

What's happening at Whenuapai?

Waitakere City is continuing to wait for the Crown's decision on the future of Whenuapai. The Council has made a substantial submission in support of its view that Whenuapai should be retained as a commercial airport. Copies of the submission and other information can be found on the Council's web site www.waitakere.govt.nz

The Council favours the use of the airport by commercial airlines because of the economic, environmental and town structure benefits. Moreover there is a huge cost in lost opportunities in destroying an expensive piece of infrastructure such as an existing airport.

Imbalance between population and employment

Waitakere City's greatest problem is that the majority of our residents have to leave the city for work each day. Whilst the government is investing billions addressing the Auckland Region's transport problems, this will not fix the problem unless there are fundamental shifts in the travel patterns of the Region. Today the most employment is located in the southern areas of the region, and the imbalance between population and

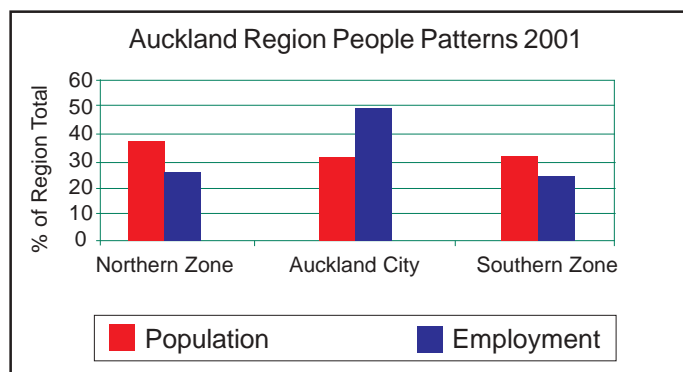
employment is worst in the Northern Zone.

Within its existing urban area and within its planned growth area the City is prioritising land uses that promote economic development. This is because to continue the current pattern of people leaving the City to travel south each day has huge costs and creates significant environmental problems. The Council is supporting the conversion of the airbase to commercial use because international evidence shows that infrastructure such as airports generates major economic benefits.

Alternatives such as commercial or industrial development have been put forward for the site. Such alternatives are unlikely to happen, as the site is outside the regionally agreed growth areas for Waitakere City. Under regional and Waitakere City policies, plans, and growth management strategies, the disposal process can only deliver three

outcomes, either singularly or in combination:

- Ongoing use as an airport.
- A Public Work - such as a prison, hospital, or Housing New Zealand.
- Rural Residential sites of 4-hectare blocks.



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Council signs with Westland

Westgate Shopping Centre owner IMF Westland Ltd says that it has been so successful that there is not enough space for additional shops. Although there are expansion plans for the current shopping centre (refer to article on page 3), these can't accommodate plans for a whole new town centre that will be needed to serve the north of the city.

The Council and Westland have negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding that will ensure that the future town centre will provide for a full range of community, educational, recreational

and commercial uses.

Mayor Bob Harvey says, "Our agreement with Westland is another example of the Council's smart thinking - it allows the private sector to take the lead in providing public services, saving rate payers money".

Concept plans for the new town centre are being developed, and in the latter part of the year there will be an opportunity for the public to provide their comments.

Boats replace planes at Hobsonville Airbase

Plans for the development of a Marine industrial cluster at Hobsonville continue to proceed slowly. Land for the cluster is expected to become available in June. The Council will then work on the necessary planning and zoning changes. This is likely to take two to four years.

The Ministry of Education has secured an 8-hectare area fronting Hobsonville road, for the development of a secondary school in about 6-8 years.

Housing New Zealand has indicated its intention to acquire the remainder of the former airbase for an integrated mixed-use community development. It is likely that the existing built area fronting the Waitamata Harbour, would be redeveloped first retaining the existing character and buildings of the airbase. Timing for this development will be dependent on the Air Force leaving the base. Currently it continues to use some of this area whilst it remains at Whenuapai.

Development of the greenfields areas of the base is at least eight years away, but could be as much as 20 years in the future.

