity effects of the proximity of the urban area to rural land use. It is noted in the document that the rural parts of the city have been incorporated as a result of 'the last boundary extensions' and that this has given the city a rural character. There is little mention of the value of this land to the area and how urban expansion can be managed accordingly.

This point is consistent with Miller's (2011) discussion of the RMA and how its focus on the natural environment, with little regard for urban growth, resulted in the loss of controls to protect farmland. Protection of farmland had underpinned previous planning legislation, and therefore, local authorities were compelled to control urban expansion. The RMA, however, took a different approach, and therefore these 'de facto' controls, were absent from planning provisions developed subsequently (Miller, 2011, p. 105). Zoning measures to manage land uses and subdivision only went so far as the legislation provides for developers to undertake private plan changes to rezone farmland for urban use, thereby challenging this method of urban growth management (Miller, 2011).

## **Future Proof: Knowing Our Future by Planning Today, Growth Strategy and Implementation Plan 2009**

### ***Context***

The FutureProof Strategy was released in 2009 and is a sub-regional strategy document produced as a collaboration between the Waikato Regional Council (Environment Waikato), Hamilton City Council, Waipa District Council and the Waikato District Council.

The strategy was developed as a result of concerns around a lack of collaboration between territorial authorities and the regional council regarding the issue of growth. This is highlighted in the strategy foreword, signed by the 'Independent Chair' of the Future Proof Joint Committee, a representative of the Tainui Waka Alliance, the Chair of Environment Waikato and the three mayors of the territorial authorities. The foreword is a political statement attempting to demonstrate that work is being done to address not only the issue of growth management, but also a perceived lack of intergovernmental collaboration at a local government level.

Statements in the media regarding the strategy seek to frame the reader's thinking in order to justify the approach taken. The Independent Chair, Doug Arcus, commented in the media press release at the launch of the project that:

*'By combining the resources of the Councils, a fully integrated strategy could be developed to manage and fund sustainable growth....this is a milestone for local government in this region...It is all about collaboration' (Holloway, 2008).*

In discussing the facts behind the strategy Mr Arcus comments that there is continued demand for housing and industrial land close to the city (Holloway, 2008). This will have impacts for the region if no planning is undertaken (Holloway, 2008).

Three years on from the strategy's development, a Waikato University Professor criticised the continued rezoning of land on the periphery of Hamilton (Rotokauri, Peacocke and Rototuna) rather than encouraging inner city living (Adams, 2012). However, the

Property Council argues that landowners are motivated by the land values that are applied once land has been rezoned residential, compared with retaining land for rural use (Adams, 2012). A Waikato Times online poll asked readers ‘Should constraints be put on how wide Hamilton can spread?’ with 76% voting ‘yes’ (Waikato Times., 2012). Although it is accepted that urban sprawl is a problem that needs to be managed, how it should be managed is up for debate when other stakeholders are involved. This may particularly be the case when Future Proof is implemented through the Regional Policy Statement and the District Plans.

### ***Sub-regional Collaboration***

Future Proof is a collaborative effort between the three territorial authorities and the regional council, and is described as ‘a new way forward’ (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 13). The focus of the strategy is on effective governance for the region that shows strong leadership and integration between key parties. It is stated that ‘Future Proof’s success will be determined by the long-term, formal commitment to collaboration between the key agencies and authorities and that integration is necessary to aid with obtaining funding from central government. Not only is the strategy a collaboration between the local authorities and tangata whenua, but Matamata-Piako District Council and the New Zealand Transport Agency are described as ‘supporters’ of the Strategy who have been involved in its development. The involvement of Matamata-Piako District Council was in relation to the influence of the Morrinsville area on growth within the sub-region. Morrinsville has a high growth rate and is in relatively close proximity to Hamilton City.

A further concept that is referred to in the Strategy in terms of its implementation is the use of ‘integrated planning’. The Strategy states that:

*‘The success of any strategy depends on an efficient and integrated planning process. It is essential that the community has full opportunity to participate and provide input into any decision making process to ensure an effective partnership. It is also important that the*

*partnership between tāngata whenua, the Crown and local authorities embrace the concept of kaitiakitanga.... Future Proof's success will be determined by the long-term, formal commitment to collaboration between the key agencies and authorities. Collaboration and liaison with Government Agencies will be implemented to ensure Future Proof's success.' (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 75)*

This relates not only to the collaboration described above, but also to the involvement of the community who are to be given 'full opportunity to participate and provide input into any decision-making process' (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 12). Moreover, the expectation is that the strategy partners will 'continue to engage and involve government and non-government agencies, the private sector, and the wider community' (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 12).

#### ***'Live, Work and Play'***

The FutureProof Strategy refers to 'live, work, play and invest' defining this phrase simply as 'a concept that encourages the provision of housing, business, investment, community activities and recreation within a local area' (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 198). The strategy uses the theme in relation to the development of Hamilton City in particular, but also in relation to the future growth of the smaller centres. This is encapsulated in one of the Strategic Themes: 'Diverse and Vibrant Metropolitan Centre linked to Thriving Towns and Rural Communities and Place of Choice – Live, Work, Play, Invest and Visit'. The description of this theme centres on the economic, cultural, social and environmental imperatives for Hamilton City and the towns and rural communities in the sub-region and the need for vibrancy and diversity. There is also emphasis on the need to protect versatile soils for continued agricultural production, the economic mainstay of the Waikato Region.

This theme can be directly linked to the liveable communities imperative of smart growth theory and urban design and sustainable development goals (Porter, 2002). A focus on place and retaining

what is valued by communities is apparent in FutureProof, and this has been at the core of urban design and, more specifically, New Urbanist theory (which feeds into Smart Growth) (Wheeler, 2004). Indeed a key outcome sought for the abovementioned theme in FutureProof is that ‘Principles of urban design have directed development in a way that encourages work, live and play environments’ (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 49). The expectation is that each territorial authority will incorporate these concepts in more detail in their own growth strategies and related documents such as the District Plan.

### ***Consultation***

Future Proof was developed with the input of the community at the initial stages of the strategy development, where the public were given the opportunity to provide feedback on three general growth scenarios: Scenario 1 – Business as usual, Scenario 2 – Compact Settlement, and Scenario 3 - Concentrated Growth. This consultation was undertaken in October 2008 and 66 written submissions were received. The majority of submissions supported a combination of scenarios two and three. As well as feedback on the three scenarios, consultation also revealed concerns around other areas such as public transport, rural and residential development. These formed the basis of guiding principles in the development of the Strategy.

Following this initial consultation, the three options were evaluated against criteria which focus on the Future Proof vision. The evaluation criteria were comprehensive, utilising a matrix whereby scenarios were measured against key objectives and the strategy vision. This evaluation process revealed that scenario three was best aligned to the strategy vision as it ‘was consistently the highest overall strategy elements and outcomes relating to natural environment, sustainable resource use and community “livability” and as a place of choice. In the long-term, these are the elements that will be the measures of strategy success’ (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 51). However, in the longer term a blend of scenarios two and three were considered appropriate, with medium term goal being

the compact development of scenario two, but moving towards the concentrated growth of scenario three.

A draft Future Proof strategy was then prepared with additional consultation undertaken, with hearings held for submitters to present their submission on the draft (Future Proof Website., 2013). The submissions on the Proposed Waikato Regional Policy Statement in 2010 highlight that there are mixed opinions about implementing the Future Proof Strategy by setting down a land use pattern and density targets for the sub-region. Some organisations (including the Waikato District Council) sought more flexibility and less prescription, while others welcomed more certainty in the direction of future urban development (Waikato Regional Council., 2011).

#### ***Monitoring and Review***

The Future Proof Strategy places a high priority on monitoring, placing it within the Implementation Plan of the Strategy. The strategy states that:

*'Monitoring provides an effective mechanism to inform Future Proof decision-makers and those who have implementation responsibilities about the consequences of actions, and changes in the community and the environment, in order to determine effectiveness of the implementation of Future Proof actions. For monitoring to provide meaningful information, it needs to have good quality data (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 84).*

A key concern is ensure data is up-to-date, the development of indicators on which to measure progress, and consistency between the local authorities in their state of the environment monitoring. This section of the Strategy highlights the extent of the planning period (50 years) and as a result of this the strategy is a living document. The inclusion of monitoring and review provisions allows consequences of particular actions, or changes in the social, economic, political or environmental context to be taken into account. Monitoring includes not only population statistics but also other social, economic and

environmental indicators that influence the rate and direction of urban growth. This monitoring is the responsibility of the strategy partners involved and this is set down in the implementation plan.

### ***Tangata Whenua***

A priority of Future Proof is that tangata whenua have a role within the governance of the Strategy. As such, tangata whenua are provided with opportunities to be involved with the implementation of Future Proof through representation on the Future Proof Implementation Committee, as well as a tangata whenua forum which provides ongoing input to the Future Proof project. Tangata whenua documents (such as Treaty Settlement Claims, iwi management plans and so on) are also given recognition in Future Proof as sources of information and action that need to be facilitated and implemented in the Future Proof Strategy implementation. A key implementation action also involves the development of a protocol on managing waahi tapu<sup>5</sup> and wāhi whakahirahira<sup>6</sup> that may be impacted by development activity.

The ‘National Context’ section of Future Proof recognises the significance of tangata whenua in referring to the United Nation’s Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This places the issue of indigenous people within the wider community, particularly in their traditional homelands, as an issue of global significance (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009). The Strategy relates this to the Treaty of Waitangi obligations between the Crown and hapu, which guide how tangata whenua, regional and district councils, and other government agencies exercise their roles and responsibilities. Future Proof states that:

*‘The outcomes from the settlement of grievances from breaches of Te Tiriti, coupled with ongoing capability and capacity building initiatives at individual, whānau, marae, hapū, and iwi level, will further influence the role*

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<sup>5</sup> Sites that are considered sacred or resources with cultural or spiritual importance for Maori and in particular the kaitiaki over the area (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 199).

