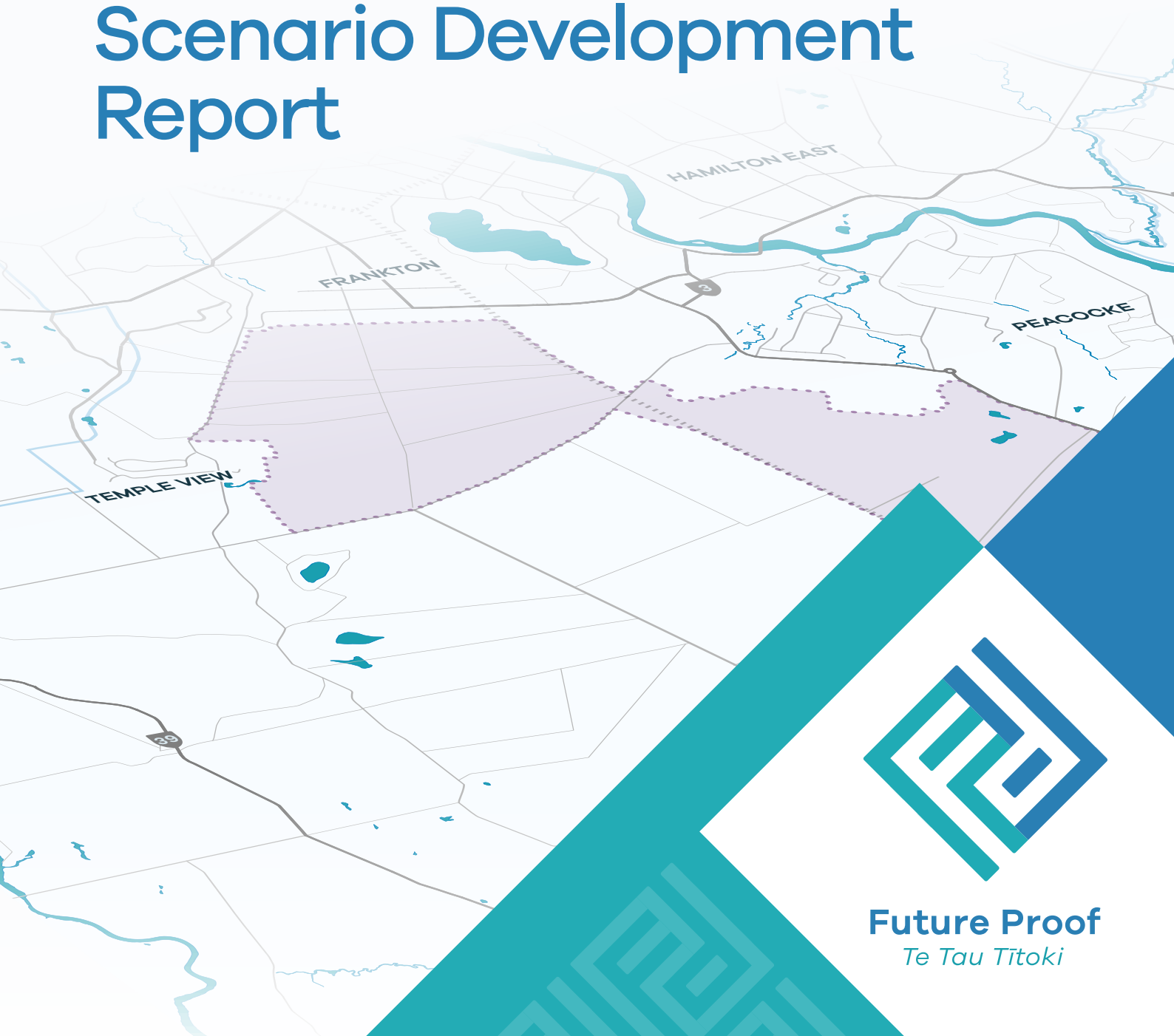
North Waipā – South Hamilton Spatial Study

Scenario Development Report



Future Proof
Te Tau Tītoki

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Executive Summary

Future Proof is undertaking a high-level study that will ensure future growth needs in the North Waipā – South Hamilton area are clearly understood and identified and that growth and investment can be well-coordinated.

The study will aim to identify the key land use and infrastructure investments needed to support future development surrounding the Southern Links road project across locations such as Mystery Creek, Rukuhia, Hamilton Airport, and extending towards Ōhaupō while protecting the environmental attributes significant and unique to the region.

There are a lot of planning documents already in place that guide certain development types across the North Waipā – South Hamilton area.

A stocktake of all of these documents has been completed which has informed a Gap Analysis Report. This Report paints a picture of what things have already been confirmed for the area and what things still need to be explored and discussed.

Things already confirmed include decisions made through District Plan processes, community planning processes such as the Ahu Ake Waipā Community Spatial Plan and various growth strategies.

Since the gap analysis was completed, focus moved to the development of Scenarios which are outlined in this report.

Scenarios are used to stimulate discussion on a range of possible futures. They are not predictions; rather, they provide high-level direction for planning purposes and help visualise and explore possible pathways, test trade-offs, and guide strategic direction in the coming decades.

Collectively, the five possible future scenarios span a spectrum — from Scenario 1's status quo to Scenario 2's coordinated delivery, Scenario 3's competitive acceleration, Scenario 4's economic boost driven by a development corporation, and Scenario 5's environmental protection.

We are now talking with key stakeholders to discuss the scenarios and take on any feedback. This feedback will be used to inform the final North Waipā – South Hamilton Spatial Study Report which will then be used to inform the Future Proof Development Strategy which is due to be reviewed in 2026.

Introduction

Background

In September 2024, the Future Proof Strategy - Future Development Strategy update and its Implementation Plan were formally adopted. These documents identify seven transformational moves, aiming to provide significant place-shaping elements in implementing the Future Proof settlement pattern and moving towards a more sustainable form of urban growth development.

These transformational moves are based on:

1. Iwi aspirations.
2. Give effect to Te Ture Waimana o Te Awa o Waikato - the Vision and Strategy for the Waikato River and its tributaries.
3. A comprehensive and fundamental evolution of our transport system.
4. A vibrant metro core and lively metropolitan and town centres.
5. Strong and productive economic corridors.
6. Thriving communities and neighbourhoods.
7. Water-wise and water-sensitive communities.

Transformational Move #5: Strong and Productive Economic Corridors focuses on establishing efficient economic connections between centres, employment hubs, metropolitan areas, ports, and airports within the Waikato Region. Particular emphasis was placed on improving access between key productive areas: Hautapu, Ruakura, Hamilton central city, and extending northwards to Horotiu and Ngāruawāhia.

Under Transformational Move #5, two key implementation activities are proposed:

- **Activity #5.1 -** Develop an integrated spatial framework for the North Waipā/ South Hamilton region.
- **Activity #5.2 -** Formulate a comprehensive economic and connectivity spatial concept for the Hamilton to Tauranga Corridor.

This report focuses on the North Waipā/South Hamilton area (activity #5.1) and is the second report, following the Gap Analysis Report completed in mid-2025, being prepared to inform the final study report.

The study is anticipated to be completed by May 2026.

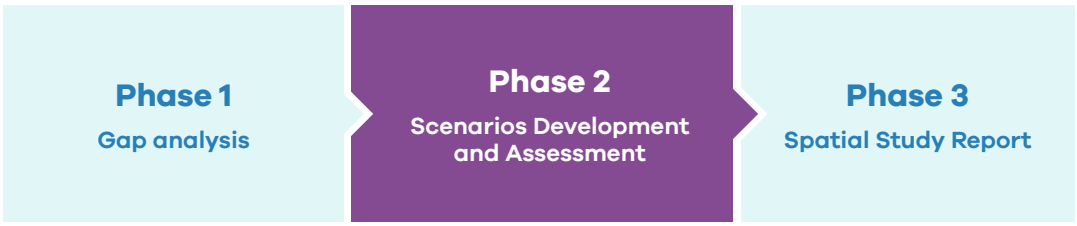


Figure 1 *Phases of the North Waipā/ South Hamilton Spatial Study project (current phase in purple)*

The study aims to identify the key land use and infrastructure investments needed to support future development surrounding the Southern Links road project across locations such as Mystery Creek, Rukuhia, Hamilton Airport, and extending towards Ōhaupō while protecting the environmental attributes significant and unique to the region (such as the extensive cover of highly productive land).

While the study aligns with the recently adopted Future Proof Strategy - Future Development Strategy (hereafter referred to as 'FDS'), it also aims to address any additional investigations not anticipated by it.

Using scenario-based evaluation, this study is functioning as a comprehensive investigation into "what kind of future we want to enable", rather than simply "what we can consent" and will be used to inform and guide future FDS updates and/or the regional spatial plan.

Purpose and structure of the report

This Scenario Development Report presents five possible future scenarios for the North Waipā - South Hamilton Area. Each is shaped by different emphases on infrastructure sequencing, land use profile, and environmental balance.

The report is structured in five sections:

1. Introduction (this section)
2. Context and Approach
3. Methodology and Scenario Structure
4. Possible Future Scenarios:
    - "At a glance" summaries of each scenario
    - Narratives and comparative matrix across key outcome topics (jobs, liveability, transport, mana whenua/iwi aspirations, environment, infrastructure alignment, feasibility)
5. Next Steps

Why use scenarios?

