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Inquiry into using land for housing
New Zealand Productivity Commission
PO Box 8036
The Terrace
WELLINGTON 6143

Dear Sir/Madam

RE: WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCIL SUBMISSION ON THE USING LAND FOR HOUSING ISSUES PAPER

The Waikato District Council (WDC) welcomes the opportunity to provide feedback on Using Land for Housing Issues Paper.

A bit about the Waikato district:

The people

Nearly 40 per cent of New Zealand's total population live within a 150 km radius of the Waikato district. However, the district itself is still sparsely populated by North Island standards, with just over 64,000 people living in this principally rural area, which covers roughly 418,893 hectares.

The Waikato district has a median age of 35.3 years, lower than that of New Zealand as a whole where it is 35.9 years. This is a reflection of the fact that the district has a smaller number of people aged over 65 (10.0 per cent) and a larger number of people aged under 15 (25.5 per cent) than the average.

While this currently means that there is a greater need for services and facilities for the younger members of our community, there are long-term implications as the demand for services for those above 65 will increase in future years.

Population projections for the Waikato district

The Waikato District Council is one of the few local authorities experiencing growth in New Zealand. Under a medium growth scenario the population of the Waikato district is projected to grow from 64,910 in 2013 to around 82,733 in 2033. By 2063 the population is likely to have grown to 94,862 (+46 per cent).

Ethnicity

Ethnically, the Waikato district has low numbers of Pacific Island (2.4 per cent) and Asian people (2.8 per cent), but a much larger than average proportion of Maaori (25.9 per cent). 69 per cent of people in the Waikato district consider themselves to be European. The district's urban wards have much higher percentages of Maaori than its rural wards.

Waikato-Tainui

Waikato-Tainui holds a unique status as tangata whenua of the Waikato region. The Council has a Joint Management Agreement with Waikato-Tainui as part of the Waikato River settlement.

Income

The district has a higher than national median level of income, at \$25,700. The diversity of the district shows differing results when comparing the rural wards with urban wards.

A high number of people receive their income from the agriculture and fishing industries, which reflects the district's rural nature.

Property ownership

There are moderate levels of home ownership in the Waikato district with 55.2 per cent of permanent residents owning their own property. The national average is 54.5 per cent.

It is worth noting that not all the questions posed by the Commission are appropriate for the Council to respond to. These are noted in the submission where applicable. Council will be happy to supply any data that may be of help to the Commission to conduct its inquiry.

Yours faithfully



Allan Sanson
MAYOR