<sup>6</sup> A sites of significance which may or may not be a waahi tapu (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 199)

*and participation of tāngata whenua in the successful implementation of Future Proof.'*

The Strategy also incorporates a 'Tangata Whenua Vision' in addition to the overall strategy vision. The Tangata Whenua Vision is 'Kia tuku atu ngā karu atua o te waka hei ārahi, hei arataki, hei tiaki To enable guidance, leadership and nurturing. Knowing our future by planning today.' In addition, the strategy recognises settlements that have developed around various marae – referred to as 'papakainga' development. This acknowledges that this is a traditional style of settlement for tangata whenua which has a role to play in the management of urban growth and the ongoing viability of marae. Papakainga development is recognised as a source of social, economic and cultural wellbeing for tangata whenua and taura here (Maori individuals and whanau who live within the sub-region but are tangata whenua of other regions).

Overall tangata whenua are not only acknowledged in the Strategy but are provided with opportunities to be involved in decision-making and implementation of the Strategy.

### ***Transport***

Future Proof identifies transport as a priority area for the Strategy, under the major theme of 'Affordable and Sustainable Infrastructure'. The purpose of this aspect of the strategy 'is to plan for growth and anticipated social and economic change in the sub-region that is well supported by a sustainable and resilient transport system' (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 136). Population growth in Auckland and the Bay of Plenty is identified as a key influence on the sub-region's transport network. The Strategy also identifies different issues such as increased demand on transport infrastructure and the funding available, increasing traffic congestion in larger urban areas, and concerns about urban sprawl, climate change and higher fuel prices, which have all 'converged' and led to a greater focus on land-use and transport integration rather than the 'predict and provide approach to transport provision' of the past (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009, p. 136). The Strategy directs the exploration of land use

mechanisms for transport management in the first instance rather than high-cost infrastructure solutions (Hamilton City Council., et al., 2009). This approach is demonstrative of current best practice in the planning discipline, and is also a fundamental component of smart growth.

## **Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy: A Compact and Sustainable City 2008**

### ***Context***

The most recent Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy (HUGS) was developed by Hamilton City Council in consultation with Urbanismplus (an urban design consultancy). The final strategy was adopted by Hamilton City Council in 2008. HUGS is described as the ‘spatial vision’ for Hamilton City which has been ‘enhanced through the development of seven other collaborative city strategies’ (Hamilton City Council., 2008b, p. 2). The Strategy has been developed on the basis that past planning was based on cost only and a new approach was needed. Moreover, the Strategy highlights that at the time of its production the population of Hamilton was approximately 140,000. This is expected to increase to 225,000 people by 2041 – an additional 85,000 people. Approximately 36,000 additional homes are required to accommodate this population increase. As such, it appears the Hamilton City Council is taking a much different approach to that of HUGS 1991, where the emphasis was on identifying growth cells for greenfield development.

The Strategy is the result of Council broadening the debate to a wider consideration of value delivered to the entire city (Hamilton City Council., 2008b). This approach is described as ‘a significant shift in thinking and a more holistic way of prioritising growth options’ (Hamilton City Council., 2008b, p. 2). The Strategy has also been produced on the basis that existing land development is inefficient and there is demand in excess of supply for industrial land. The goal is for Hamilton to remain economically competitive, and to ‘mend before we extend’ to maximise efficiencies (Hamilton City Council., 2008b, p. 7). There is also recognition of the ‘highly productive land’ surrounding the City, something that was not apparent in the HUGS

1991 document. Moreover, the HUGS 2008 document recognises environmental context, specifically recognising the pressure future population growth will place on resources such as water supply, improving the quality of the living environment, providing a range of section sizes and recognising the benefit of compact living.

### ***A Spatial Vision for Hamilton City***

The strategy is high level, setting out priorities for Hamilton's development and how the City will accommodate anticipated increase in population. The Strategy was also developed following an 'Enquiry by Design' process which saw the collaboration of 'key city planning disciplines....resolving issues as they arose and testing solutions in an integrated and dynamic manner'. The Strategy presents four growth approaches for the City, each focused on a specific tool for managing growth, thereby setting out priorities for urban growth in Hamilton City.

These aspects set the HUGS 2008 document apart from the preceding 1991 Strategy which, although a discussion document, was Council-driven and focused on constraints to development, and greenfield growth areas. It was not apparent in the HUGS 1991 document that collaboration, to the level evident in HUGS 2008, was a part of the development of that document. The 1991 document can be described more as a guideline signalling future development areas, whereas the 2008 Strategy, though high-level, appears more proactive perhaps reflecting the integrated approach now being taken in planning generally. Even the way the document is set out sets the tone, with simple terminology, and key points highlighted in large text. For example, a key question that is posed at the beginning of the document is 'If you imagine Hamilton's future, what would the city look and feel like?' and the facts around population growth are set out from the start in bold at the top of the page. A theme of the document is 'Enabling New Ways of Thinking' and within this it is stated that 'We need to challenge the current approach to city growth and determine the best future for Hamilton as a whole'. Indeed, it is clear that this spatial plan challenges traditional planning approaches to

growth management, and this is a core function of spatial planning (Royal Town Planning Institute., 2007).

### ***Compact development & Intensification***

A further point that was almost completely absent from the HUGS 1991 document (bar a brief mention of the trend of infill development) is the concept of compact development. The title of the HUGS 2008 document makes explicit the purpose of the spatial plan which is to move towards a compact city form. Compact development is seen as a way to 'proactively limit sprawl' and manage the city's urban footprint (Hamilton City Council., 2008b, p. 8). The strategy quotes urban designer and enquiry by design facilitator, Kobus Mentz, who states that 'Wherever viable we should 'mend before we extend', first strengthening our existing communities and workplaces in order to maximise benefits and efficiencies from amenities, public services, and infrastructure' (Hamilton City Council., 2008b, p. 7). This is a way of stating that the previous approach to urban growth (which focused on greenfield expansion) has been poor.

The approach in the Growth strategy is to regenerate existing areas and improve the quality of the living environment. While this is part of urban design, it is intertwined with the approach of encouraging compact development; residents need to see examples of good quality compact development before they will be motivated to live there. This was highlighted by the then Hamilton City Mayor, Bob Simcock, following Council's adoption of HUGS 2008, when he stated that 'Everyone acknowledges that intensification has already occurred and most are horrified in how it has evolved. The community subsequently has good reason to be concerned about how we deliver more compact living environments and manage how these are appropriately integrated into existing communities' (Hamilton City Council., 2008a para. 8).

The Strategy notes that currently average section sizes are between 600 and 700 square metres and this is driving urban sprawl and increasing costs of land. The approach in the Strategy is to provide a range of section sizes in the City which would include sections for compact living such as town houses and apartment living. Thus

Growth Approach 1 is that ‘Over the next 10-20 years, approximately 50% of Hamilton’s new dwellings will be increasingly provided through regeneration of existing parts of the city... This regeneration will focus in and around key nodes including CityHeart, transport hubs, suburban centres and areas of high public amenity such as parks and the river.’

Although HUGS does not go into detail about design of housing, it is clear that the strategy aims to see careful design and location of higher density housing in Hamilton. Indeed it is stated that if quality living environments are to be provided, Council and developers will need to be more selective about the areas where compact development occurs. The Strategy also provides images of different styles of compact living including ‘City Heart’ ‘Suburban Centres and Transport Hubs’ and ‘Areas of High Amenity’.



*Image 1: Examples of compact living environment densities in the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy 2008 (Hamilton City Council., 2008b)*

### ***Prioritisation of Growth Cells***

The Strategy acknowledges that while compact development is required, there will still be a need to ‘extend’ through greenfield development. This is due to the fact that only 50% of the anticipated growth will be able to be accommodated in existing parts of the city (infill). The growth areas identified in HUGS 1991 – Rototuna, Rotokauri and Peacocke - are expected to accommodate the remainder of growth, with each of these now having structure plans outlining proposed land use in these areas.

This approach emphasises housing choice, which is a core aspect of smart growth theory (Porter, 2002). This is in turn in recognition of the changes in housing preferences and household structures such that people want to see more liveable communities. HUGS does not go

into detail about how the greenfield areas will be developed, however the benefits of developing in Peacocke are listed and include its proximity to employment, the Waikato River, recreational opportunities, and opportunities for public transport, walking and cycling (Hamilton City Council., 2008b). Greenfield developments traditionally are low density, and this has been problematic for smart growth efforts (Porter, 2002). The challenge for Hamilton, if it is to develop a compact form, and proactively manage urban sprawl will be to encourage greenfield development that is designed to be compact, multi-use, walkable, with a mix of house types, and is master-planned (Porter, 2002). The compact form should recognise the highly productive soils that are also highlighted in HUGS 2008 surrounding Hamilton City.

## **Waikato District Council District Growth Strategy 2009**

### ***Context***

Moving from the predominantly urban local authority area of Hamilton to the more rural Waikato District, the Waikato District Growth Strategy was prepared in 2009 to coincide with the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) 2009-19. It also coincided with the development of FutureProof. The anticipated population growth for the District as outlined in Future Proof is an increase from 44,000 in 2009 to 87,000 in 2061. This combined with changes in household size has led the Council to the conclusion that the District will need to more than double its housing supply. The Strategy can be thought of as one that is a sub-set of Future Proof, taking the guiding principles of that document and applying them to the Waikato District. The Strategy is not comprehensive, extending to 13 pages in length, and is written in basic report format – this is in contrast to Hamilton’s 2008 Growth Strategy which is only 20 pages in length. The Strategy is set in a much different context to Hamilton, where the setting is largely rural. Thus the focus of the Waikato Growth Strategy is much more on how growth needs to be managed in a way that protects the resources that underpin the District’s economy.

### ***The need for a growth strategy***

The document highlights that the District has lacked a formal growth strategy and that growth has been primarily managed through the

District Plan on an ad hoc basis. This suggests the Council has generally taken a hands-off approach, but perhaps now there is a sub-regional drive for collaboration, the Council is more inclined to manage the growth issue. Growth in the district has been driven by the market. The predominant forms of residential development have been lifestyle development and more recently low density 'executive housing' on the periphery of Hamilton City.

The primary driver of the strategy is the affect this development is having on the productive use of the land, being a predominantly agricultural based economy. Moreover, the strategy asserts that the trend for lifestyle block development is a result of a lack of housing choice within Hamilton City, rather than a driver within Waikato District itself. Development is therefore occurring on the periphery of Hamilton which demonstrates how the negative impacts of urban sprawl go beyond jurisdictional boundaries (Wilson & Song, 2011). Indeed, the study undertaken by Wilson and Song (2011) posited that large scale residential subdivisions lead to a higher rate of residential development in the immediate vicinity of the development.