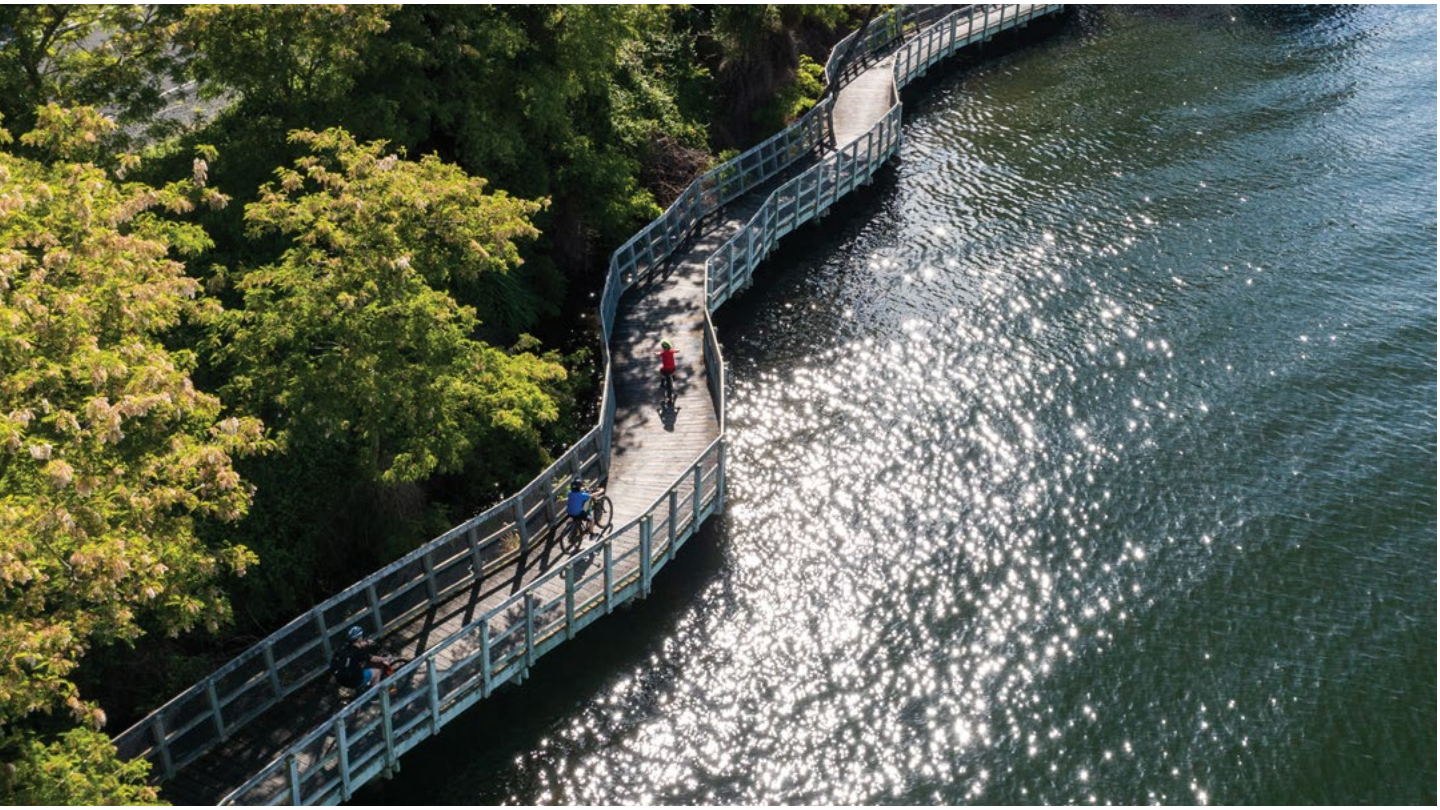
Scenarios are used to stimulate discussion on a range of possible futures. They are not predictions; rather, they are tools to help visualise and explore possible pathways, test trade-offs, and guide strategic direction in the coming decades.

By using scenarios, we can consider the potential issues or opportunities that the region may face in the future which helps us to identify actions that could be needed so that we can continue to achieve long-term positive outcomes.

Targeted assessments and stakeholder engagement will help us identify a preferred scenario or a hybrid scenario that can potentially be formed by recombining preferred elements of the original scenarios.

It is understood that identifying a preferred scenario provides no guarantee that it will come to pass, as several factors, such as market forces, are outside the control of the Future Proof partnership and its stakeholders. Nevertheless, the identification of a preferred scenario will allow further exploration of available options that can ideally:

1. Increase the likelihood of that preferred scenario occurring;
2. Prepare Future Proof partners and stakeholders to act on the opportunities and mitigate any risks associated with that preferred scenario;
3. Provide resilience across multiple scenarios (for example, are there some interventions worth being taken no matter what scenarios come to pass?); and
4. Identify any elements of a contingency plan that could mitigate the risks arising from the non-preferred scenarios occurring anyway (e.g., how could Future Proof partners respond to significant unanticipated development pressure in an area with severe environmental, cultural or infrastructural constraints?).



Te Awa River Ride

Context and Approach

Study area overview

The North Waipā - South Hamilton area has been an area under pressure for some time, particularly around the Airport.

In response to this ongoing pressure, the study area was formally identified as one of the priority development areas (PDA) for investigation by Future Proof. PDAs are areas that encompass multiple agencies (i.e., not just one Council) and require the Future Proof partnership to collaborate on investigations and drive progress when required.

While it is important to note that the study area primarily focuses on land currently located in the northern part of the Waipā District, it also considers neighbouring areas within Hamilton and the Waikato District. The areas of interest surround the Hamilton Southern Links Road project, identified in the Government Policy Statement on land transport (GPS 2024) as a Road of National Significance. It extends north toward the Peacocke neighbourhood within Hamilton City boundaries, east towards the Mystery Creek area and the shared Waikato and Waipā districts boundary, south toward the village of Ōhaupō, and west, along the North Island Main Trunk (NIMT) railway corridor.

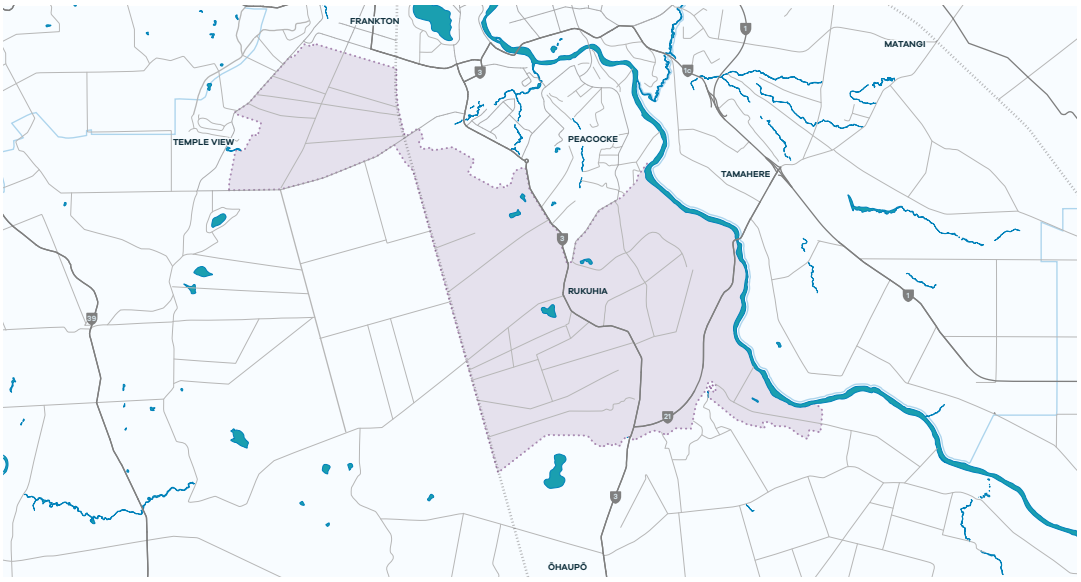


Figure 2 *North Waipā / South Hamilton Spatial Study area (purple).*

It is important to note external areas that will influence and be influenced by growth in the study area:

- Tamahere is located in the Waikato District and is not directly included in the spatial study area. The development of the Hamilton Southern Links and changes in the neighbouring areas, particularly to the west, such as Peacocke and the SL2 area, are expected to influence Tamahere. The next phase of the study, focusing on scenario exploration, will highlight the potential effects of land use changes within the spatial study area on Tamahere, taking into account its proximity.
- The Hamilton City Centre, and the towns of Cambridge and Te Awamutu do not form part of the spatial study area, however there will be certain scenarios that have a greater and lesser impact on these places.
- The next step of the study which includes the assessment of the scenarios will take into account options that have negative impacts on these areas. The intent is to add benefits, not shift them around the subregion and undermine existing strategies and plans for particular areas.

Strategic context and drivers

The study area is currently undergoing a significant transformation characterised by rapid growth that must be carefully planned, financed, and delivered. Both the population and regional economy are expanding quickly. As a result, infrastructure, such as transport, three waters and green spaces including natural areas, rivers, and peatlands, are under increasing pressure and face challenges in maintaining their function at this pace of change.