It is Waitakere City's intention to promote the development of the marine industrial cluster and the redevelopment and continued use of the coastal village area as a first stage. This is in keeping with the Council's policy to prioritise land uses that will promote economic development outcomes as a first stage of expansion of the City in the Northern Strategic Growth Area.



Concept plan for the marine industrial cluster at Hobsonville

What's happening at Whenuapai? - continued

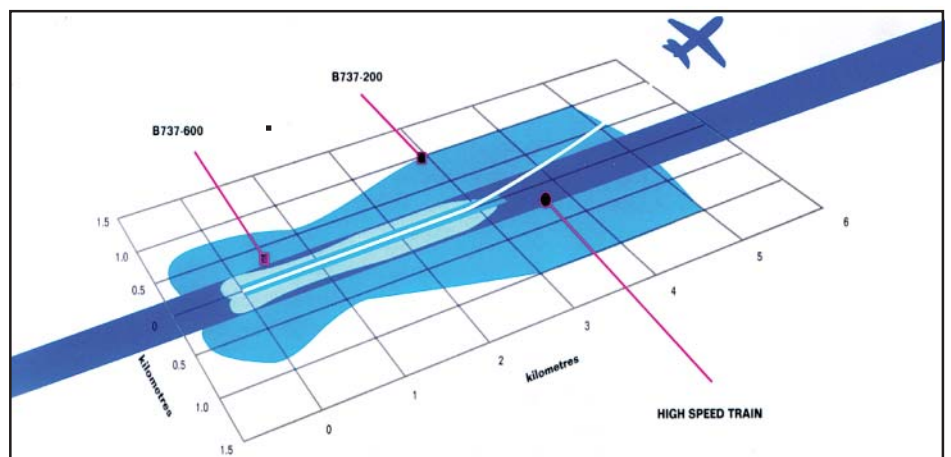
The airbase land is outside of the Auckland Region's Metropolitan Urban Limit, and also has major stormwater and sewerage issues - estimated to cost \$20 million to solve. For these reasons, individual commercial or industrial development cannot occur, although there is scope for some such development in conjunction with an airport facility.

Waitakere City has, therefore, given a clear message that it favours Whenuapai continuing to be used as an airport, with areas of the site not required for aviation purposes developed, over time, to accommodate the commercial/industrial users that will be attracted by the airport.

An important perceived issue with Whenuapai Airport is noise. Although, residents around the airport have co-existed with it for many years, some are now concerned about the impact of commercial operations. In fact, it is likely noise levels

will be lower, because a modern airport, using modern aircraft, has a very small noise envelope compared with its current military use. The impact is less than that of a new motorway and few people will be adversely impacted.

Noise comparison : old versus new Boeing 737



Source: Infratil

Motorway name recommended

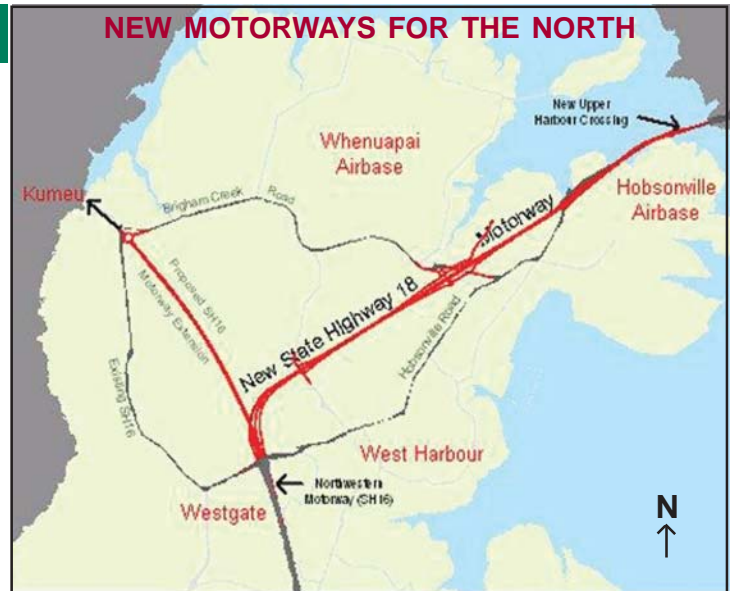
The Massey Community Board favours the name 'Upper Harbour Motorway' for the new State Highway 18 motorway extension between Westgate and State Highway 1, near Albany. The Community Board's choice was backed by 32% of residents who took part in a Council on-line poll.