#### ***Existing Villages and Townships***

Growth will be directed to existing villages and townships in order 'to sustain the district and its critical natural, physical, and economic resources into the future'. This will include revitalisation of these areas. The Council aims to achieve a reversal of the existing trend of 80% of development in rural areas, to 80% of development in existing urban areas. This is said to be consistent with the FutureProof Strategy which aims for consolidation and compact development in existing settlements.

A core concern of the Strategy is that the trend for lifestyle development threatens 'critical environmental resources' of the district which will be ever more important for the District's economy (Waikato District Council., 2009, p. 7). These resources include versatile soils, productive lands and environmental assets and the strategy identifies these as requiring protection. The environmental assets referred to are the coastline and outstanding landscapes of national significance. There appears to be a sense of urgency around

the need to protect these resources and the severity of the growth issue, with the Strategy stating that:

*‘An essential part of the strategy for protecting this resource is to halt the explosion of residential development into the countryside and direct this into the district’s townships. Safeguarding the countryside against the economic and social pressures that arise from uncontrolled development will provide certainty for the continued operation and investment in rural businesses, both in terms of traditional production industries and new opportunities that will be created by the growth of the district’s towns’ (Waikato District Council., 2009, p. 12)*

The use of the phrase ‘halt the explosion’ in this statement suggests a sense of urgency and seriousness with the situation. The authors could have used ‘manage’ or ‘reduce’ but the word ‘halt’ has been used instead, with a much stronger undertone. It is similar to what Maccallum and Hopkins (2011, p. 495) have described as ‘systematic assumptions about cause and effect’ in which the reader is told under no uncertain terms the likely outcome if current trends – in this case lifestyle development – continue into the future. In fact the whole Strategy is written in this way with most key points in the strategy leading back to the effects of unmanaged growth on the District’s economy.

### ***The ‘Golden Triangle’ & Critical Infrastructure***

A fundamental consideration underpinning the Waikato District Growth Strategy is infrastructure. This appears to be of fundamental importance for the growth of the District and is linked directly with its location in relation to Auckland (north) and Hamilton (south). The District is also located in the centre of ‘the Golden Triangle’ – the relationship between Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga, particularly the complementary port facilities that each provides and the communication and transport between them. The Waikato District is the source of much of the raw materials and goods that go to the

respective ports. The productive capacity of the district underpins the wealth, economic capacity and quality of life of the region as a whole.

The growth strategy stresses the point that the District is a key source of energy and resources servicing the Auckland and Waikato Regions and in particular that demand for these resources will only increase. Thus the strategy is written from the perspective of the economic benefits of managing growth. While there is an emphasis on this critical infrastructure, there is also recognition that Council will play a fundamental role in protecting it. For example, the Strategy states that Council will need to provide certainty to the market by investing in new infrastructure and services to meet the needs of residents and ‘a clearer, more interventionist approach is needed’ (Waikato District Council., 2009)

#### ***Agriculture & Soils***

The Waikato District is heavily reliant on its high quality soils and dairy farming activity as a source of wealth and employment. This is not only important for the District, but also contributes to the overall economic capacity of the Waikato Region. There is also a trend towards horticultural forms of farming in the District. Therefore, the Strategy sees this aspect as a driving force for the control of urban growth in the District and this provides impetus for the goal of directing development into existing villages and town centres. The Strategy notes how the ‘introduction of urban values into a rural setting’ has put pressure on agricultural activities to reduce their effects such as noise, dust and vibration which would otherwise be considered normal in a rural environment.

This issue is highlighted by Nelson (1992) in his discussion of the economic impacts of urban development on farmland. Continued urban development near farmland, or in the case of the Waikato district, amongst farmland, creates ‘spillover effects’ imposed by the urban development on rural activities (Nelson, 1992). One such spillover is the eventual ‘regulation’ of farming activities in order to curb their effects on adjacent urban development which consequently serves to undervalue the use of rural land for farming activity, and overvalue the land for further urban development (Nelson, 1992). In

the case of Waikato District, a concern is likely to be the reverse sensitivity effects created by recent and unchallenged lifestyle development, on the agricultural activities that are the backbone of the District and Regional economy. According to Nelson (1992), the closer farming activity occurs to urban development, the less valuable and productive this land will be for agricultural use.

## **Waipa 2050**

### ***Context***

The Waipa 2050 strategy was produced in 2009 by the Waipa District Council, with the assistance of planning consultancy Beca. The Strategy was borne out of the requirement of FutureProof that individual councils would produce their own growth strategies. The document is considerably more comprehensive than its Waikato District counterpart. It is clear that a considerable amount of resource has been dedicated to the Strategy; not only due to the presentation, but also given that Beca was commissioned to put the strategy together.

It is anticipated that over the life of the Strategy there will be an increase of 27,000 people living in Waipa. The Strategy is part of a wider ‘integrated suite of planning tools and approaches’ which includes this Growth Strategy, town concept plans for five ‘urban’ settlement areas, an Environment Strategy which focuses on rural, landscape, cultural, heritage protection and development, and the District Plan as the key implementation tool (Duffy, Douch, & Hill, 2010, p. 2).

### ***Vision***

The Waipa 2050 Growth Strategy is underpinned by a specific vision for the district: ‘Uniting the people of Waipa for progress while sustaining the environment.’

The Strategy picks up on a key phrase of FutureProof, ‘live, work, and play’. The phrase is applied locally by linking it to the District’s tourism brand – ‘Home of Champions’. This brand reflects the success of members of the Waipa community at the Olympics and various World Championship sporting events such as rowing and

equestrian (Duffy, et al., 2010). Indeed, Waipa District Council has sought to continue with this brand and enhance it through all of its areas of responsibility, including its Growth Strategy (Duffy, et al., 2010). The use of this brand in the growth strategy is not only a continuation of the District's marketing philosophy, but also highlights that the strategy, through managing growth, aims to 'champion' best practice in growth management and ultimately a more sustainable settlement pattern. A key driver of this has been concerns raised by the community about the status quo approach to development namely 'that many of the key elements of the urban characteristics that endeared the District to people were being eroded' (Duffy, et al., 2010, p. 1).

This approach can be seen in light of the broader goals of 'smart growth' which aim to address a wide range of issues within towns and cities (Howell-Moroney, 2008). Indeed, one such goal of smart growth that is mentioned throughout this research is the notion of creating 'liveable communities'. The aim is that these communities, through the implementation of smart growth, can have a better quality of life through, inter alia, increased social capital. In the case of Waipa, the assumption is that the District will experience increased social capital through management of future growth, based on the notion of Waipa as the 'home of champions'. This is also about the making of place and an identity for the District which is an important aspect of liveable communities (Porter, 2002). As Porter (2002) highlights 'Place making is accomplished through the sharing of experiences, the invention and celebration of rituals and traditions, and the design of the built environment to nurture sharing and celebration'. By building Waipa 2050 around the notion of 'Home of Champions', the District can identify with the goals of the strategy and its vision, as residents recognise the brand name which is their identity.

#### ***Managing the rural environment***

Similar to the Waikato District, a driver of the Growth Strategy has also been concern around the impact of urban development on the rural parts of the District which are significant in terms of their scale

and economic benefit for the District and wider region. Indeed, the Strategy lists two constraints to Rural living in Waipa – the lack of control over rural subdivision and the reverse sensitivity effects of residential development within the rural environment. In terms of managing the rural resource, the constraints and risks facing the District include private plan changes and rural residential subdivisions reducing the availability of prime agricultural land and access to aggregate and mineral resources as well as minimal protection of ecological corridors. Agricultural activities also continue to take place close to peat lakes and waterways.

Inherent in this is the issue of reverse sensitivity in terms of residential development in the rural environment, and rural land practices in close proximity to natural resources. This is a complex issue, with balancing required to a) provide for growth sustainably b) provide for the continuation of the productive use of prime soils, and c) protect natural resources. Indeed in relation to a) and b) the discussion in the previous section on the Waikato District on the work of Nelson (1992) is reiterated. The risk inherent in allowing urban development in close proximity to rural activities is that eventually urban development ‘wins’ out over rural land practices that in this case underpin the economic development of the Waikato Region, as the ‘nuisance’ effects created by legitimate productive farming are incompatible with residential activity, and ultimately end up being regulated or limited as a result. In terms of c), a key issue in the Waikato over the last decade or so has been the effects of dairy farming on waterways.

### ***Town Centre Plans & Urban Design***

Growth is directed to existing town centres and villages. To this end, the Waipa 2050 project has involved the establishment of Town Centre Plans for Cambridge, Kihikihi, Ohaupo, Pirongia, and Te Awamutu. These plans were developed from information in the Growth Strategy and community feedback. Each concept plan provides an analysis of the land use and zoning, existing and future character of the area, and sets out objectives and principles for the

town. The concept plans have an urban design focus, with character areas defined, connections and view shafts identified.

There is also guidance on urban sustainability and low impact infrastructure solutions. Provision for a range of housing is signalled in these concept plans; however there is a strong desire to retain existing character where a lower density of development is appropriate. Indeed, given the smaller scale of Waipa's urban environment in comparison with Hamilton, there is not the need to intensify to the extent signalled in the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy 2008. A common theme amongst all of the concept plans is to consolidate the town centres and make them walkable and well-connected. These town centre plans are part of the liveable communities concept, providing for growth but ensuring that this is done in a planned and managed way that maintains existing character but allows this to be enhanced. The core principles of urban design are inherent in all four Town Centre Plans.

Similar to spatial plans, the Town Plans are certainly focused on long-term development of the area, guide infrastructure provision albeit at a high level, and are multi-disciplined and strategic (Ministry for the Environment., 2010). The Plans do not set out regulation but in fact will guide the development of the second-generation District Plan. The Town Plans are part of the wider Growth Strategy process, but can be viewed as a transformation in the planning approach for Waipa District. Indeed, strategic spatial planning such as this is described by Albrechts (2006, p. 1152) as a 'transformative and integrative (preferably) public-sector led sociospatial process through which a vision, coherent actions, and means for implementation are produced that shape and frame what a place is and what it might become'. In line with this approach, the Waipa Town Centre Plans have involved a review of the risks and constraints facing the urban environment in the context of the status quo approach to growth management.