Population growth trends and changes

The Future Proof sub-region forms the southern point of New Zealand's "Golden Triangle", which encompasses Auckland, Hamilton, and Tauranga. These three cities and the economic node they form are responsible for approximately 50% of the country's economic output and are home to half of its total population.[1]

The sub-region is also part of a dynamic corridor of rapid population and development growth that stretches from Papakura in the north to south of Te Awamutu, and east with key towns such as Morrinsville and

[1] *MBIE Regional Workforce Plan 2025*

Matamata, which also provide links to Tauranga. The population of the sub-region is projected to increase by around 30 percent over the next 30 years.

Hamilton City is the sub-region's largest population centre with a population of around 189,700 people as at 2024. It is the fourth most populous city in New Zealand and one of the fastest growing cities in the country. The city has a young age structure with 12.5 percent of residents being 65 years old or older and a median age of 33.2 (as at 2023). The city is well-connected in terms of location, and supported by a young, educated workforce and a strong network of education providers. Hamiltonians are employed in a broad range of occupations including healthcare, manufacturing, education and training, construction, as well as professional, scientific, and technical roles. In recent years Hamilton has become a logistics and transportation hub due to the opening of the Ruakura Inland Port and superhub project.

Hamilton's population is becoming increasingly ethnically diverse, with a notable presence of younger Pasifika and Māori groups. In Hamilton, 58% identify as being of European origin. In contrast, Waipā district has a less diverse population[2].

Waipā's resident population was estimated to be about 61,400 people in 2024. The population is fairly evenly mixed between urban and rural; with the main urban populations centred in the towns of Te Awamutu, Cambridge, and Kihikihi. The district has an older age structure with 19.4 percent of residents being 65 years old or older and the median age is 40.9 (as at 2023).

Because of the high proportion of high class soils, the district has a rich agricultural base that is dominated by dairy farming, but also features sheep, beef, horse studs, deer farming and fruit production. While agriculture is vital to Waipā, its economy is diversifying over time with manufacturing, construction and services growing in importance.

While not anticipating a change in the agreed population projections (University of Waikato) at the sub-regional level, the scenarios will consider the pace of that change, timing and distribution.

[2] *StatsNZ 2018/2024*

Timespan for the Spatial Study

The spatial study has a long-term planning horizon of over 30 years. However, various projects, including the fast-track application for the Southern Links 1 development (SL1) and two large-scale infrastructure proposals, the Hamilton Southern Links (HSL) roading project and the Southern Metro Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP), have accelerated land use changes for the area.

Recent progress with the southern wastewater treatment plant and the state highway component of the Southern Links arterial network have prompted the need to prepare an integrated spatial framework to guide the area's development over the next three decades, as there is high potential that both of these critical infrastructure investments could be substantially advanced within the next 10-15 years. Ultimately, the study is likely to provide an entry point to the multi-generational changes which are expected in this area of the Waikato region.

Partnership and governance

Enduring partnership between mana whenua /iwi, councils, developers, and central government agencies will determine how effectively the study area and wider region grow. Co-governance models established through the Waikato River Authority and evolving partnerships offer a foundation for shared decision-making. The challenge is to translate partnership principles into the practical realities of funding, staging, and land release.

The area is an enabler of economic growth for the sub-region

At a local level, the study area is directly affected by the southward growth of Hamilton City and by the growth of the Waipā population and economy. Within the study area, the largest single influence of change is the growth of industrial and business-related development around Hamilton Airport, which reopened its international terminal in June 2025.

Potential land transfers between Waipā District Council and Hamilton City Council

All of the study area, and where change in land use will predominantly occur, is wholly currently contained within the Waipā district. Most of the undeveloped land is currently predominantly zoned Rural in the Waipā District Plan, and some of this area can be regarded as 'greenfield' land available for urban development.

The Future Proof Strategy notes that both SL1 and SL2 are the subject of a strategic boundary agreement signed in 2022 between Waipā District Council and Hamilton City. The agreement outlines a process for the proposed transfer of land into the jurisdictional boundary of Hamilton City Council by addressing possible strategic land use issues as required under Future Proof and the Hamilton Urban Growth Strategy (HUGS) Principles for Out of Boundary Development. This process includes identifying the site development, resource use and infrastructure planning investigations necessary to support a possible urbanisation of the area. It is noted that these areas were not included in the 30-year timeframe of the 2024 Future Proof Strategy settlement pattern, as investigations had not yet been completed to support their inclusion.

In 2024, SL1 was identified as a listed project in accordance with the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTA Act 2024). It is intended to support Hamilton's planned southern growth.

The NZTA investment case for progressing the development of the State Highway component of the Southern Links arterial network

NZTA's Hamilton Southern Links project is classified as a 'Road of National Significance' in the 2024 Government Policy Statement on land transport. NZTA is preparing an investment case for the project, and an initial $100M was approved in October 2025 for design and consenting work. The project, along with its supporting arterial network, has long been a priority for Future Proof to deliver strategic transport and support economic growth, but it competes with other road developments for limited government funds. The form and function of this project have also changed over time. There is a commitment to construct some form of road along the entire Southern Links designation.

Significant changes in resource management legislation have occurred in the last decade, and new legislation and policies are programmed to happen in the short term.

This means we are operating in a legislative and policy environment that is subject to considerable change over the 30+ year timespan of the study. In 2025, the government has signalled that it intends to have a more permissive planning regime based on property rights. The upcoming reform, the Going for Housing Growth programme, seeks to unlock housing and economic development by creating a more competitive land market and clearer pathways for infrastructure delivery. For councils and developers, this means a stronger emphasis on live zoning and long-term infrastructure coordination. Yet, the reform also challenges local authorities to protect the very qualities that make the Waikato distinctive – its highly productive soils, cultural landscapes, and strong sense of place.

Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato

The health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and its tributaries remain central to all growth considerations. Te Ture Whaimana, currently under review, sets a framework for restoring and protecting the mauri (life force) of the river and its catchment. It sits ahead of all other subordinate legislation or planning documents under the Resource Management Act (1991). Its direction requires that the river's needs are considered first. Te Ture Whaimana is therefore given effect to in every scenario presented in this report – from the scale of development to the management of wastewater, stormwater, and land use intensity.

Economic growth

It is well recognised that the North Waipā - South Hamilton area is well positioned for significant economic opportunity. The presence of The University of Waikato, the Ruakura Superhub to the north, surrounding farmland, the railway line, the state highway, the airport and its precincts, and Mystery Creek in close proximity to one another creates numerous economic opportunities, making the study area part of a possible larger logistics and innovation corridor that connects producers, exporters, and researchers.

Demand for industrial land is growing fast in the Future Proof sub-region. There are a number of industrial developments either underway or identified in the central and northern parts of the sub-region. How and where all of the industrial demand is met will shape employment outcomes and infrastructure investment priorities across the region.

Environmental and climate adaptation

Highly productive land, which includes peat soils, along with gullies and other sensitive ecological systems, is abundant in the study area. These ecosystems provide essential functions that support social and economic activities, integral to the growth of the area and wider region.

Aerial shot of the southern end of the Waikato Expressway (from NZTA Waka Kotahi)

Methodology and Scenarios Structure

Development framework

The scenario framework has been developed to test different pathways for how and where growth could unfold across the study area and neighbouring context.

These scenarios are not forecasts or preferred options. They are designed as exploratory tools to stimulate dialogue, identify trade-offs, and clarify where regulatory and investment choices have the greatest impact, considering their timespan and how these may be required to transcend decades of possible policy change.

Each scenario represents a policy and development context, illustrating how decisions made today could influence outcomes by 2040 and 2055.

The scenarios provide a structured foundation for engagement with mana whenua/iwi partners and stakeholders responsible for infrastructure and environmental management.

The scenarios were developed through a combination of strategic and iterative reviews with planning and infrastructure experts.

The process followed three key steps:

1. **Baseline analysis**
   Identifying the current policy and regulatory frameworks, infrastructure capacity, and land-use constraints across the study area. This primarily served as the purpose and function of the stocktake and gap analysis report.[3]

2. **Outlining drivers and uncertainties**
   Mapping key variables influencing future development, infrastructure timing, economic intervention, and environmental regulation.

3. **Scenario development**
   Building five internally consistent storylines that reflect distinct combinations of policy, development and infrastructure settings.

[3] *July 2025. Available on Future Proof website: NorthWaipaSouthHamiltonGapAnalysis.pdf*

Scenario elements and focus areas

While the wider study area spans the southern urban–rural interface of Hamilton and Waipā, the scenarios focus on specific areas that exhibit the highest likelihood of land-use change within the 30-year planning horizon of these scenarios.

These include areas within SL1, SL2, the Airport and surrounding precincts, Mystery Creek area, areas on the eastern side of the NIMT line, Peacocke, and the village of Rukuhia.