The board's second preference was for 'Westgate Motorway', recognising that the Massey/Westgate area is destined to be a major regional growth centre in the next 15-20 years.

Transit New Zealand sought local input for an official name for the motorway from Waitakere and North Shore City.

Several weeks ago, the full Waitakere Council recommended the name 'Chris Timms Memorial Drive' in recognition of local sportsman, businessman and community leader Chris Timms who was tragically killed in an air accident earlier in the year.

The Council will offer the 'Chris Timms Memorial Drive' name to Transit New Zealand as well as forwarding the Massey



Community Board's choices of 'Upper Harbour Motorway' and 'Westgate Motorway'. The next preferred names for the highway extension in the on-line poll were Whenuapai Motorway (18%) and North Eastern Highway (7%).

What's happening at Westgate?

Regular shoppers at Westgate might have noticed that Westgate is growing. To the south of the existing shopping centre, on Westgate Drive, a new shopping precinct is being established that will cater for fashion conscious Westies. The centre's owner, Westgate Properties Limited, is expanding its floorspace by 1,700 square metres to provide 11 new boutiques. The new fashion precinct will have parking underneath, giving all-weather convenience.

In addition, Westgate is responding to public demand by expanding the range of shops on its current site. New buildings will be constructed to provide space for three banks opposite the Robert Harris coffee shop. The Farmers store on the north side of the shopping centre will also be expanded, and a new building on the motorway side of the site, will provide for new restaurants and an upstairs gym. The area around the bus stop will also be re-vamped, to provide shops so that bus passengers can purchase a quick magazine or coffee.

Westgate owner Mark Gunton says, "We're proud of our shopping centre and want to make sure that it stays a first rate shopping destination. We've always been looking to provide a full range of facilities, and are very pleased that with our new additions,

shoppers will be able to do all their shopping, banking, and recreation activities on site".

What you said

As part of its regular opinion-surveying of parts of the City, the Council undertook a survey of Westgate shoppers late last year. Some 200 shoppers were questioned, of whom 60% lived in the Massey Ward of Waitakere City (stretching from Lincoln Road to Hobsonville). Nearly a quarter of those questioned at the shopping centre lived outside of Waitakere City. A summary of the survey results follows:

Economic

- 76% of shoppers visit weekly or more often.
- The average spend is \$76.
- 57% rated the variety of shops good/very good.
- 59% rated the activities and events poor/very poor.

Social

- 45 minutes is the average duration of each visit.
- 61% rate the general appearance of Westgate as good/very good.



- 75% find nothing unsafe in the centre. Only 10% have visited nearby open space in the last year.
- 53% use nearby community facilities such as the library, or the leisure centre.
- 11% have visiting the library as their main reason to visit Westgate.
- 82% rate the provision of car parking good/very good.