### ***Tangata Whenua***

Tangata Whenua values are a priority of the Waipa 2050 strategy, with a whole chapter dedicated to 'Tangata Whenua Perspectives'.

Tangata whenua are recognised as partners in the Growth Strategy project, a series of hui were held during the consultation phase of the strategy's development, and tangata whenua have identified key themes that are of relevance to them. These include on-going capacity and capability building of tangata whenua, including the settlement of outstanding claims in relation to Treaty of Waitangi breaches, and an increasing Maori population. The assumption is that tangata whenua will have a greater influence on social, political, environmental and economic structures in Waipa. A further theme of relevance is the acknowledgement, protection and enhancement of the biodiversity and cultural aspects of the district. Overall tangata whenua are supportive of the move toward sustainable transport and infrastructure as signalled in the Growth Strategy.

A further point of note is references to the settlement of Treaty claims and subsequent management of rivers and waterways in the district. This section of the Strategy signals that clarification of roles and responsibilities will be required in this regard. Papakainga housing is also signalled as a future form of settlement for tangata whenua, albeit in a slightly different approach to that of the present time – that is it is unlikely that in 2050 Papakainga development will be limited to multiple-owned maori land around a marae complex. It is more likely that this form of development will also include communities living in and around waahi tapu, and wahi whakahirahira on privately owned general title land. Thus papakainga development may appear in the future in the same manner as other forms of urban development.

A key implementation method set down in the Strategy is the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Waipa District Council and tangata whenua. This MoU ‘...seeks to provide an initial, high level understanding of the relationship between Tāngata Whenua and Council. It also seeks to capture high level principles, values and aspirations of Tāngata Whenua along with priority actions to be undertaken’ (Waipa District Council., 2009, p. 70).

Although this approach to involving tangata whenua in planning is a step ahead of other territorial authorities, it is not the approach advocated by Matunga (2000). The Waipa approach is still very high level, with little in the way of a ‘dual planning’ approach encouraged by Matunga (2000). It does however signal that some responsibility will be given to tangata whenua in the management of resources such as the Waikato River, as a result of the Treaty Claims Settlement. However, elsewhere it could be argued that the chapter simply serves to show that consultation has been undertaken with tangata whenua. The section does refer to ‘capacity and capability building’ as being a key growth management theme for tangata whenua and this is an aspect that has been suggested as essential for the active involvement of iwi in plan making (Miller, 2011). A key issue will be how the relationship between the Council and tangata whenua will be viewed – typically the relationship is seen by the former as a legislative requirement and by the latter as a ‘long-term, ongoing and meaningful relationship’ (Miller, 2011, p. 151; Neill, 2003, p. 4).

### ***Community consultation***

The Waipa 2050 strategy has been established following a process of community consultation. The Growth scenarios were developed and consulted on to ‘gather a broad range of perspectives and opinions’. Consultation included one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders, public open days in the main towns, and an opportunity for informal feedback. A series of hui were also held with tangata whenua. A community workshop was held with ‘key members of the community’ in order to confirm the growth scenarios, confirm evaluation criteria to be used, apply a weighting to the criteria and assess the scenarios using these criteria. In addition to this consultation on the Growth Strategy itself, the Town Concept Plans were developed following community visioning workshops in each of the towns. These workshops were intended to introduce the local communities to Town Concept Plan phase of the Waipa 2050 project. Workshops were held with the general community, with high school students and with local iwi. These workshops involved participants identifying issues, potential solutions and writing their own vision

statements which fed into the final vision statement for the Town Concept Plan.

The consultation process for the Waipa 2050 strategy appears to be fairly comprehensive, with opportunities provided to the community for involvement in both the growth strategy and the Town Concept Plans. However, it is fair to say that there was more community involvement in the development of the Town Concept Plans, in terms of real engagement, than with the Growth Strategy itself. The workshop for the Growth Strategy was limited to 'key members of the community'. It is not known who these 'key members' were, but it is likely that they would have been members of the development community and community organisations. Open days and the normal submission process were the avenues for the general public. The approach taken for the Town Concept Plans is similar to the deliberative democracy described by Hopkins (2010), although formal decision making was not the purpose of community involvement.

### *Summary*

This analysis of key growth management documents in the Waikato sub-region has shown that, until recently growth management has been somewhat ad hoc, or in some cases non-existent. The Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy Discussion Document 1991 and Supplementary Discussion Document were an attempt to direct growth to identified growth areas. However, the documents were high level and demonstrated the neo-liberal political underpinnings of the time. Compared with the more recent documents HUGS 1991 was focused on greenfield growth and lacked guidance on infill or intensification of the City. The more recent FutureProof growth strategy, along with each Council's own growth strategies, demonstrates a shift in thinking in the Waikato region, towards 'Smart Growth'. This change in thinking appears to be commensurate with changes in planning practice generally and appears to have come as a result of pressure to address the issue of urban sprawl, particularly as it relates to Hamilton City.

The changes in planning practice are also apparent with the move to a sub-regional collaborative approach, and the emphasis on urban design as a key method for managing the move to compact development. There are clear differences, however between the three territorial authorities in their approach to implementing Future Proof and establishing their own growth strategies. HUGS 2008 and the Waikato District Growth Strategy are both very high level, while Waipa 2050 is more comprehensive with its associate Town Concept Plans. Nevertheless, the plans all have common themes being compact urban development, protection of agricultural land, and sustainability.

## **CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION**

### **Introduction**

This Chapter of the report brings together the themes of each of the case study documents that were identified in the previous two chapters. This discussion returns to the methodological framework to analyse these themes and to draw some conclusions in terms of comparison between the different documents over time, and also against the literature that was explored in Chapter 4.

### **Contextual Driving Forces**

The preceding chapters have highlighted that growth management in the Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions is symptomatic of specific economic, political and social ideas operating in New Zealand during two clear periods – the late 1980s-early 1990s and the 2000s. This conclusion parallels Galland's (2012) assertion that the practices and hierarchical structures of spatial planning change as a result of the constant pressure that a series of economic, socio-cultural and political driving forces exert upon them. Some aspects of these driving forces are specific to New Zealand, while others are evident of more general or international themes.

### ***1990s Political Economy***

Economic values are a feature of all the documents to varying degrees. The documents of the early 1990s were very much focused on cost savings and on economic efficiencies. This is evident in the WBOPUDSS, the TUGS 1991 and the HUGS 1991 documents. Although these documents were all produced within a five year period there was a change within the economic environment during this time, with a positive economic climate in 1986 when the first Bay of Plenty document was produced, and an economic recession by 1991. The impact of the economy on urban growth and vice versa underpins these earlier documents at the expense, in most cases, of social or environmental considerations.

A conclusion to be drawn from the analysis is that the economic climate and the political ideology of the time are not mutually exclusive, and in fact in the case of New Zealand they go hand-in-

hand when analysing policy responses in this climate. This is termed the political economy (Gleeson & Grundy, 1997). The Resource Management Act 1991 was one result of this political climate, described as a 'revolutionary step' that 'promised a new era for planning' (Miller, 2011, p. 2). The existing system under the Town and Country Planning Act 1977 was considered inefficient and an obstacle to development (Miller, 2011). According to Miller (2011, p. 2), under the new legislation 'planners... became resource or environmental managers supported by an array of policy analysts drawn from a range of other disciplines from the biological sciences to economics'. This of course is arguably the intention of the RMA, with its focus on integrated environmental management. With the passage of the RMA, the environment was at the heart of the planning process, but at the same time development interests were also a consideration with a focus on efficiency. The new legislation promoted sustainable management and the management of environmental effects, rather than the separation of land use activities. In essence the idea was that activities should be able to locate anywhere provided their effects were 'avoided, remedied, or mitigated'.

The documents that were produced in both regions between 1986 and 1992 all illustrated this political and economic climate and its effects on planning practice. The WBOPUDSS focuses on the 'economic advantages' of developing closer to Tauranga and a market-led and efficient strategy. In 1991 the Tauranga Urban Growth Strategy was produced during a period of economic decline, particularly within the kiwi fruit industry, and kiwi fruit orchardists looked to subdivide and sell off portions of their land for residential development in response (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991; Tauranga District Council., 1991). In Hamilton, the unpredictable economic and political climate prevented the Council from committing to any clear cut strategy or targets for urban development (Hamilton City Council., 1991). And finally, the Towards 2010 document produced by the Western Bay of Plenty District Council on behalf of the community has a 'hands off' perspective, with economic imperatives underpinning the document.

This general attitude towards planning, of which growth management is a part, was not unique to New Zealand, and is evidenced in the United Kingdom, the United States, Europe and in Australia at the same time (Allmendinger, 2009; Galland, 2012; Gow, 2000; Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011). Applied to the planning discipline, this was a period of neo-liberal planning which reflected the more general political and economic ideology of the time (Allmendinger, 2009). Furthermore, the analysis has demonstrated that planning in this period was characterised by a shift away from strategic planning, such as growth management (Albrechts, 2006). This shift is in line with the neo-conservative/neo-liberal theory of the time which espoused a ‘disdain for planning’ (Albrechts, 2006, p. 1149) and in growth management terms relegated planning documents in favour of strategic agreements with the private development sector (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011). This perspective is evident in the earlier documents analysed in this report, whereby the strategies have tended not to set out particular targets or have limited their scope to simply identifying areas for future development and stopping short of zoning or stating when exactly new land will be opened up for development. For example, structure plans for the greenfield areas in the HUGS 1991 document took several years to come to fruition, and have only recently been adopted and implemented.

### ***Widening the policy ambit***

Since the 1990s there has been a widening of the ‘policy ambit’ within the planning discipline and which is reflected in the growth management documents studied here (Gleeson, Darbas, & Lawson, 2004, p. 351). This shift is likely to be a response to growing discontent from the public about poor environmental outcomes and economic restraint which came as a result of neo-liberal principles. In contrast to the economic imperatives synonymous with the late 1980s and early 1990s, the early 2000s showed a broadening of the approach to planning and growth management. Gleeson et al. (2004) outline this point in their examination of the emergence of the governance and sustainability imperatives in Australian metropolitan planning. The period between the mid-1990s to the present day has seen the evolution from economic restraint to the realisation that an

integrated approach is necessary, the basis of which is ‘sustainability and cooperation’ (Gleeson, et al., 2004, p. 354). This approach emerged out of the Brundtland Report of 1987 and discontent with the restrained approach to planning that had dominated from the mid-1970s (Gleeson, et al., 2004).