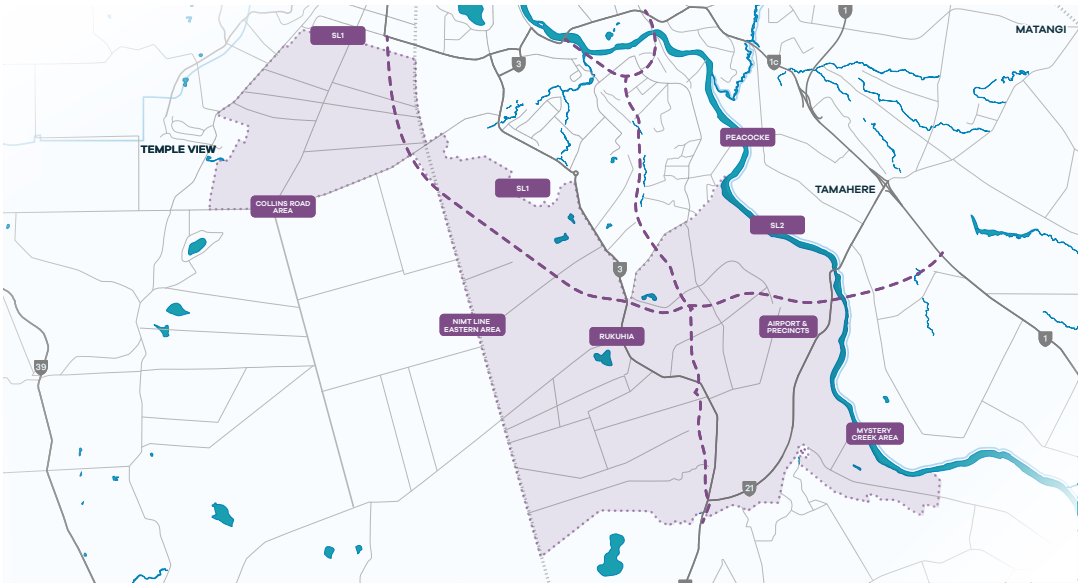


Figure 3 *North Waipā – South Hamilton Spatial Study - Scenario elements.*

These areas were identified based on a combination of scheduled development proposals (i.e., fast-track applications) and existing landowner aspirations acknowledged through the submissions process made during the adoption of the 2024 Future Development Strategy.

Together, these areas highlight both market interest and growth pressure points, as well as, at times, infrastructure investment readiness. These locations are of particular interest for potential medium- to long-term land use changes, where it is important to evaluate sequencing, servicing, and environmental impacts—especially where infrastructure dependencies, highly productive soils, and ecological sensitivities converge.

Other surrounding rural and peri-urban areas remain part of the overall spatial context but are not explored in detail, as their development is likely to be limited by infrastructure capacity, policy direction, or low market readiness.

Structure and limitations

The scenarios used are not an exhaustive list of all possibilities. They have been shaped around the critical focus areas (listed below) and outcome statements as identified in the agreed Vision and Outcomes Statements for the study.

- Anticipated Regulatory Environment and Population Projections
- Development - Residential/Industrial/Commercial
- Infrastructure - Transport
- Infrastructure - Water
- Infrastructure - Social
- Environment/Heritage/Culture
- Planning/Staging

There has not been extensive quantitative analysis of the scenarios as their purpose is to illustrate the possible futures, not to provide a data driven examination or a base for modelling. Testing of the scenarios will be conducted as part of the upcoming multi-criteria assessment (MCA) phase. Similarly, interventions are not explored in any detail in these scenarios but will likely form part of the MCA.

It is also important to recognise that multiple scenarios could occur within one regulatory context. The scenarios presented are just one possibility. Each scenario explores a different growth pathway and planning approach for the study area. These are not preferred options, but a mechanism for testing alternative futures.

While the scenarios discuss various developments and infrastructure projects, these should in no way be seen as endorsement or rejection of these proposals. All development and infrastructure will follow separate regulatory processes. The scenarios are a means of testing different outcomes.

Possible Future Scenarios for the North Waipā – South Hamilton Area

The following five scenarios have been developed to explore how various drivers of change can come together to shape the different futures.

Collectively, the five possible future scenarios span a spectrum — from Scenario 1's status quo to Scenario 2's coordinated delivery, Scenario 3's competitive acceleration, Scenario 4's economic boost driven by a development corporation, and Scenario 5's environmental protection.

Together, they provide insights into the trade-offs facing the area, such as:

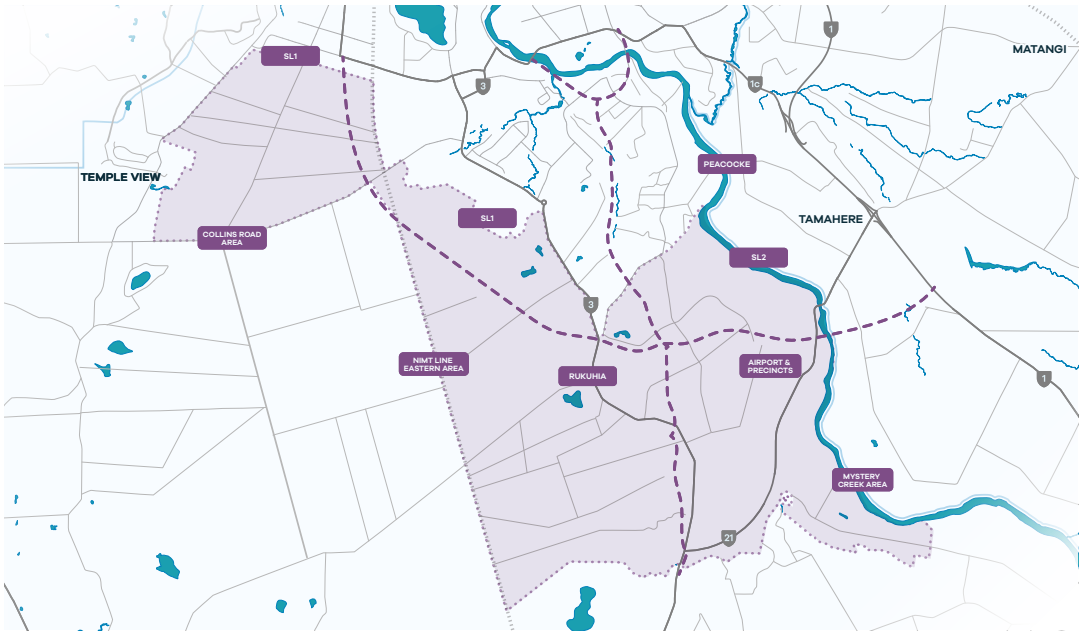
- pace of growth vs quality of place and servicing
- economic growth vs environmental impact
- local governance vs market responsiveness.

Scenario 1: Status quo

(Appendix A – page 29)

At a glance:

- Growth proceeds broadly in line with existing strategies, with Peacocke and SL1 developing incrementally under current planning tools.
- Infrastructure sequencing is slow and sometimes reactive.
- Rukuhia and Ōhaupō remain villages with large lots, while SL2 stays rural.
- The Airport continues to grow aviation and dry industries, with some expansion into logistics and warehousing, and Mystery Creek retains its recreation/events focus.
- Progress is steady but modest, with limited innovation and uneven infrastructure provision.
- Hamilton Southern Links and the Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant are accepted as givens in the Status Quo scenario.



Map – Scenario Base

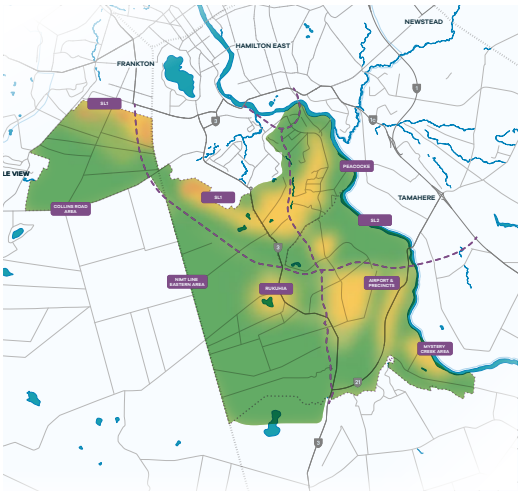
Scenario 2: Staged roll-out

(Appendix A – page 33)

At a glance:

- Growth is tightly coordinated with infrastructure, ensuring development follows a planned sequence.
- SL1 is the primary focus, with staging aligned to Southern Links delivery and mini wastewater plants bridging until the Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant comes online.
- Peacocke grows more slowly as developers leapfrog into SL1.
- Airport activities are prioritised, with only dry industry permitted.
- Rukuhia and Ōhaupō retain their rural character until later, when reticulation supports the growth of compact villages.
- Environmental protections are stronger, with blue-green networks fully delivered.

Scenario 2 - Development/activity heatmaps



By 2040

By 2055

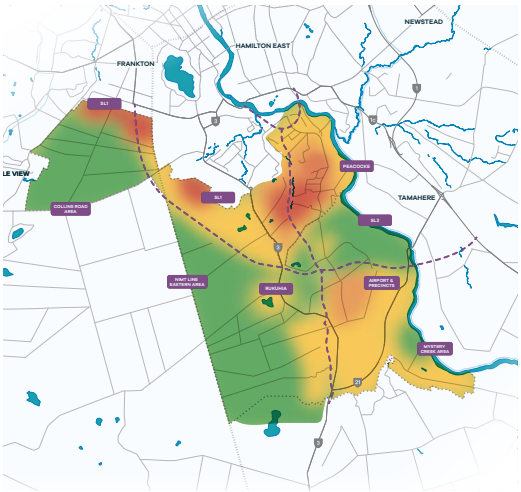
Scenario 3: Accelerated land zoning capacity and competitive market

(Appendix A – page 43)

At a glance:

- Land release is accelerated to create a competitive market, with SL1, Peacocke, SL2, and Collins Road all developing rapidly, often ahead of infrastructure.
- Both wet and dry industries are permitted, noting that there may be water allocation issues. This creates a broad industrial profile around the Airport and within the eastern area of the NIMT line.
- Rukuhia and Ōhaupō urbanise faster, becoming commuter towns.
- Mystery Creek grows into a national events and tourism hub, while retail centres emerge around the Airport.
- Infrastructure struggles to keep pace, with wastewater and schools lagging, and environmental outcomes are weaker as highly productive soils and habitats are lost.

