

COMMUNITY FEATURES

What the Act says

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 identifies the “distinctive local communities” of the Heritage Area as an important feature.

Social features of Oratia / Waitatarua

Social and community features of Oratia / Waitatarua area are shown in the economic, social and cultural features map.

Within Oratia and Waitatarua land use activities are diverse, ranging from bush living in the upper reaches of Carter and Parker Roads, to the expanse of remnant orchards and horticulture around West Coast Road and lower Shaw Road. There is a scattering of quarter acre sections and large lot development in between. Much of the existing residential development dates back to the days of Waitemata County and is sporadically located, frequently on the edge of the higher bush margins.

Following is a summary of information and statistics (from 2006 Census) relating to the Otimai Census Area Unit (CAU) shown in Figure 1, used as a proxy for the Oratia/Waitatarua area. Other parts of Waitatarua which are not included in the Otimai CAU are covered by the Opanuku CAU which is very large and includes parts of Henderson Valley.

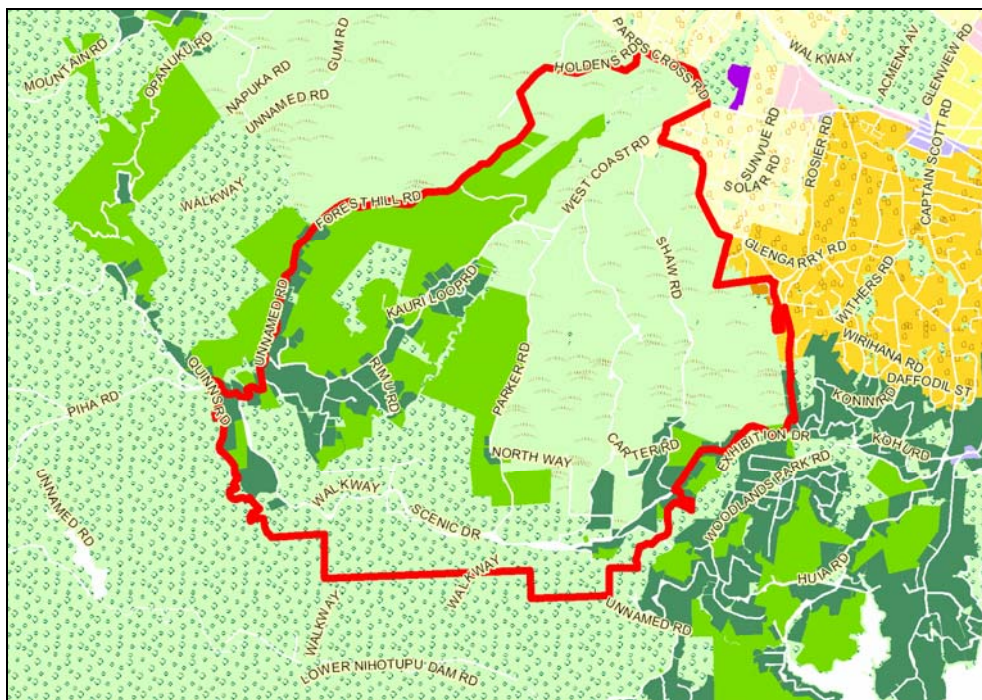


Figure 1: Geographical Boundary of the Otimai Census Area Unit

Population at the 2006 Census: 3495 in the Otimai CAU.

Ethnic groups: The Waitakere Ranges “Heritage Area” and Otimai CAU have a significantly higher percentage of Europeans and lower other ethnic groups than Waitakere City as a whole. For the Otimai CAU the ethnic distribution is European (86%), Maori (7%), Pacific (3%) and Asian (3%).

Education: Residents generally have higher levels of qualifications (32% having equivalent to a Level 5 Diploma or higher compared to 24% for the city as a whole). Otimai CAU has comparatively higher levels of individuals with Degrees and Masters Degrees and lower levels of individuals with no qualifications when compared to the other foothills catchments.

Income: The median individual income for the Otimai CAU is \$32470 which is \$6370 higher than Waitakere City as a whole and the highest in the foothills area. The non-foothills area of the Heritage Area is higher at \$34760. Residents on average have higher incomes in Otimai CAU than Waitakere City, with 62% earning \$70,000 or more compared to 40% for the city as a whole. There is a significant difference in the median family income for residents aged 15+ between the foothills and Waitakere City as a whole. The Otimai CAU area has the highest median family income in the foothills (\$86317) which is \$27817 higher than Waitakere City as a whole.

Families: The Heritage Area has more one family households and less one person households than Waitakere City as a whole. In the Heritage Area and Otimai CAU, couples without children and with children are both higher than Waitakere City as a whole.

Employment: The Heritage Area has higher individuals in full and part-time employment than Waitakere City as a whole and less unemployed people. Employed Otimai CAU residents' most frequent areas of employment are, in descending order, Oratia, Henderson, Auckland Central, Lincoln Rd, and New Lynn (closely followed by Rosebank Peninsula). More individuals work at home than in Waitakere City as a whole. The largest employers are the property and business service followed by construction and cultural/recreation services.

Population density: The population density for the Otimai CAU area is 0-3 people per hectare which is the same as the other foothills catchments.