In New Zealand this shift in ideological thinking at a central government level saw the introduction of the Local Government Act 2002 and the incorporation of the ‘four wellbeings’ into the purpose of local government. Both the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy and Future Proof incorporate the wider sustainable development considerations of economic, social, cultural and environmental wellbeing and how these influence, or are influenced by, urban growth. This approach parallels Porter’s (2002, p. 1) definition, reviewed in Chapter 4, of smart growth where he highlights the need to balance economic, environmental and social imperatives. It also reflects similar developments in Australian planning where links between land use planning and many other matters for which government is responsible are brought together within a spatial plan (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011).

Miller (2011) notes that the LGA 2002 was intended to provide for a more strategic planning approach for local government in dealing with complex issues. While it provided for the creation of Long Term Council Community Plans, it has also provided the opportunity to prepare urban growth strategies. A key issue, however, has been the disjointedness of the sustainable *management* purpose of the RMA, and the sustainable *development* purpose of the LGA 2002 (Miller, 2011). This has led to a multitude of different planning documents in addition to the statutory plans produced under the RMA (Miller, 2011). While there is great potential for the plans and strategies to be integrated there is a lack of guidance on how to join up the strategic plans with the district and regional plans (Miller, 2011). Nevertheless, the strategic plans studied in this research do attempt to ensure they flow through to first the RPS and the District Plan which assists in joining up the planning tools.

## **Layers of Policy Discourse**

### ***Environment and Sustainable Development***

The case studies demonstrate the evolution of environmental considerations, through to the broader sustainable development concept under which planning operates today.

The WBOPUDSS in particular lacks emphasis on environmental issues with the final report limited to a brief summary of the findings of the Environmental Assessment that informed the final strategy. It would seem, however, that the assessment was focused around how the environment of each growth area could accommodate new development, with discussion limited to design elements, rather than impacts on natural features or other aspects of the environment which would be considered today. The TUGS 1991 document similarly lacks an environmental focus, but does utilise the concept of greenbelts which, although seem to lack a definitive purpose, appear to also be applicable for a number of purposes, including providing an area of open space for the community to enjoy, providing a 'buffer' to reduce reverse sensitivity effects between residential and rural activities, and to apply to areas that were too unstable to be utilised for residential development.

The Towards 2010 document, however, stands in contrast to the two preceding documents and is described as having 'a strong environmental bias' (New Zealand Local Government., 1992, p. 28). This document has a specific section dedicated to the 'physical environment' which is seen as 'the district's most important asset' (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 8). The goal of this aspect of the document is 'To conserve and enhance the physical and natural environment of the Western Bay of Plenty', using terms such as 'intrinsic qualities' and so on which were not a feature of the preceding two documents (Western Bay of Plenty District Council., 1992, p. 8).

In terms of the Waikato, the HUGS 1991 Discussion Paper does refer to 'sustainable management' and the constraints to development posed by topography, geography, and geology. This use of

‘sustainable management’ is interesting, given the term is used in the purpose of the RMA which was introduced in the same year. It is noticeable, however, that the focus in HUGS is on the economic component of the concept, rather than an overall approach which would see the inclusion of environmental, cultural and social aspects in addition to the economic aspect. Perhaps this is demonstrative of the early stages of the Act and the fact that this document was not produced under the RMA, it simply contributes to an RMA process (that is the development of the District Plan).

The more recent documents of the 2000s demonstrate a broader understanding of the elements that make up ‘the environment’ and of course the ‘sustainable development’ concept which has become the underlying philosophy of planning. The Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth vision espouses this focus early on in the strategy, and the themes are evidence that the environment, as defined in a sustainable development context, is a key priority, if not *the* priority. While the strategy contains a theme entitled ‘Natural and Cultural Environment’ what is considered ‘the environment’ is not limited to these natural and cultural resources. It is clear that other themes all contribute to ‘the environment’ in various ways. For example, ‘Enhanced Lifestyles’ and ‘Efficient and Affordable Infrastructure’ contain elements that are fundamental to a quality environment.

Urban design considerations are also now considered to make a significant contribution to the quality of the built environment (Lunday, 2003). The HUGS 2008 document emphasises the need for urban renewal and urban design in order to create a quality living environment, thereby managing growth effectively. The Waipa 2050 strategy and the associated Town Concept Plans seek to enhance the built environment, while also identifying and recognising the key elements of the natural environment that need to be managed alongside growth. For the Waikato District, environmental considerations are noted with provision of quality environments for new housing development and protection of critical environmental features being highlighted. The Waikato River and its importance in terms of a quality water supply is also a feature of the more recent

Waikato documents, particularly in FutureProof and in the Waikato District Growth Strategy.

The ‘Live, work and play’ concept is a feature of both BOP Smart Growth and FutureProof. Although defined slightly differently, the key point to note from the use of these concepts is that a more holistic approach to growth management is being taken today than in the past. The focus is not simply on one aspect of the community be it economic or infrastructure, but is on how all the elements within a community or urban area work together to create a more sustainable environment. It is in line with the smart growth concept of ‘liveability’ (Porter, 2002, p. 78). Todes (2011, p. 116) has highlighted that planning was once seen ‘as an irrelevant discipline obsessed with spatial ordering and control’ but has been ‘revisited’ and ‘reinvented’ to play new roles in managing the growth of cities in ways that promote their sustainability, inclusiveness and liveability’.

This evolution in terms of the environment and sustainability is commensurate with the international literature on the progression of the sustainable development agenda. According to Wheeler (2004, p. 23) it was not until the release of the Brundtland Commission report in 1987 and the Rio Summit in 1991 that the concept ‘entered the mainstream internationally’. Furthermore, the evolution of what was an academic concept into a conventional phrase is summed up by Miller (2011, p. 3) who states that ‘It has escaped the lexicon of the academic and has entered the language of the general public, to be applied not only to environmental issues but also to almost every aspect of life, requiring anything and everything to be sustainable.’ Given the concept is not well-defined, it is not surprising that it has taken some time to underpin growth management in the case study areas (Miller, 2011).

### ***Protection of Versatile Agricultural Land***

While the protection of farmland is a general concern of growth management practices internationally, it appears that it is not a priority, particularly as it applies to large metropolitan areas. In New Zealand, and this is highlighted in both case studies, the protection of versatile land and soils, or productive agricultural land is a priority.

While the earlier growth management documents did identify urban encroachment onto productive land as an area of concern, it was not until the more recent Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth and FutureProof strategies that the real importance of this land to the regions was emphasised. Moreover, the rather generic term ‘productive land’ is utilised in the early documents, whereas the recent documents refer to ‘versatile soils’ and ‘versatile land’. This possibly demonstrates an evolution in the depth of knowledge of soils and production since the 1980s. The Town and Country Planning Act 1977 set out matters of national importance, including ‘the avoidance of encroachment of urban development on, and the protection of, land having a high actual or potential value for the production of food’. This was certainly carried forward to the WBOPUDSS, which recognised the protection of productive land among several other factors as part of the ‘wise use of resources’. The term ‘productive land’ continues to be used in the TUGS 1991 Strategy, and ‘productive soils’ is a feature of the HUGS 1991 Discussion document.

This is in contrast to the more recent documents which refer to ‘versatile soils’ and ‘versatile land’, recognising that the terminology has changed. While ‘productive’ invokes a sense of usefulness, the term ‘versatile’ suggests a much broader understanding. The effect of this may be that protection of farmland at all costs is no longer the driving force, but instead there is recognition that land that is currently used for cropping, for example, may in the future need to be utilised for pastoral farming, or indeed for future residential development. This change in terminology also recognises the imperatives of sustainable development, whereby reliance on one particular resource may not be appropriate in light of other environmental or social concerns (for example, residential housing may be a more appropriate use of the land resource than farmland).

Notably, protection of productive land in the RMA does not fall under a matter of national importance, but is considered to be one of many factors to be considered as part of section 5 and the ‘sustainable management of natural and physical resources’ for future generations. Section 7 (‘Other Matters’) would allow consideration of productive land, but as part of a wider range of considerations. So there is now

an acceptance that under the RMA, productive land is not the only concern in meeting the purpose of the Act, and that versatile soils do not have the primacy they had under the previous legislation (Tauranga City Council., et al., 2007).

### ***Integrated Planning, Roles and Responsibilities***

A feature of the more recent growth management documents has been the concept of ‘integrated planning’. Integration was not a feature of the documents of the late 1980s/early 1990s, and this is largely because there was no obligation for local authorities to have an integrated approach to growth management. The more recent documents demonstrate a better understanding of what the concept of integrated management means in practice. This demonstrates the concept of ‘intergovernmental collaboration’ which was explored in the literature review, and is an essential component of smart growth theory (Porter, 2002, p. 165). While this collaboration has been difficult to achieve in the US, it appears that in New Zealand, it is easier to achieve, albeit between local and regional government levels. However, intergovernmental collaboration has only occurred in recent years, more than a decade after the reorganisation of local government and the inception of the RMA.

While the earlier strategies were undertaken by individual territorial authorities, the more recent strategies have had a sub-regional approach, and in the case of the Waikato additional growth strategies underpinning the sub-regional strategy at the territorial authority level. While the sub-regional approach takes a subset of the region as its focus, the approach generally corresponds with the international literature which indicates that a regional approach is the ideal level for successful growth management. This regional approach is somewhat contradictory to the New Zealand literature which suggests that to date regional councils’ roles have been obscure and in reality disappointing for both its constituents and central government (McNeill, 2011; Miller, 2011).

This new sub-regional approach is in line with Wheeler’s (2004) suggestion that such an approach is necessary to overcome issues around piecemeal planning which lacks the full commitment by

political leaders. Setting broad goals and policy directions at higher levels of government is suggested as a way of achieving more consistent outcomes across the region, and the more detailed policy occurs at the district or local level (Wheeler, 2004).