Scenario 3 - Development/activity heatmaps



By 2040

By 2055

Scenario 4: Economic-led growth

(Appendix A – page 54)

At a glance:

- A Development Corporation drives coordinated industrial clustering and front-loaded infrastructure investment, positioning the Airport as a super-industrial hub for the sub-region alongside Ruakura.
- Residential growth is still managed by councils under a staged approach, but industrial land is curated for high-value, aviation-compatible industries.
- Peacocke becomes a compact mixed-use community, while Rukuhia and Ōhaupō urbanise gradually with wastewater reticulation.
- Mystery Creek expands as a tourism and events node, and the eastern area of the NIMT line is partially developed for agri-tech.
- The Airport, Mystery Creek, and Ruakura form a sub-regional economic powerhouse.

Scenario 4 - Development/activity heatmaps

By 2040

By 2055

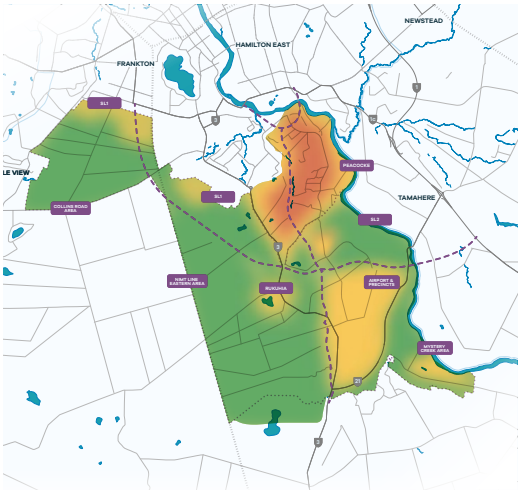
Scenario 5: Environmental gateway

(Appendix A – page 65)

At a glance:

- In this scenario, growth is shaped first and foremost by environmental outcomes, and investments are maximised to give effect to Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato and Te Mana o te Wai, guiding land release and land use based on their contribution to the restoration and protection of the Waikato River and its tributaries.
- Peacocke absorbs housing demand at medium density, while SL1 and Collins Road stall due to constructability and environmental constraints.
- A green belt encircles growth cells, protecting ecological corridors and productive soils.
- The Airport evolves as an eco-destination with clean-tech, circular economy industries, and Mystery Creek becomes a gateway to the river and cycleway network.
- By 2055, the Airport, Ruakura, and Mystery Creek form a “green industrial super node” hosting global agri-tech and sustainable food production ventures, fully aligned with iwi aspirations and ecological restoration.

Scenario 5 - Development/activity heatmaps



By 2040

By 2055

Comparative matrix 'By 2055' scenarios

'By 2055' scenarios	Scenario 1 Status Quo	Scenario 2 Staged Roll-Out	Scenario 3 Accelerated/ Competitive Market	Scenario 4 Economic-boost	Scenario 5 Environmental Gateway
Employment and Job Opportunities	Jobs emerge steadily but mostly in dry industries (warehousing, logistics) around the Airport precinct. Mystery Creek remains focused on events. Limited diversification into high-value industries. Some employment is enabled in Peacocke and SL1 to support the increased populations.	Employment opportunities grow gradually, concentrated in SL1 and Peacocke. Airport precinct activity is protected for aviation, limiting industrial diversity but sustaining strong aviation-related jobs. Agri-tech emerges modestly north of Mystery Creek in the longer term.	Wide-ranging jobs appear rapidly, with both wet and dry industries enabled. Airport and the eastern area of the NIMT line attract large-scale industrial, manufacturing, and agri-tech employers. However, jobs may sprawl, creating inefficiencies and competing with Hamilton/Waipā centres.	Strong clustering of high-value jobs in the Airport hub — logistics, agri-tech, advanced manufacturing, supported by Waikato University partnerships. High-value, export-oriented employment base emerges. Residential growth lags but population follows jobs.	Employment growth is slower but focused on sustainable sectors — clean-tech, circular economy, eco-tourism, and agri-tech aligned with Te Ture Whaimana. Jobs tied to environmental restoration (river health, blue-green infrastructure) and eco-based tourism.
Great Place to Live	Moderate housing growth in Peacocke and SL1. Rukuhia/ Ōhaupō retain large-lot village character— coordinated delivery of amenities.	Well-managed, compact growth. Blue-green networks and staged schools/ facilities improve quality of life. Rural villages keep character. Housing is moderately dense but coordinated.	Rapid, sprawling development. Fast population inflow creates housing variety but planning lags behind. Poor integration of facilities means patchy community outcomes, with pressure on schools and open spaces.	Higher housing density in Peacocke, Rukuhia, and Ōhaupō creates commuter towns. Growth follows industry, so residential quality depends on proximity to the hub. Some trade-offs in liveability due to industrial dominance (priority of investments).	Compact, sustainable neighbourhoods. Green belts protect rural character. Housing growth is modest but well-designed, with strong integration of open spaces, walkways, and green/ blue amenities. Lifestyle is high-quality but less affordable due to restrictions.
Easy to Get Around	Road-based growth. HSL assumed but under current priorities PT remains limited to basic bus routes until later in the period. No BRT in the short- to medium term. Cycleways are limited to structure plan areas.	HSL staged delivery with cycle corridors included. Reliable bus service to Airport/Peacocke, Park & Ride signalled. BRT in place by 2055. Safe walking/ cycling routes in new areas. Coordinated networks.	HSL completed early but congestion remains high due to sprawl. No BRT until later in the period which struggles with catchment alignment. Freight dominates SH3. Patchy delivery of cycleways. Park & Ride difficult to secure.	HSL complete, freight and BRT integrated with Airport hub. BRT spine links Airport, Hamilton, Te Awamutu, Cambridge. Park & Ride and shuttle services are operational. Rail freight under investigation.	Transport prioritises low-carbon modes. Cycling and walking corridors integrated with blue-green networks. BRT is scaled up and reliable. Freight rail in early delivery phase.

Comparative matrix 'By 2055' scenarios (continued)

'By 2055' scenarios	Scenario 1 Status Quo	Scenario 2 Staged Roll-Out	Scenario 3 Accelerated/ Competitive Market	Scenario 4 Economic-boost	Scenario 5 Environmental Gateway
Supporting Iwi Aspirations	Iwi consulted but engagement is ad hoc, tied to statutory processes. Limited co-governance structures.	Blue-green networks delivered with iwi partnership, alignment with Iwi Environmental Management Plans. Some cultural recognition in planning.	Fast-tracked, developer-led planning leaves iwi aspirations often reactive rather than embedded. Risk that cultural sites are overlooked.	Iwi equity in development corporation. Co-governance in industrial hub and ecological corridors. Mātauranga Māori influences design.	Iwi aspirations central. Te Ture Whaimana and Te Mana o Te Wai given full effect. Co-management and cultural values embedded in planning, tourism, and ecological restoration.
Caring for the Environment and the Waikato River	Incremental environmental improvements via SL1/Peacocke structure plans. Blue-green corridors are partially implemented. No major step-change.	Environmental effects staged and managed. Blue-green networks are delivered systematically. Peat lake and riparian protections stronger than baseline	Major environmental trade-offs. Loss of highly productive land, fragmented habitats, and degradation of bat and river ecosystems. Te Ture Whaimana is treated as a compliance floor.	Environmental safeguards embedded in DC operations, but pressures from industrial intensity remain—some improvements (peat lakes, blue-green corridors) but tension between growth and ecology.	Environment first. Blue-green network fully realised. River and tributaries restored. HPL and biodiversity are strictly protected. Environmental health becomes an economic driver.
Level of Strategic Infrastructure Alignment	Infrastructure delivery lags behind land release. HSL is assumed but timing is uncertain, and wastewater investment is long-term. Alignment is partial but not proactive.	High alignment — growth is directly tied to infrastructure triggers. HSL and wastewater are staged and sequenced with land release, reducing misalignment risks.	Poor alignment — land release outpaces infrastructure capacity. Wastewater assumptions exceeded early, roading networks congested, and retrofitting adds costs.	Strong alignment for industrial infrastructure — the Development Corporation coordinates and front-loads investment in transport and wastewater for business land. Some misalignment remains for residential infrastructure, which is managed separately by councils.	Infrastructure is deliberately staged and only released when environmental thresholds and resilience measures are met. Strong alignment with long-term water, wastewater, and active transport investment, but slower delivery pace overall.