Age distribution: The median age in Otimai CAU is 38 which increased from 36 in 2001. Age distribution is shown in Figure 1. Otimai CAU has a higher percentage of people aged 5-15, 30-44 and 60+ than the rest of the foothills. The Heritage Area has a higher percentage of people ages 10-19 and 40-65 and less percentage ages 0-4, 24-35 and 65+ than Waitakere City as a whole.

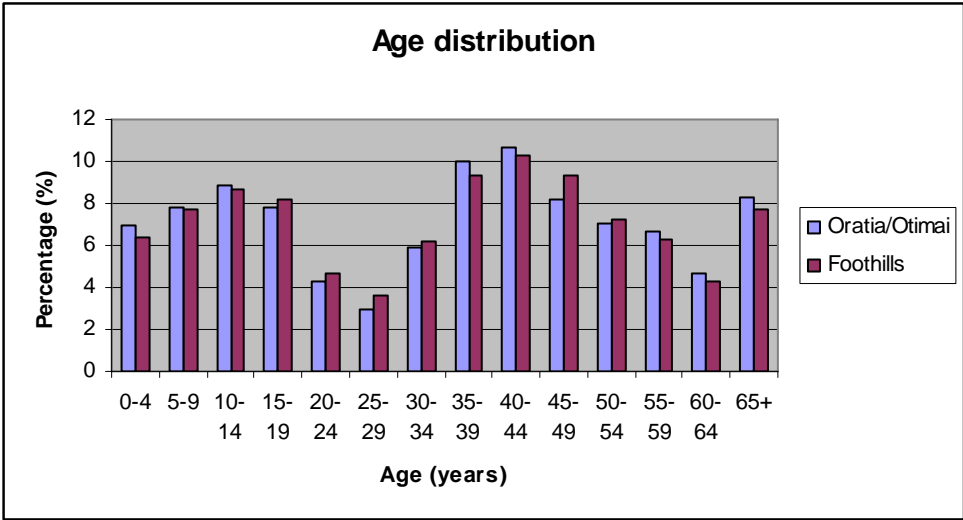


Figure 2 Age distribution comparison for the Otimai CAU and the Waitakere Ranges foothills

Housing: The Otimai CAU is made up of a mix of housing types from more substantial farmhouses on farmland blocks of at least 4 hectares to large family homes built in the 1970s and 1980s. There are significantly less 3 bedroom homes than other parts of Waitakere City and more 4 and 5 bedroom homes. This is a similar trend in other parts of the Ranges. Home ownership is significantly higher than Waitakere City as a whole and in the Otimai CAU is the highest of the foothills. Key facts for the Otimai CAU are:

- Occupied dwellings: 1170
- Unoccupied dwellings: 81

- Average household size: 2.99 which is the same as for Waitakere City as a whole. Average household size for the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area is 2.82.
- Average weekly rent: \$378

Water

- Wastewater: on-site systems
- Stormwater: some reticulation of stormwater, mainly for road run-off.
- Water supply: reticulated water supply/roof water

Transport: The majority of people in the Otimai CAU have access to a motor vehicle. Of those who go to work most go by car with very low use of public transport (public transport is not very accessible in the area with only 3 buses per day passing through the area from Waiatarua to Henderson). The nearest train station is at Sunnyvale. The school has walking school buses and also 4 school buses. Footpaths run along West Coast Road to Parker Road and also Shaw Road for a few kilometres. There is also a track from Arataki (Scenic Drive) through to Parker Road.

Employment and businesses: A variety of small businesses operate in the area. The most common businesses or industries in the Otimai CAU are garden related activities (gardening, flowers, landscape design, nurseries), building/building related and orchards/vineyards.

The Otimai CAU follows a similar employment distribution to that of the Heritage Area as a whole. Property and Business Services is by far the largest employer followed by Construction. Cultural and Recreational Services is the third largest employment sector.

Oratia School: Oratia School has approximately 528 students and is on the corner of West Coast and Shaw Roads, Oratia. Oratia School has bronze status as an Enviro School and is working toward silver. Some Enviro School projects that are underway at the school are:

- planting vegetable gardens;
- growing seedlings for planting;
- planting a small orchard of fruit trees; and
- beautifying school grounds.

High school students from this area generally attend/are zoned for Green Bay and Henderson High Schools.

Social infrastructure: There are a range of social infrastructure services in Oratia / Waiatarua and these are relatively accessible. These include early childhood facilities and a local primary school. There are two markets, one weekly farmers market held at Artisan Wines and the monthly settlers market, held at the Settlers Hall. There are also a range of sports, youth and other community facilities available for residents and others to use in the area including Oratia Bowling Club, Western Magpies Softball Club and Henderson Riding for the Disabled. While there are no doctors listed in the Otimai CAU, there are doctors offices located in Glen Eden, Henderson and Titirangi.

If demographic trends continue there will be a significant increase in individuals aged 65+ in the next 5 – 30 years which will increase pressures on health care, health and social services organisations, accessibility and housing.

Assuming the demographic trends and low transience levels in the Otimai CAU continue, the current high levels of 10 – 20 year olds may be forming families over the next 5 – 15 years. There may be a case for encouraging additional early childhood provision in the area. There may also be additional pressure for primary health care, maternity services, and housing.