Indeed, both Future Proof's and BOP Smart Growth's implementation is intended to occur first through changes to the RPS followed by more detailed district plan mechanisms alongside the growth strategies. However, it could be questioned how binding the strategy really is in a legal sense as while there is an understanding between the partners of the respective strategies, legislation does not legally bind any of the parties to its content (unless there are subsequent provisions in statutory planning documents such as the RPS). In the US, such documents are legally binding requiring that different levels of plans be consistent with each other (Wheeler, 2004). This, according to Wheeler (2004, p. 99) puts 'teeth into planning'.

Both strategies are supported by a strong formal governance component, incorporating an implementation group or committee and a series of actions are assigned to this group. The purpose of this group is to facilitate the strategy implementation and delegation powers are assigned to the group. Moreover, Memorandums of Understanding underpin the more recent strategies, providing a formal agreement between parties. Given the accounts of both Gow (2000) and Porter (2002), it would seem that New Zealand is ahead of the US as far as a regional approach to smart growth is concerned.

This is in contrast to many regional councils in New Zealand during the early phases of the RMA, when, according to Miller (2011, p. 49), most regions concentrated on 'the basic natural resources of air, water and soil' while the three main regions of Auckland, Wellington and Canterbury all addressed urban growth and containment. Miller (2011) suggests that this is due to the size of New Zealand and the economic dependence on agriculture and other primary industries, thus similar issues are dealt with across the country. Peart (2007) also argues that few regional councils have delved into the issue of growth management, and that in fact the RMA provisions around the RPS should be strengthened to the point that these documents are a

regional spatial strategy outlining where development should or should not be located, maps highlighting these areas, clear implementation mechanisms, and monitoring requirements.

Nevertheless, the subsequent change to the RPS and the regional direction for urban growth would have been a significant change for local authorities in both sub-regions as this additional focus on urban growth and containment was not considered a typical responsibility of the Regional Council. Indeed, the RMA responsibilities of regional councils are actually resource management focused rather than planning per se, which does cause issues and debates around what the regional councils' function should be (Miller, 2011). On the other hand, Miller (2011) suggests that as a result of a lack of guidance from central government on the topic of growth management, collaborative and innovative approaches have been necessary and this has seen regional councils more willing to undertake growth management.

This hierarchy of plans and agents to implement the strategies, is part of integrated environmental management and according to Gow (2000) has been hard to achieve in the United States as few states have a regional authority with any significant influence. The predominant type of regional oversight in the US is described as 'ad hoc and advisory' – put together for a specific issue or overview of an issue, without jurisdictional independence or regulatory mechanisms (Gow, 2000, p. 15). Where growth management has been carried out in the US, it occurs under an authoritative governance framework, where the regional level government has metro-planning responsibilities and planning and management responsibilities for major infrastructure, as well as financial resources, and regulatory powers (Gow, 2000).

It can be argued that New Zealand's structure of government overcomes some of the issues that other countries may face where the structure is more complex or where authorities are given little financial or regulatory capability. Growth management is said to be most effective when undertaken at the regional level, and as such in

this respect the examples explored in this research have achieved a regional approach.

### ***Monitoring and Review***

Not only are the recent documents evidence of integration of institutions, but also demonstrate the integration of ‘actions across time’ (Barton, 1993; Miller, 2011, p. 57) – that is the monitoring of outcomes which is set down as a method in both the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy and the FutureProof strategy. Both strategies seek to develop indicators to focus monitoring and to utilise state of the environment reporting (required under the RMA), which is to include social, economic, environment and cultural monitoring.

This monitoring and review component of these growth strategies parallels the conclusions and recommendations of Gow (2000) after his observation of growth management in the US. While effective growth management strategies cannot be driven by technocratic methods, the technical aspects play a key role in not only developing the strategy, but also keeping it as a living document through ‘ongoing investment in information and monitoring, and updating through reviews’ (Gow, 2000, p. 93). However, it has been observed by Carlson and Dierwechter (2007) that evaluation of growth management policies and strategies has been lacking due to the absence of reliable evaluation methods. It is important that monitoring data is easily interpreted and communicated not only to policymakers but also to politicians and the public who may question the effectiveness of growth management policies. Porter (2002) highlights that monitoring indicators need to be developed collaboratively with the community. Likewise, the monitoring provisions of the Bay of Plenty and Waikato strategies are largely technical and financial, rather than monitoring by the community.

The older growth management strategies also contained monitoring and review recommendations. For example, the WBOPUDSS suggested that as the strategy was a ‘framework rather than prescription’ the community would need to review growth trends and amendment to the strategy may be required. Monitoring was to focus

on urban consolidation trends, impacts of economic change, changes in immigration patterns, and changes in location or housing type preferences. It is notable that there was no mention of monitoring natural resources. The TUGS 1991 strategy referred to monitoring only once as a policy, and this is in relation to infill development. The HUGS 1991 strategy, described as ‘a process not a blueprint’, was underpinned by monitoring of trends, but as a high level strategy did not set down any concrete targets in the first place.

By comparison, the more recent documents, taking an integrated approach, seek to monitor all aspects of the environment, not simply demographic or economic trends. The Future Proof Strategy has set density targets, for example, to be achieved over the life of the strategy (50 years). It is interesting that Hamilton City Council was reluctant to set targets for a 25 year planning period in 1991, yet nearly 20 years later, managed to set targets for a 50 year planning period, noting the need for continuous monitoring of trends. Nonetheless, the monitoring and review of strategies and plans has been a part of a rational planning process since the 1970s (Taylor, 1998). To varying degrees, all the strategies demonstrate the notion that goals and policies need to be adapted to the particular circumstances of the day and that particular actions may lead to a change in policy (Taylor, 1998).

***Urban Design, Mixed Use Development and Sustainable Transport***

A key feature of the more recent growth management documents has been the emphasis on urban design principles, particularly in relation to the intensification of housing and mixed use development. This is particularly evident in the HUGS 2008 strategy, and the Town Concept Plans produced as part of Waipa 2050. Elements of the concept are also apparent in Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth. Urban design was not a feature of the earlier documents.

In the Bay of Plenty, previous growth management strategies tended to promote the intensification and infill goals, but lacked any guidance around how the city and towns should be designed to accommodate growth while contributing to quality of life. Indeed, these are concerns that the smart growth theory tries to address, and

Porter (2002) notes that past practices of higher-density development and society's desire for low-density greenfield development make compact and mixed use development difficult to achieve on paper. However, it is notable that the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth consultation saw the community support a mix of both intensification and greenfield development. This approach is consistent with the suggestions of Giles-Corti (2011) who warns of the need to consider the social and health effects of intensification as a solution to urban sprawl. However, as was noted in the Bay of Plenty case study chapter, the reality of the intensification goals in SmartGrowth has been realised by the community and has received negative feedback which has led the Council to halt the implementation of intensification projects (Ralph, 2011).

The live, work, play and invest concept that is used in both strategies is also demonstrative of the urban design focus that is increasingly a fundamental component of planning, and specifically growth management. This theme can be directly linked to the liveable communities imperative of Smart Growth theory and urban design and sustainable development goals (Porter, 2002). Within the notion of 'live, work and play' is the idea that towns and cities need to be designed to accommodate growth in a manner that avoids sprawl and encourages compact development, allows for the retention of character and making areas more functional in terms of their walkability, access to parks and open space, public transport, mixed use development and so on. This is evident in Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth, Future Proof, HUGS 2008, and Waipa 2050.

It is interesting that the Waikato District Growth Strategy does not incorporate the urban design concept, yet consolidation of existing towns and villages is a priority. The 'regeneration' of these centres is referred to but there is no detail on how this will progress and whether there are any specific tools to be used to regenerate these areas. This may simply be demonstrative of the priority for the Waikato District, which is the protection of their economic base – agriculture.

The urban design theme is also evidenced throughout the recent strategies in other imperatives, such as sustainable transportation.

This is referred to as smart transportation or ‘expanded mobility’ by Porter (2002, p. 43), and is linked to urban design and increased liveability goals because the type of land use development is a determinant of the mode of transport that is utilised (Porter, 2002). In New Zealand, there has been an increased emphasis on the provision of sustainable and integrated transportation systems which incorporate alternative modes of transport. This is another essential component of smart growth theory and in New Zealand is promoted by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) (Dunbar, McDermott, & Mein, 2009; Miller, 2011; Porter, 2002). This idea of sustainable transport and promoting alternative modes of travel was not a feature of the earlier growth management documents. This is likely to be a reflection, once again, of the neo-liberal approach that pervaded all levels of government at that time, where transport was not considered an issue and travel by private car was engrained in New Zealand lifestyles (Miller, 2011).

Indeed, establishing public transport systems in New Zealand continues to be fraught with difficulty particularly because the RMA does not contain provision for sustainable transport or integrated land use and transport planning, despite its sustainable management purpose (Miller, 2011). However, the recent growth strategies reflect the importance placed on sustainable transport, and the functions afforded to Regional Councils in terms of the Regional Land Transport Strategy. Both the Future Proof and BOP Smart Growth strategies utilise a ‘growth corridor’ approach to transportation planning, with these corridors intended to be the focal points of integrated land use and transportation. This recognises the need to create compact and mixed use development that is located in close proximity to key transportation infrastructure. Indeed, this approach is consistent with the philosophy of transport planning in modern times, that is the end of the ‘predict and provide’ mentality (Ravetz, 2000, p. 87).

## **Agency**

### ***Involvement of external organisations***

Not only has consultation with the general public improved, but also collaboration with other agencies and local authorities is a feature of these later documents. The involvement of central government in the earliest of these documents, the WBOPUDSS, however is noticeable. In contrast, growth management documents in the early 1990s were developed by the local authorities themselves (or local authorities have engaged planning consultants to assist). The more recent strategies have been developed as a result of collaboration between regional and territorial authorities, but these approaches have also included some central government agencies, notably the New Zealand Transport Agency (formerly Land Transport New Zealand). This demonstrates a cycle which is commensurate with wider legislative and political reforms – centralisation to decentralisation and, to an extent, back to centralisation again (Boston, Martin, Pallot, & Walsh, 1997).