Comparative matrix 'By 2055' scenarios (continued)

'By 2055' scenarios	Scenario 1 Status Quo	Scenario 2 Staged Roll-Out	Scenario 3 Accelerated/ Competitive Market	Scenario 4 Economic-boost	Scenario 5 Environmental Gateway
Feasibility and Constructability	Medium feasibility — traditional processes, slower roll-out, fewer risks, but long delivery timelines.	High feasibility — infrastructure triggers and staging improve constructability. Mini wastewater plants bridge gaps.	Low feasibility — constructability issues (peat soils, infrastructure gaps) are overlooked in the push to accelerate development. Misaligned land-use assumptions stress wastewater and transport delivery.	Medium-high feasibility — Development Corporation front-loads infrastructure, coordinates delivery. Risks remain around peat soils (SL1 delayed) and financing complexity.	Medium feasibility — deliberate restrictions slow growth, but constructability issues are reduced by a smaller footprint and environmental buffers. Risk of affordability constraints and developer resistance.

Next Steps: Working Towards a Preferred Scenario

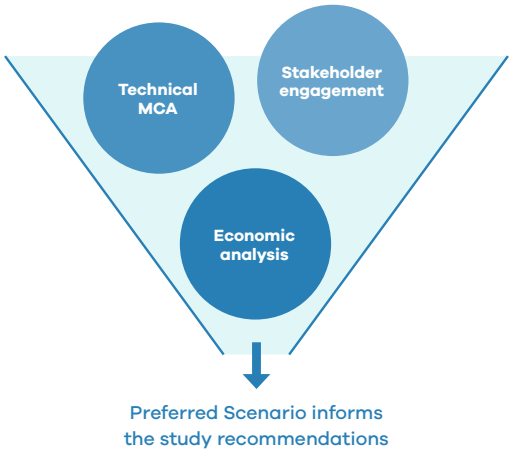
Stakeholder engagement on the scenarios will help to determine which scenarios and/or elements of scenarios are preferred. It will also help to refine these scenarios and identify any issues.

An assessment will be completed which tests the scenarios against MCA criteria. The criteria will be based on the agreed outcome statements for the study:

- employment outcomes
- liveability
- accessibility
- mana whenua /iwi aspirations
- environment
- strategic infrastructure alignment
- feasibility/constructability.

It is also proposed that an independent economic analysis will be undertaken across the scenarios.

These steps will focus on testing and refining these scenarios toward an emerging preferred scenario, comparing and assessing each scenario against assessment criteria mirrored in the agreed-upon study outcome statements.



Once the feedback on scenarios has been analysed, the MCA completed and the economic analysis undertaken, an emerging preferred scenario will be selected. It should be noted that this preferred scenario may include elements from different scenarios. The selected scenario will underpin the Spatial Study Report.

A final Spatial Study Report will be prepared in early 2026. The Study Report will outline the preferred scenario and approach for the study area and the actions required to achieve this.

APPENDIX A

Possible Future Scenarios

Scenario 1: Status quo

At a glance

- Scenario 1 is the "Status quo" scenario and reflects the base with the North Waipā - South Hamilton area as it continues to experience growth, primarily in accordance with the agreed population projections and business land assumptions of the Future Proof Partners (FPP) as set out in the Future Development Strategy adopted in 2024.
- This scenario also assumes the growth pattern under various planning instruments such as the Resource Management Act (RMA), the Future Development Strategy (FDS) and the Fast-Track Approval (FTA) Act running in parallel, as per current policy environment.
- With this in mind, the recent out-of-sequence land development in the last 12 months has been taken into account in terms of:
    - Scheduled applications in the FTA Act and agreed referrals
    - Plan changes and existing zoning in District Plans
    - The updated status of the Hamilton Southern Links (HSL) as a road of national significance (RoNS)
    - The updated status of the new Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWwTP), which was recently included in the draft National Infrastructure Plan by the Infrastructure Commission.
- The centres approach of the Future Proof Strategy and Regional Policy Statement remains robust with Hamilton as the primary centre in the region for commercial, civic and social activity. The towns of Cambridge and Te Awamutu continue to provide commercial and servicing needs to their urban and rural communities.