Environmental

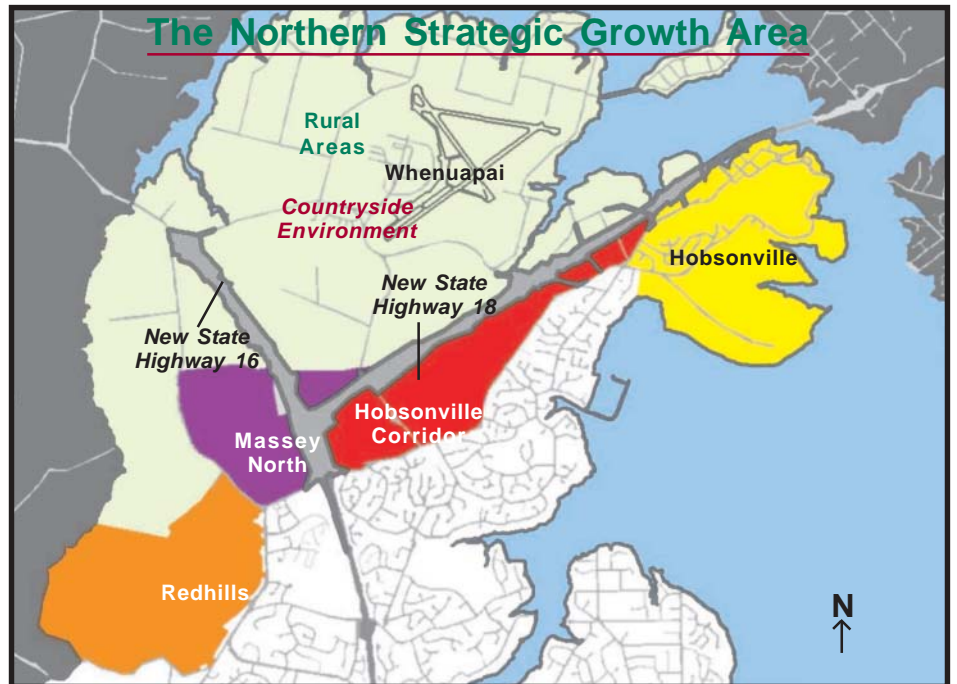
- 8% walked to Westgate, only 4% bussed.
- 53% rated the provision of public transport good/very good.



For enquiries on any matter in this newsletter, contact:

Waitakere City Council's Call Centre, at tel. 839 0400

Or view the Council's website: www.waitakere.govt.nz



What's happening north of Westgate?

Most of the Northern Strategic Growth Area (NorSGA) is currently identified in the Waitakere District Plan as Countryside Environment. This reflects its rural character, but needs to be understood within the context of the City's long-term urban strategy.

The strategy is to intensify urban development in and around the three town centres of New Lynn, Henderson and Massey North/Westgate, and along major transport corridors such as Lincoln Road and Great North Road. The strategy also includes shielding the Waitakere Ranges from intensive urban development. This, therefore, leaves only the northern area of the City (NorSGA) available for urban expansion in the long-term.

Currently the Waitakere City District Plan allows for a minimum lot size of 4 hectares (10 acres) in the Countryside Environment. Under certain circumstances, the District Plan allows landowners in the Countryside Environment to subdivide below 4 hectare

lots through a rural structure plan process. There is no set site size in structure planning - it is based on the level of development that the land can absorb, taking into account all the constraints such as the geology, stormwater, landscape, etc.

But rural structure plans for this area may not, in fact, be appropriate if they predetermine future road layouts and lot sizes. For instance, if structure plan proposals are progressed in the Countryside Environment and result in an average minimum lot size of approximately one hectare, the density would create significant issues for future urban development of that land. This is because a fragmented rural residential subdivision pattern created by structure plans generates significant difficulties when trying to create sustainable urban forms. This is especially so when providing for road frontage, efficient street patterns and site access, as well as block layout and site widths.

It is difficult to speculate on what decisions about urban development will be made in the future. However the strategic importance of this area will become more apparent in the future, as it sits at the centre of expanding economic catchments in Rodney and North Shore. What can be done now is that the Council can act to ensure that future options are not foreclosed by actions taken today.

What is clear is that urbanisation and residential development within most of the Countryside areas are still many years away. There are still many uncertainties that need to be resolved, including future developments at both Hobsonville and Whenuapai, and the impact these will have on the development of new urban land. For these reasons the Council has placed the Waiarohia Structure Plan (located in the Countryside Environment near Whenuapai airbase) on hold for a further 12 months (it had previously been deferred until March 2004).

In the meantime, the existing Countryside Environment Rules still apply and residents should continue to use them as the starting point for any development and/or subdivision proposals that they may have.

Please contact the Council on (09) 839 0400 to discuss these rules in detail.

