



Future Proof Submission on  
*The Draft Auckland Unitary Plan*

May 2013

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**Submission:**

This is a submission by the Future Proof Implementation Committee on the **Draft Auckland Unitary Plan**. The content of the submission follows overleaf. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the document.

**Signed:**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ken Tremaine". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'K' and a small circle at the end of the name.

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Ken Tremaine  
Future Proof Implementation Advisor

## 1. Introduction

This is a submission by the Future Proof Implementation Committee (“FPIC”), the governance group responsible for implementation of the Future Proof Growth Strategy. The FPIC includes representatives from the Future Proof sub-regional councils of the Waikato Regional Council, Hamilton City Council, Waipa and Waikato Districts as well as Tāngata Whenua (Waikato-Tainui). It is formally advised by the New Zealand Transport Agency.

The Future Proof Strategy is a 50-year growth management vision and implementation plan which was adopted by the Strategy partners on 30 June 2009. Future Proof is currently in the implementation phase. The Strategy takes a strategic, integrated approach to long term planning and growth management.

The FPIC would like to commend the Auckland Council on the Draft Auckland Unitary Plan.

The FPIC submitted on the *Auckland Unleashed* Discussion Document and the *Draft Auckland Plan* in 2011. All of the background detail regarding the Future Proof Strategy was provided in that submission. Information on the role of the Waikato and Auckland in the Upper North Island growth area was also outlined in that submission.

This submission mainly centres on cross-boundary issues and the potential transport impacts of the proposed Auckland settlement pattern. Future Proof is happy to work with the Auckland Council on some or all of the matters raised in this submission and to discuss any of those matters further.

## **2. Comment on the Draft Auckland Unitary Plan**

### **2.1 General Comment**

Future Proof commends the Auckland Council on the development of the Draft Unitary Plan. The Unitary Plan will be the key document for implementing the Auckland Plan and giving effect to its strategic directions, particularly those concerning growth management and long-term land use planning.

Future Proof strongly supports the compact urban form approach and the use of a rural-urban boundary as an important tool for achieving better integration between land use and infrastructure. The compact city approach and the use of urban limits is a key component of the Future Proof Strategy. Urban limits mean that a level of certainty can be provided on land use planning, accompanying infrastructure provision and timing. Also, the ability of councils to equitably fund them. These outcomes are critical for achieving integrated planning. The level of certainty provided by the use of urban limits also means that other infrastructure providers such as the New Zealand Transport Agency, KiwiRail and energy companies can align their planning and investment with the settlement pattern.

Without the use of urban limits and some form of development sequencing there would be no certainty or direction provided. Ultimately it would encourage an unplanned approach which makes infrastructure planning and funding difficult. It could lead to an increased urban footprint that cannot affordably be serviced by councils or other infrastructure providers. In the Future Proof sub-region the use of urban limits as seen as a key means of ensuring that development does not encroach on prime agricultural land.

Future Proof is in the process of implementing its settlement pattern, including the compact urban form approach, through the use of urban limits and land use and infrastructure sequencing in the Proposed Waikato Regional Policy Statement.

Future Proof sees the use of a rural-urban boundary in Auckland as an important tool in managing Auckland's growth. It also assists the Waikato region to see where growth in Auckland will occur and will help to manage the growth impacts on the boundary between Auckland and the Waikato. If there is no rural-urban boundary then Future Proof would have

significant concerns about the impact of development towards the southern edge of Auckland and the northern edge of the Waikato. . Future Proof is pleased to note the ongoing dialogue between Auckland Council and the Waikato District Council regarding growth management in this area. Both the Auckland and Waikato regions need to continue to work towards implementing some form of urban limits and consolidated settlement approach. In this way the adverse effects of development on productive rural land and on infrastructure, particularly transport, can be better managed.

## **2.2 Cross Boundary Issues**

Future Proof is supportive of the cross boundary issues identified in section 1.7. The issues of population growth, transport linkages, economic development and the natural environment cover the cross boundary matters between Auckland and the Waikato well.

In particular, Future Proof supports the reference under ‘Population Growth’ to aligning regional and local growth management strategies. It is important that the Waikato and Auckland continue to work together at both local and regional levels, on the implementation of their respective growth strategies.

The cross boundary issue of transport linkages is also supported. However, Future Proof is of the view that a reference to rail as well as the need to maintain effective linkages with inland ports and freight hubs should be added. Rail is an important part of the inter-regional transport network and needs to be specifically referenced alongside roading and the passenger transport network. There is a significant amount of freight moved between Auckland and the Waikato. The inland ports and freight hubs located in the Upper North Island are a key part of this. The Ports of Auckland and the Auckland International Airport are important but so are the freight hubs and inland ports. The Crawford Street inland port operated by Fonterra in Hamilton is a good example of this, handling around 760,000 tonnes of dairy products a year.<sup>1</sup>

Future Proof suggests the following text amendment:

### *Transport Linkages*

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<sup>1</sup> Waikato Regional Land Transport Strategy, 2011-2041 at page 117

*Recognising and facilitating the different transport linkages between Auckland, Northland and Waikato in terms of people and freight movement, the use and expansion of the roading, rail and passenger transport network and maintaining accessibility to Auckland International Airport, ~~and~~ Ports of Auckland and various freight hubs and inland ports as multi-regional transport nodes.*

Future Proof also supports the Waikato Regional Council's submission points relating to cross-boundary issues. There is a list of matters in the Waikato Regional Council's submission that it has suggested should be addressed which would be of value to this section of the Draft Auckland Unitary Plan.

### **2.3 Transport Linkages and the Effects of the Settlement Pattern**

While Future Proof is supportive of the underlying principles behind the Auckland settlement pattern, ie achieving a more compact urban form and the rural-urban boundary, we would like to better understand the transport implications of the land use proposed to the south of Auckland and what the ultimate urban footprint is likely to be.

We note that significant growth is now planned for the satellite town of Pukekohe. It is anticipated that Pukekohe will become a town of 50,000 people by 2041. This is more akin to a small metropolitan edge city than an independent satellite town. Other areas to the south may also have growth allocated. These include Drury, Karaka and Waiuku. There is also a substantial industrial business park proposed at Drury (the Drury South Business Project – a 360ha industrial development) as well as other business land areas to the south. The Auckland Plan indicates that there are a number of greenfield areas in the south that need further investigation.

Future Proof is concerned about the impact of this growth on the northern Waikato, in particular the settlements of Pokeno and Tuakau and the associated investment already committed in these areas. We are also concerned about the transport implications of the proposed settlement pattern on State Highway 1 (the Southern Motorway and the Waikato Expressway) and the North Island Main Trunk rail line which are key routes for road and rail freight movements between Auckland and the Waikato. We are of the view that some cross boundary transport modelling is required to better understand the effect of the proposed long-term settlement pattern, how it will integrate with the northern Waikato area and the

impact on the constraints identified in the UNISA Freight Story. The cumulative effect of all the developments proposed on transport access between Auckland the Waikato is unknown.

Future Proof would like the Auckland Council to undertake some transport modelling on the impacts of the proposed land use pattern in the south before a final footprint is decided on. Future Proof wishes to ensure that efficient corridor access to and from the Waikato and Auckland is maintained, particularly for exports. Future Proof would be happy to work with the Auckland Council on this matter.

Future Proof supports the points made by the Waikato Regional Council in relation to transport, in particular transport collaboration. Future Proof would like to see on-going collaboration between the Waikato Regional Council and the Auckland Council on transport planning including the modelling of effects on key inter-regional strategic corridors.