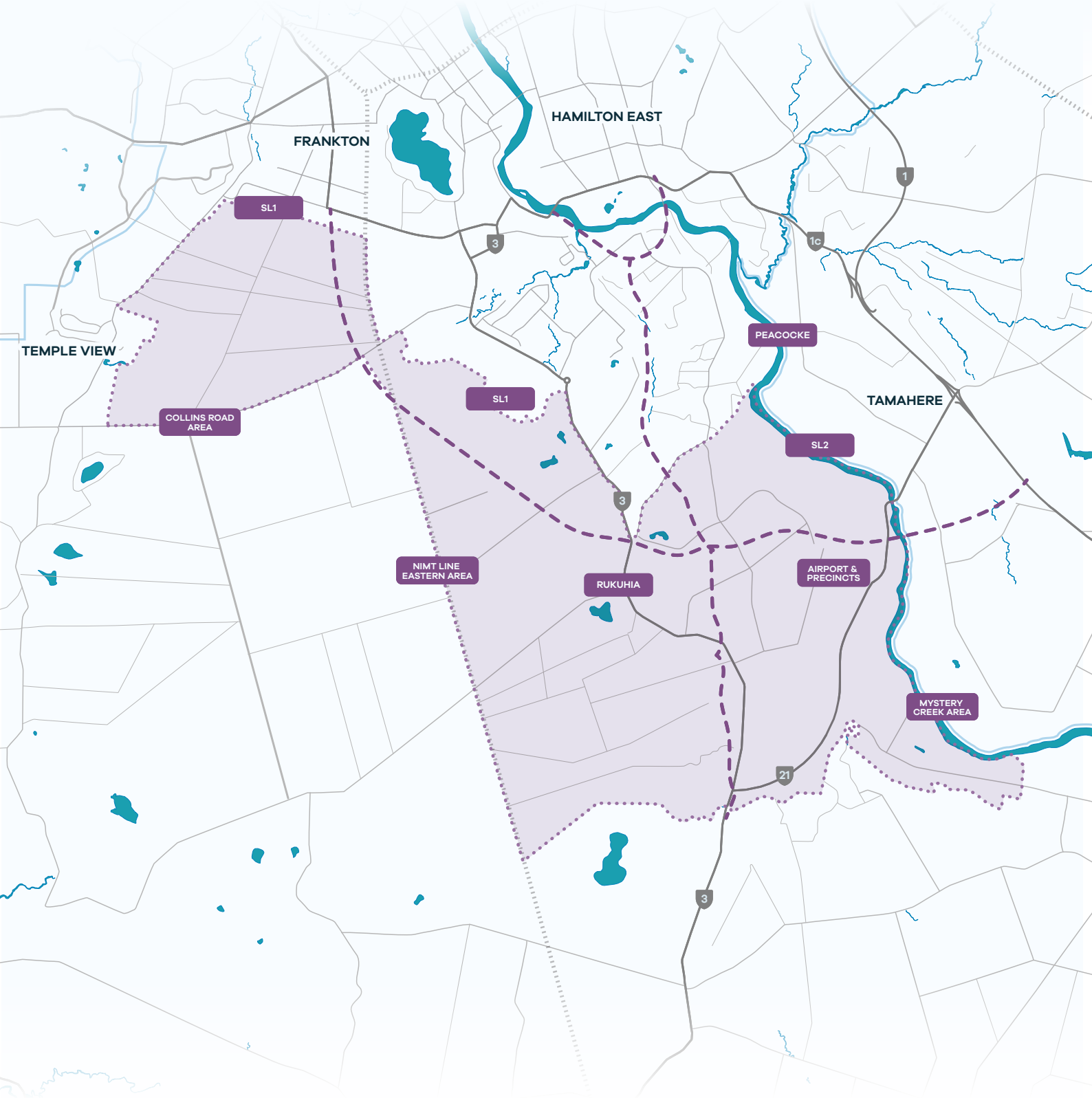
Description of key assumptions

Scenario elements	Key assumptions
Strategic Fit / Regulatory	• Early 2025: Central Government announced plans for repealing and replacing the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). • Phase 3 signalled two new pieces of legislation: The Natural Environment Act (NEA) and The Planning Act, with a greater focus on regional spatial planning. • The Strategic Boundary Agreement is looking to be given effect once Hamilton City Council (HCC) and Waipā District Council (WDC) have reached an agreement. The boundary transfer will likely be carried out in stages with SL1 being transferred in a first instance then SL2.
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development	• The **SL1** growth area is planned to be developed in stages. • **SL1** Stages 1A and 1B (residential/industrial) — are intended to be delivered under Fast-Track consenting. The remaining SL1 (**Balance SL1** or Stage 2) is planned to be developed in line with its concept plan. • Development in the **area north of Collins Road** development area is uncertain due to constructability challenges (unlikely within 30 years) of predominant peat soils. • **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō** are retained as villages with large lot residential (Min. net lot area of 2,500m^2 / 4dph). In both cases, reticulation is not envisaged in the short to medium-term, and growth is likely to be contained within the current growth cells. Increasing pressure for the expansion of both villages is being applied by landowners acknowledging the growth in this village could directly compete with other growth cells (i.e., SL1). • **Peacocke** is slowly developing as per its structure plan. The area has been experiencing out-of-sequence development with developers in the southern part progressing at a faster pace compared to those in the northern part. • **SL2** is retained as rural and is likely to be transferred as a final stage to Hamilton City under the strategic boundary agreement. The area hosts large residential lots and is significantly fragmented with low or no developer activity. Higher-density residential is unlikely in the medium to long-term or until the Peacocke area fills up and arterial is built connecting Peacocks and Rukuhia. • **Hamilton Airport** (which includes all surrounding precincts) is expected to expand over the short to long-term with aviation and non-aviation related activities up to 190 ha. Airport resumed international passenger flights in June 2025 and continues to support aviation training via Waikato Aviation and the Young Eagles. Designation for the runway is due to lapse in 2026, although this is expected to be extended. Full wastewater reticulation is not likely ahead of 2040. Assumption is for industry to remain as a dry industry (to date, logistics/storage/warehousing) as the Airport precinct plan change designates dry industries through strict volume controls and no water available to accommodate wet industries. • **Mystery Creek** is retained as recreation and event focus zone. There are no aspirations to connect to the wastewater treatment plant, and currently, septic tanks are sufficient on normal operational days while sewage is conveyed by truck to Te Awamutu during significant events. • Sand mining located on **the eastern side of the NIMT line** will continue till 2038 (Consent end date). The mined area will then be remediated. Land owners in the area have expressed aspiration to develop commercial and industrial with road access to SH3. • An **area north of Mystery Creek** has a private plan change lodged and on hold with WDC. Aspiration for extension of the Airport Business Zone with express provision for Agritech activities. Low confidence as to the timeframe. The area includes the existing Tomra site, which is already developed, and parts of the site are constrained due to Waikato River gully and riverbank. • **Tamahere area** – Tamahere is located in the Waikato District and is not directly included in the spatial study area, however the development of the Hamilton Southern Links and changes in neighbouring areas, particularly to the west, such as Peacocke and the SL2 area, are expected to influence Tamahere.

Description of key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions
 **Infrastructure - Transport**	• **Hamilton Southern Links** form is accepted as a given for the base case scenario. At the time of writing, funding and delivery approach are uncertain, as is the tolling status. No cycling corridor is included in the designation footprint. • **The Southern Links Network Plan** is in progress to develop or connect the surrounding existing and future arterial and collector road networks. • Public Transport (PT) pathways, **no BRT** in the short-to-medium term; however, frequent services between the Airport and Hamilton City are planned in the short to medium term. Zero-emission buses are likely to be the majority of the PT fleet by 2035. • No further investigation planned for the **passenger rail** connection in the long term. At a design minimum, it can not accommodate any mode share at this point. • **Walking and cycling corridors** are provided in the study area via a concept plan for SL1 and a structure plan for Peacocke. • Proposed alterations to the Narrows bridge over the Waikato Awa could provide a long-term opportunity to extend the Te Awa cycleway River Ride to the western bank of the Awa and north into the Peacocke growth cell.
 **Infrastructure - Water**	• **Water supply** is likely to be challenging to match the expected development in the study area. Water supply is sufficient for Peacocke, though availability for other developments remains uncertain. SL1 will be required to apply for additional water allocation and development is dependent on finding new supply. • **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** was recently included in the draft National Infrastructure Plan by the Infrastructure Commission, and is progressing through the early stages of the notice of requirement. A site has been identified and is located in the SL2 area. The plant is expected to be operational in the medium to long-term, scaling with a modular approach that includes an initial stage to service 35 years of existing and future growth. • Private **on-site wastewater management** solutions are intended to progress until reticulation of new growth areas such as SL1, Rukuhia and Ōhaupō.
 **Infrastructure - Social**	• The core study area contains nine existing **schools/school zones** (Deanwell, Glenview, Te Kura Amorangi o Whakawatea, Kaipaki, Koromatua, Ōhaupō, Rukuhia, and Tamahere and South City Christian). • Two new primary schools are planned in Peacocke to serve its growing population. • Access to Ōhaupō School is likely to experience challenges as traffic volumes rise on SH3. • **Community facilities** such as halls, libraries, open spaces are delivered in line with new growth areas to service future populations.
 **Environment / Heritage/ Culture**	• **Peacocke structure plan** contributes significantly to areas of environmental preservation, enhancing biodiversity. • Concept plan for SL1 integrates ecological improvements alongside stormwater treatment. • The **blue-green network** envisioned in the Future Proof Strategy continues to expand, increasing biodiversity in restored and predator-free gully systems, while providing secondary stormwater treatment and retention during extreme events.
 **Planning and Staging**	• Airport designation for runway extension lapses 2026, but is expected to be extended. • The Strategic Boundary Agreement between Waipā District and Hamilton City councils is being progressed • Airport Business Zone and Mystery Creek Events Zone are retained as they are.

Scenario One: Status quo



Legend

- District lines
- State Highways
- Waikato River
- Railway
- Hamilton Southern Links designation
- Study area boundary

Scenario 2: Staged roll-out 30 + years

At a glance

- In this scenario, the RMA has been reformed, and the new Going for Housing Growth legislation places significant emphasis on the staging in the Regional Spatial Strategy / Plan. Growth is carefully managed through staging rules, master/structure planning, infrastructure triggers and developer agreements. Unanticipated and out-of-sequence developments can still enable growth outside of the Future Proof settlement pattern. Unanticipated and/or out-of-sequence developments can still occur but would be subject to the same requirements around master planning, triggers and agreements.
- Delivery has been staged and coordinated, with new neighbourhoods coming online in sequence to align with infrastructure readiness and consent triggers set through the structure planning process. Approved Fast-Track Areas (FTAs) have progressed rapidly, with both residential and industrial development occurring in step with supporting infrastructure.
- Development outside FTA areas is slow for the first 10-15 years, but accelerated following the unlocking of infrastructure, with Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant (SWWTP) scaled up to servicing new growth and Hamilton Southern Links (HSL) full scope being developed.
- Rukuhia and Ōhaupō retain their rural character until later in the scenario timeframe (by 2055), when moderate intensification occurs.
- The Airport precinct activities rebalance toward aviation, with limited dry industry and improved incentives to ensure land development is focussed on those that require proximity to an airport.
- By 2055, this scenario delivers predictable growth, strong environmental management, and reduced risk of over-investment.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Anticipated Regulatory Environment and Population Projections	• This staged approach relies on the use of the spatial elements and long-term plans alongside triggers/developers agreements. Unanticipated and/or out-of-sequence developments can still occur but would be subject to the same requirements around triggers and agreements. • Spatial plan provides for master and structure planning and development opportunities dependent on infrastructure availability and provision. • Scenario allows councils to retain control over land release and actively use infrastructure as a trigger for development. • Population projection aligns with baseline.	
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development	• The area in **SL1** has now transferred to Hamilton City and is being developed as per the concept plan in a staged and coordinated manner. • **Listed FTA** (residential and industrial) in **SL1** have been approved and are being delivered in alignment with infrastructure (road network, cycling and walking corridor), according to triggers established in their consent and via the structure planning process. The remaining part of **SL1**, not referred through the FTA process (Balance SL1), has been slow for the first 10 years in comparison to its FTA counterpart; however, development in this area accelerates once Hamilton Southern Links (HSL) is completed. Although there is no wastewater reticulation, scaled mini private treatment plants have been established with the intention of connecting to the wider wastewater network in the longer-term. • The area north of **Collins Road** has not been developed. The constructability challenges (e.g. peat soils), previously experienced in SL1 to a lesser degree, are exacerbated in this area and the feasibility of residential and industrial development is questionable. • Large lot residential areas remain the defining character of **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō**, preserving their rural village feel. • In **Peacocke**, the pace of development has slowed as demand and affordability change, with early focus on SL1, while some developers opt to leapfrog directly into SL1. • The **Airport precinct** has undergone a rebalancing of its role as a key economic node. New planning provisions and the Airport MasterPlan have ensured that airport operations and infrastructure take precedence over non-aviation uses by	• Reticulated wastewater and urbanisation has reached **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō**, introducing greater residential density while maintaining their role as connected but distinct communities. • **SL2** has not yet transferred to Hamilton and has retained its rural character, with development held back in favour of completing development in **Peacocke** and **SL1**. Despite being already well fragmented, the rural zoning and large lot residential areas allow for SL2 to be recognised as the next potential long-term growth area. • With the limited establishment of industrial activity within the original Airport precincts, a rezoning has allowed the **area north of Mystery Creek** to establish agri-tech industries and high-value manufacturing slowly. • This means the **Airport Business Zone** has now been expanded to the Waikato River, although natural constraints such as gullies and riverbanks reduce the net developable area. • This recent emerging economic hub has begun to attract similar and support services. • Given this, **the area located east of the NIMT line** has been slowly rezoned and a mix of commercial and light industrial activity is slowly emerging, with the intent to extend and connect with parts of the Airport's Western Precinct. • Farming activities continue in the remaining non-urban areas, with this being the main activity on the west side of the rail line. In contrast, the east side has undergone significant changes in land use, leading to the loss of highly productive soils for industrial activities that are primarily complementary to farming.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development (continued)	prioritising land for aviation associated activities and ensuring that development plans primarily consider the needs of aviation safety and efficiency. Thus, aviation activity is more actively protected, while limited additional light industrial activities have grown within and around the precincts. Dry industry remains the single industrial type, with no wet industries permitted. • **Mystery Creek** has strengthened its position as a tourism, recreation, and events hub, benefiting from the increased aviation activity. • **The area located east of the NIMT line** remains undeveloped, and sand mining has continued until the consent expires in 2038. As the area is widely LUC class 2 soil, careful remediation work is underway to restore and future-proof the long-term capability of these prime soils particularly where sand extraction had taken place. • **SL2** remains under Waipā District Council jurisdiction and contains the Southern Wastewater treatment in part; however, it hasn't developed further and is still predominantly zoned as rural. • The staged roll-out approach of developments across the area has allowed **farming activities** to remain predominant within the study area, particularly in areas where high class soils are and where peat soils pose constraints to urban/industrial development.	
Infrastructure - Water	• **Water allocation** is sufficient for Peacocke, and had to be carefully allocated for the SL1 area, but supply to other growth areas remains under consideration. • Until the **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** is operational, residential and industrial developers are installing scaled mini private treatment plants. These will eventually require retrofitting to connect to centralised servicing.	• The **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** is fully operational, connecting new developments as they come online. SL1 is fully serviced, and wastewater reticulation has been extended to **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō.** • Wet industries remain excluded from the Airport precinct.