### ***Tangata Whenua***

The level of involvement of tangata whenua and local iwi and hapu has also evolved. It was evident in the 1986 WBOPUDSS that although consideration of Maori values was acknowledged, this was on a limited scale and it seems that the areas for urban growth were already decided prior to consultation taking place. Matunga (1989, p. 3) describes legislative changes and court rulings of this period in terms of ‘Local government...being compelled to acknowledge Maori values – particularly within its resource management functions’. However, the WBOPUDSS approach illustrates how iwi were either left out of the plan development process entirely or were viewed as simply another group to be consulted with (Ericksen, et al., 2004; Matunga, 1989, 2000).

Local government at this time was also constrained by ‘monocultural’ legislation which focussed too narrowly on land use and Maori and balancing ancestral land against other issues of ‘national importance’ (Matunga, 1989, p. 3). Indeed, the TUGS 1991 study attempted to involve iwi in the development of the final strategy, but faced difficulty in making contact with the appropriate marae of the area.

The decision was made to press on and finalise the Strategy as it was deemed to be ‘in the public interest to publish the growth strategy report on the assumption that the dialogue with the maraes will continue and that specific studies on the future of Maori land holdings and marae development will be undertaken by Council’ (Beca Carter Hollings & Ferner Ltd., 1991).

By comparison, in the more recent growth management documents, particularly for the sub-regional strategies, tangata whenua are *partners* in the strategy, such that they have had a role to play in the development of growth options and in the final strategy implementation. The Waikato Future Proof strategy actually begins with a mihi written by the Maori King, King Tuheitia. ‘Tangata whenua’ is also a specific theme within Future Proof and within this is recognition of concepts such as papakainga development and the role these settlements can play in growth management. The Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy recognises tangata whenua as a ‘sub-regional issue’ to be addressed.

The Waipa 2050 strategy also incorporates this approach and devotes an entire chapter to tangata whenua. Though a high level approach, this is considerably advanced in comparison to the earlier growth management documents. For the Waikato District, tangata whenua values centre on Ngaruwahia as the official residence of the Maori King, and the opportunities this presents for revitalisation of the township. The recent signing of the Deed of Settlement between local iwi Waikato-Tainui and the Crown is also mentioned with regard to the importance of the Waikato River to the District.

The subject of indigenous rights and the need to incorporate this into strategic growth management projects is not addressed in the international literature. This brings a unique element to the growth management literature, as the issues that must be addressed in planning documents in New Zealand need to incorporate the particular concerns of local iwi, and address the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. There is now an acceptance in New Zealand planning that these values and principles should be at the core of planning processes, and indeed long term strategic planning is of vital

concern to tangata whenua given the particular relationship they have with natural resources.

However, it is evident that this has not always been the case in terms of growth management, and while it is the researcher's observation that vast improvement has been made, there is still a long way to go to adequately address these issues in council planning documents (Kennedy, 2008). Interestingly, Webster (Webster, 2011, p. 146) notes that very few Councils in New Zealand have actually been shown to follow their own best practice methods and memoranda of understanding with Maori, particularly where these support 'shared decision-making' and promote a 'strong on-going relationship'.

### ***Consultation and Community Engagement***

A notable difference between the early growth management documents and the more recent strategies is the approach to consultation and community engagement. The majority of the documents of the late 1980s and early 1990s were Council-led and consultation with the public or other agencies was minimal. The two exceptions are TUGS 1991 and Towards 2010. TUGS 1991 sought feedback from the community on six growth options via a newspaper flyer and written submissions, as well as a series of public meetings. The Towards 2010 document can be treated as a community driven process, and facilitated by the Council.

The approach taken for the development of the Towards 2010 plan can be seen as an attempt at 'deliberative democracy' (Hopkins, 2010). The purpose of such approaches to plan formulation are an attempt to make plan making a more equitable process, involving all affected groups in decision-making. The plan process reflects what Hopkins describes as the introduction of the governance discourse in the 1980s, which has led to governments operating in a 'shared power world' where the role of the state in bringing about change is reduced.

While a nomination process was used for Towards 2010, there is no description provided of who selected the names from the nominations received, nor the criteria upon which people were selected. Without knowing what sectors of the community were represented it is difficult to make a judgement, however it can be argued that there

may not have been a level playing field. As the literature has shown, planning processes can still favour the dominant local economic interests, such as landowners and developers, and economic interests play a significant role in policy development, particularly during times of economic recession (Hopkins, 2010).

There is a lack of information on the public response to the HUGS 1991 Discussion Document; however some conclusions can be drawn on the level of public involvement. This document itself was the starting point for consultation. The growth areas in the supplementary document have been progressed to structure plans since 1991 and one can only assume that the Council's stance did not change dramatically following consultation on the 1991 documents. One observation to be made is that the HUGS 1991 Discussion Documents were comprehensive, and technical in nature. It could be argued that the public may have found this an overwhelming Council document to provide feedback on, such that the information provided to the community does not necessarily encourage them to participate in a meaningful way, nor does the material provided communicate in 'accessible language' (International Association of Public Participation., 2003; Reeves, 2005, p. 141).

The strategies of the last decade have shown the growth and change in this particular area of planning in general, where it is now an expectation that such documents will be developed with some level of community involvement (Reeves, 2005). Indeed, a learning from the United States growth management approaches has been that local authorities need to genuinely seek out the views of both the private sector and the community in developing growth strategies (Gow, 2000). It is insufficient today to simply take a technocratic approach to plan development and decision-making (Gow, 2000; Reeves, 2005). Both the FutureProof and the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategies involved the community at the initial stage. Unlike the TUGS 1991 Strategy these documents presented three growth options based on ideas of the urban footprint, rather than on predetermined growth areas. The community were able to provide feedback on the preferred style of growth, rather than having to choose between specific areas pre-determined by Council.

### *Summary*

This chapter has provided a deeper analysis of the two case studies explored in the preceding chapters by utilising elements of the analytical frameworks of Galland (2012) and Maccallum and Hopkins (Maccallum & Hopkins, 2011) and elucidating the key themes that answer the research question posed in Chapter 1. In terms of contextual driving forces, the chapter has shown how the political economy was influential on the growth management approaches in the Bay of Plenty and Waikato in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The neo-liberal ideology of central government permeated through to local government policy and had a dramatic impact on the planning discipline in New Zealand. Concerns regarding the environment and sustainable development have taken some time to come to fruition in growth management policy and this is a reflection of the challenges planners faced at the time in implementing a concept that had no clear definition.

In terms of policy discourse, the case studies have both shown an element of growth management that is somewhat unique to New Zealand, in the concern of the effects of urban growth on ‘productive land’ and, as it is now termed, ‘versatile land’. This element demonstrates a wider concern with the need to protect New Zealand’s agricultural base as well as recognition that this needs to be balanced with economic and social needs. Further, the growth strategies of the 2000s have shown the implementation of ‘integrated planning’ with collaboration between different levels of government and with external agencies being a key feature of these documents, and which was not evident in the earlier documents. A further development has been greater concern in the more recent documents with liveability and urban design, as well as the impacts of transportation on urban form. These elements reflect the progression of the sustainable development concept.

Finally, in terms of agency the involvement of tangata whenua in growth management has evolved over time, with tangata whenua now playing a key role at the governance level. Again, this is a unique element of growth management which is not apparent internationally - simple ‘consultation’ is not sufficient to meet Treaty of Waitangi

obligations. Lastly, consultation and community engagement has also progressed, with the community now being involved at the initial phases of strategy development, rather than later on after predetermined decisions have been made.

## **CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION**

This research set out to answer the following question: ‘What factors have influenced urban growth management policies in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions over the period 1986 to 2009?’ The preceding chapters have sought to provide answers to this question, starting with a review of the literature. An adapted discourse analysis framework from the literature was then utilised to provide insight. It is clear from this discourse analysis that the approach to urban growth management in the two case study areas has evolved considerably since the mid-1980s. This evolution has been a result of the political economy at a particular given time as well as shifts in the approach within the planning discipline at a national and international scale. A few key points should be highlighted in this conclusion.

First, as with any analysis involving a temporal component, the political and economic driving forces have been major factors in the approaches to growth management, particularly during the late 1980s to mid-1990s. Each of the documents reviewed from this period appear to have been written from a neo-liberal viewpoint with the economic and financial benefits of growth management prioritised over the social and environmental benefits. It was not until the 2000s that this approach changed, when the economic climate was more positive and political ideologies had changed. This is an interesting component, highlighting how central government policies and philosophies permeate through to local government.

The documents from 1991 and 1992 also appeared to be written within the context of the RMA such that the purpose of the strategies was to assist with the development of the new district plan. There appears to have been a high level of uncertainty through this period. It can be concluded that this was partly to do with uncertainty as to how the RMA was to be implemented as well as economic uncertainty. These strategies had short planning time frames (10 to 20 years) with few commitments made to growth targets or when growth areas would be opened up for development. In contrast, the later documents from the 2000s make definitive and measurable commitments and the scope of these commitments is considerably wider extending to a

wide range of matters including quality of life and alternative transport.

Secondly, the evolution of the sustainable development concept of the period 1991 to 2009 is evident. It appears that as time has progressed, knowledge and understanding of just what constitutes sustainable development has improved, with much firmer commitments being made to the concept by local authorities. Given the concept generally only emerged into mainstream planning after the 1991 Rio Summit, it is to be expected that it was absent from the WBOPUDSS in 1986, and arguably the TUGS and HUGS documents of 1991. With the exception of WBOPUDSS the earlier documents tended to either not refer to sustainability at all, or opted for the 'sustainable management' terminology, reflective of the use of this term in the RMA. By contrast, 'sustainable development' is at the forefront of the latter documents. For example, the sustainable development model is the centre of the vision for the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy. This may indicate the influence of the Local Government Act 2002 in which sustainable development is a core function of the Act and which provided the opportunity for more strategic planning.

Third, the emergence of the smart growth and new urbanism concepts is clear in the latter documents. Strategies to manage growth have advanced from the traditional 'predict and provide' approach of urban growth management, to the more sustainability oriented approach of smart growth. This has enabled a holistic view of urban growth from the economic issues through to quality of life and environmental concerns. An example of this is the housing typologies that are promoted in the more recent documents, in particular the push for infill and townhouse (medium density) styles of living. While infill may have been occurring in the early 1990s, this method of compact urban form was not promoted as an option. Instead the priority was greenfield growth and, in line with the neo-liberal approach, little or no direction was given as to the form of residential development required. The current growth strategies encourage a range of housing and development types, including greenfield development. This is coupled with concerns for how these developments are designed and

their proximity to transportation, schools, shopping areas and employment – the ‘live, work and play’ imperative.

However, it is unclear as to how the ‘smart growth’ strategies will play out in reality. The evidence from Tauranga City Council described by Ralph (2011) demonstrates that moving the Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy beyond a high level strategy will be challenging. Community concerns about residential intensification remain strong and elected Councillors appear to be reluctant to progress the intensification project further at the current time (Ralph, 2011). Part of this is to do with common perceptions about what an increase in density means for existing communities, and part of it is how the Council’s proposed policies are communicated to those who will be most affected. This has been reflected in the literature as well, and it appears that a prerequisite for successful growth management (or smart growth) is communicating effectively with the community and trying to allay common misconceptions about intensification. Nevertheless, it seems that increasing housing density will continue to be a controversial topic, such that any real change in development patterns will not be visible for some time. What can be noted however is the difference in approach between these recent strategies and the earlier documents where it is clear that a laissez-faire approach was taken and any notion of residential intensification was absent from plans to manage growth.

A fourth point is the development of integrated planning from a regional perspective. The earlier documents were insular in terms of the agencies involved in their development. Typically these documents were developed solely by the local authority (the exceptions being the WBOPUDSS and Towards 2010 documents). The two sub-regional growth strategies – Future Proof and SmartGrowth – have both been developed collaboratively with the regional and district councils and other agencies such as local iwi and the New Zealand Transport Agency. Not only has this resulted in more comprehensive strategies, but this has provided the holistic approach referred to earlier.

This holistic approach is an essential part of smart growth and it can be concluded that New Zealand is in a unique position with regards to its governance structure. As regional councils in New Zealand have regulatory abilities which are related but generally separate from district and city councils, collaboration has been arguably much easier to achieve than in the United States where regional government typically has an information sharing role but little regulatory capability. This has hindered the success of smart growth policies in the US. Although the focus of this research has not been on the success or otherwise of the strategies analysed, it can be concluded that due to the ability of the documents to be enshrined in regulation (through the regional policy statement and then district plans), there is a higher chance of success in implementation.

Further integration is apparent within the legislative context. Growth management strategies are not a requirement by statute, however can be seen as local government implementing its obligations under three key pieces of legislation – the Local Government Act 2002, the Resource Management Act 1991 and the Land Transport Management Act 2003. While this may demonstrate the rather fragmented nature of the statutes under which planning in New Zealand operates, the point is that at the beginning of the study period only the Resource Management Act influenced the growth strategies (and in the case of WBOPUDSS, the RMA was not yet in existence). In terms of managing growth, these three statutes are interrelated and have important functions, particularly with regard to the smart growth concept. Essentially the Future Proof and Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategies bring together the obligations under each Act into one document.

Community input into development of growth strategies also appears to have improved somewhat since the early 1990s, although there remains room for improvement. The earlier documents appeared to place less emphasis on the consultation element of strategy development than the present day strategies. The earlier documents did not emphasise the importance of public input. The exceptions to this are the Towards 2010 document and the TUGS 1991 strategy. Towards 2010 was a community document facilitated by the Council

and the TUGS 1991 process did seek the input of the community which, compared to the Hamilton equivalent (HUGS 1991) is a point of difference. It appears that feedback from that process was incorporated into the final strategy.

Overall, however, it is unclear how much input the public really have had in the growth management documents throughout the period analysed. One could draw the conclusion that while it appears to be good practice to provide a choice of growth scenarios for the community to choose from, as is the case in the more recent strategies, provision of information is key and all the documents appear complex and technical to the lay person. The later documents, while more comprehensive than their earlier counterparts are lengthy documents, such that the ability for the general public to provide thorough feedback may be limited. Again, the Tauranga City Council example demonstrates that the community most affected by plans for residential intensification need to be involved from the outset and visual images are an important factor in communicating a clear message.

An important factor to be borne in mind in New Zealand is the use of high level strategic planning to begin with, and then following through to the specific regulatory documents of the Regional Policy Statement and District Plans. While a long term strategy is desirable, the risk is that people may only become involved and raise concerns at the latter stages, where regulation is being set. This is largely because this is the level at which they will be affected be it through rezoning or a change in the density limits in their neighbourhood. In some cases it may not be until well after the District Plan change has become operative that the public understand how the proposal will work in reality. As such it is important that the community engagement process is robust and that it makes clear how the strategy will be progressed into 'reality' from the outset.

Nevertheless, there is a vast difference between the earlier documents and the more recent ones in terms of the emphasis placed on community engagement. Even the term 'community engagement' suggests something more than 'consultation' which was used in the

earlier documents. So from this perspective the approach to developing the strategies and implementing them in the future has improved. Indeed, the reference to ‘governance’ and ‘leadership’ as part of the smart growth package in these latter documents is testament to the importance that is placed on managing these aspects of urban growth into the future.

The New Zealand context also provides two additional aspects to growth management which are not evident elsewhere. The first of these is the protection of agricultural land which appears to be a key driver of smart growth strategies in the two case study areas. While it is acknowledged that the protection of farmland is one driver of growth management generally, it is argued here that it has not been a priority internationally. It is however, a priority in New Zealand due to the reliance of the national economy on the production of commodities from the land. Urban expansion onto versatile land is therefore a major issue for both the Bay of Plenty and Waikato regions – the former being a high producer of horticultural products such as kiwifruit, and the latter being a major dairy farming region. Both of these commodities are a major contributor to the New Zealand export market.

Not only this but the (limited) literature on this aspect of urban development highlights the need to protect versatile land not only for the continued production of existing crops and pastoral farming, but also to enable this land to adapt to other uses which may be necessary in the long term. This again comes back to the sustainable development concept, but is largely unique to the New Zealand context given the lack of diversity in terms of national income. This is both an environmental and economic factor in the current approach to growth management which was not prominent in the earlier documents analysed. This has been a feature of the more recent growth management strategies.

The second aspect that is certainly unique to New Zealand is the input of tangata whenua in growth management policies and the effects of these policies on the local iwi. Again, the earlier documents did not give great consideration to this aspect of planning. Today, however, it

is an expectation that planning documents include tangata whenua in their development and that the strategy or policy will provide for iwi values and aspirations. This aspect of planning has taken a considerable amount of time to develop. The documents of the 1980s and 1990s did comment on Maori values, but this was generally in a cursory form, with no real substance. More recently, iwi have been included in the development of strategies to a greater extent, with tangata whenua principles included in the implementation methods. There are also iwi representatives on the implementation committees for both Future Proof and Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth. This has positioned local iwi at the table as decision makers rather than simply as another group to be consulted with. This is a key point to be taken from the evolution of growth management in New Zealand.

These aspects that are unique to New Zealand demonstrate how international concepts such as smart growth are not totally transferrable from one context to another, without regard for differences in contextual driving forces. While many of the smart growth principles are apparent in present day growth management in New Zealand, some are more apparent than others. Associated with this is how the concept has played out in New Zealand. It appears that the smart growth practice took some time to emerge in the planning field in this country, with state governments in the US developing policies under this framework since the mid-1990s. The smart growth concept appears to have been taken up in New Zealand within the last decade with the original Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy having been adopted in 2004. This was then reviewed in 2007. In the Waikato, the Future Proof strategy was adopted even later in 2009 with the underlying district-level documents being developed and adopted around the same time.

Furthermore, the New Zealand local government structure enables a more collaborative and integrated approach to managing growth although this has taken over a decade to come to fruition. The separate regulatory jurisdictions of regional and territorial authorities appear to lend themselves to an effective ‘whole of government’ approach to growth management at a strategic planning level. The emphasis placed on governance and accountability through the joint

implementation committees compels the strategy to be implemented through regulatory mechanisms beginning with the Regional Policy Statement and filtering into District Plans.

There are also some similarities and differences in approaches to growth management between the two case study areas. Based on the information available, it appears that the Bay of Plenty councils have taken a more proactive approach to managing growth than their Waikato counterparts over the study period. While both regions have developed sub-regional growth strategies, the Waikato Future Proof relies on the individual councils also producing their own growth strategies. These appear to be mixed in terms of their comprehensiveness with Waipa 2050 appearing to be well-resourced and a clear commitment to smart growth has been made by the Waipa District Council. Waikato District on the other hand is very limited with few targets committed to and is simply a reiteration of Future Proof. Hamilton's HUGS 2008 is also brief but focuses in on the need to improve urban design outcomes in order to facilitate the intensification targets required for the City.

The different approach taken between the two case study areas in these latter documents demonstrates a difference in the commitment to collaboration in managing growth. The Bay of Plenty SmartGrowth strategy does not rely on the individual councils developing their own strategies, but simply requires some implementation methods to be achieved such as incorporation of the strategy principles and targets into the respective District Plans and Regional Policy Statement. Of course an explanation for this is also the different contexts. Tauranga City and Western Bay of Plenty District are in close proximity to one another with similar growth issues. On the other hand, Hamilton City, Waipa District and Waikato District are quite distinct, with much of the intensification aimed at Hamilton.

In sum this research has shown that approaches to growth management in both the Waikato and Bay of Plenty have evolved considerably over the period 1986 to 2009. Both case studies have demonstrated the influence of the political economy on how growth management is prioritised and handled. The emergence of sustainable

development as a priority in the planning field is also evident as is the move to 'smart growth' and new urbanism principles. The emergence of integrated planning in the planning profession, particularly in New Zealand, is also evident in the more recent growth strategies. Two further elements are evident in the New Zealand context which appear generally absent from the international examples. First, the importance of the inclusion of tangata whenua and iwi values in the development of growth management strategies and ongoing implementation has evolved over this period. Furthermore, the importance of versatile soils and protecting productive agricultural land is an imperative for the recent growth strategies in both the Bay of Plenty and Waikato sub-regions. It appears that this aspect was not always prioritised in the earlier strategies but has come to the fore in recent times.

What remains to be seen is how these growth management strategies will work in practice, with evidence of some challenges ahead particularly in Tauranga. It will take some time for the results of monitoring to emerge. This is a topic for further research.

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