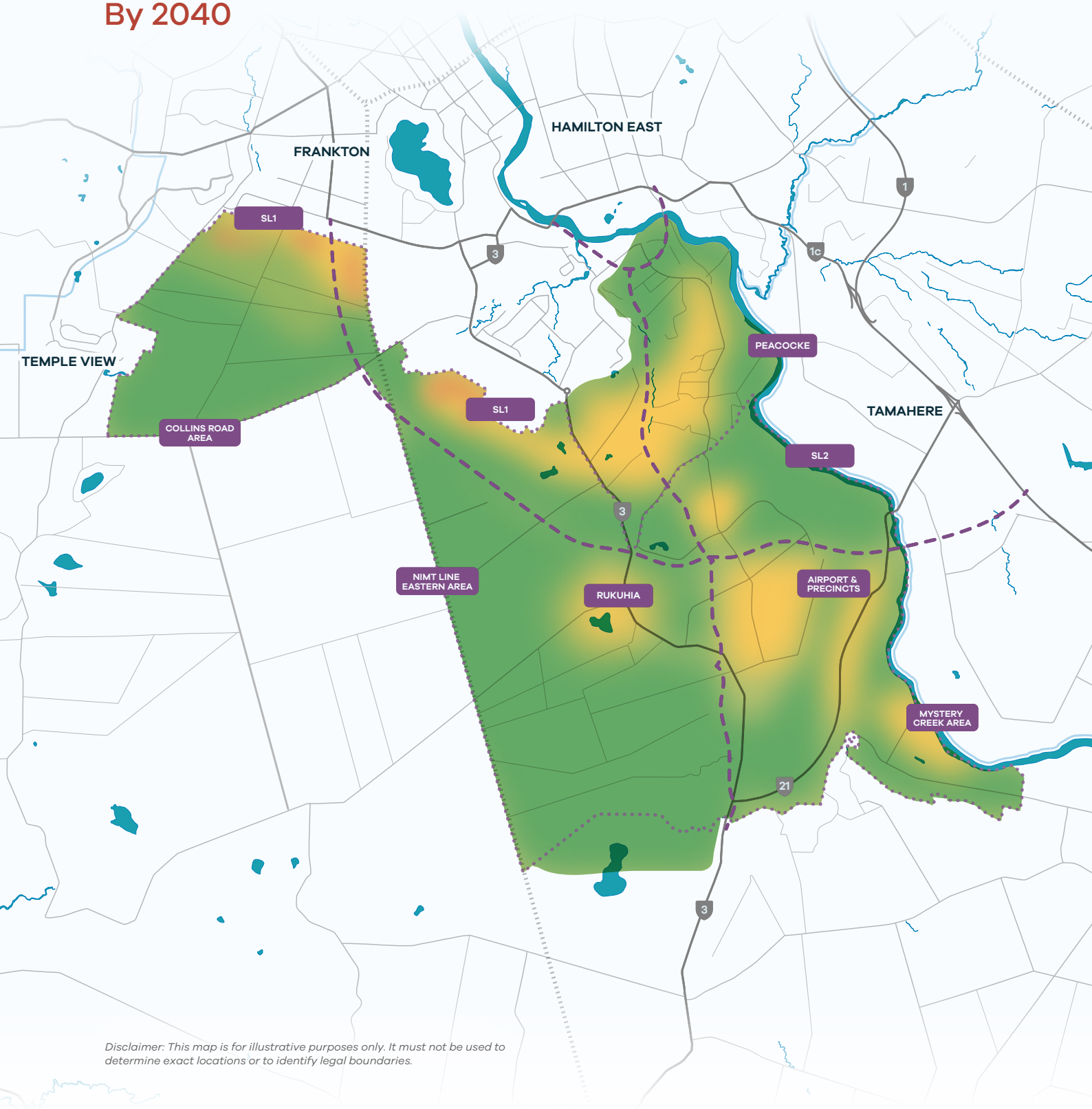
Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
 **Infrastructure - Transport**	• **Hamilton Southern Links (HSL)** was approved for funding and is now being delivered in coordinated packages, with the West and East sections being delivered first and aligning with the timing of urbanisation in residential, industrial, and commercial areas. • In new growth areas in the periphery of Hamilton, the local **roading network** is designed in line with these larger strategic corridors. The road network is under increasing pressure due to rising freight volumes in and around industrial areas, along with a surge in heavy vehicle traffic. This situation arises because wastewater services have not yet been established in most industrial and residential developments around the airport. • No Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) has been established yet; however, a regular and frequent bus service connects stations near the Airport to Peacocke and Hamilton's city centre. • International and domestic **flight** volumes are steadily increasing. • Careful urbanisation patterns have enabled the comprehensive planning and delivery of **active mode** corridors, ensuring safe and direct walking and cycling routes within new residential areas. The staged approach for the delivery of HSL has allowed for the design and delivery of segregated cycleways alongside. • A Park and Ride has been signalled as part of the Airport MasterPlan on a site still to be defined, located in the vicinity of the Airport or Mystery Creek.	• **Hamilton Southern Links (HSL)** is completed and fully operational – it could be a tolled state highway. • A **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** has been established between Hamilton and the Airport (including a route via Peacocke), services extend to provide frequent connections south to Ōhaupō, Te Awamutu and Cambridge, improving commuter and visitor access. The reliability and level of service have been popular, effectively lifting pressure on the local road network. There remain critical pinch points which continue to create traffic issues for certain areas, causing challenges for access to schools. • A Park and Ride also now connects the BRT and the Airport and integrates seamlessly with existing or planned public transport options, creating a multimodal network for tourists and commuters. • While plans for an agri-tech hub near the airport are gaining momentum in interest, air cargo demand is steady, however insufficient, to further investigate a **freight rail connection** from the NIMT line to the airport.
 **Infrastructure - Social**	• Investment in local schools has been staged and development has only occurred at one of the two originally planned Peacocke school sites due to earlier development in other areas. • Community facilities such as libraries and open spaces have also been delivered in accordance with the concept plan on SL1 and the structure plan in Peacocke.	• Educational and recreational facilities across the growth areas have been met with staged investment.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
 **Environment / Heritage/ Culture**	• The staged approach to development allows environmental pressures to be more effectively managed. • This scenario approach provides for the environmental and cultural outcomes sought and protections set forth in Te Ture Whaimana. • Proactive biodiversity mitigation and enhancement are embedded in delivery, with the **blue-green networks** of both the Peacocke Structure Plan and SL1 Concept Plan fully implemented. This aligns with the broader Future Proof blue-green vision, including Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao, ensuring ecological corridors and waterways are protected, enhanced, planned and connected as the urban footprint expands. • Financial contributions and a staged approach (including structure planning) have allowed for sound management of the **peat lake catchment** to manage water quality and overall health of the Waikato River and lakes, namely Lake Maratoto towards Ōhaupō and Lake Kareaotahi/ Cameron in Rukuhia.	• Te Ture Whaimana continues to play a key role in regulating growth pace around the river and peat lakes. • The extension of the Airport Business Zone towards the River has been managed carefully, allowing for adequate buffer zones to be established along existing gullies and riparian margins.
 **Planning and Staging**	• Infrastructure and 'growth paying for growth' have been used as a trigger for land release. The staging approach has allowed for more master planning, leading to better urban form and design outcomes. • A **strategic boundary adjustment** has brought the SL1 area into Hamilton City. SL2 has remained in Waipā. • The Airport Business Zone has been adapted for better protection of aviation associated activities with the designation for the runway extension renewed in 2026.	• Rezoning has enabled additional development over time on the eastern side of the NIMT line, Rukuhia and Ōhaupō. • The **Airport business zone** has extended to the Waikato River. • A **strategic boundary adjustment** is under review to bring the SL2 area into Hamilton City. • The **Mystery Creek Event Zone** has been amended to allow for an increased yet appropriate level of tourism activities in the area, notably delivering tourist accommodation which has been lacking in the area.

Scenario Two:
Staged roll-out 30+ years
By 2040



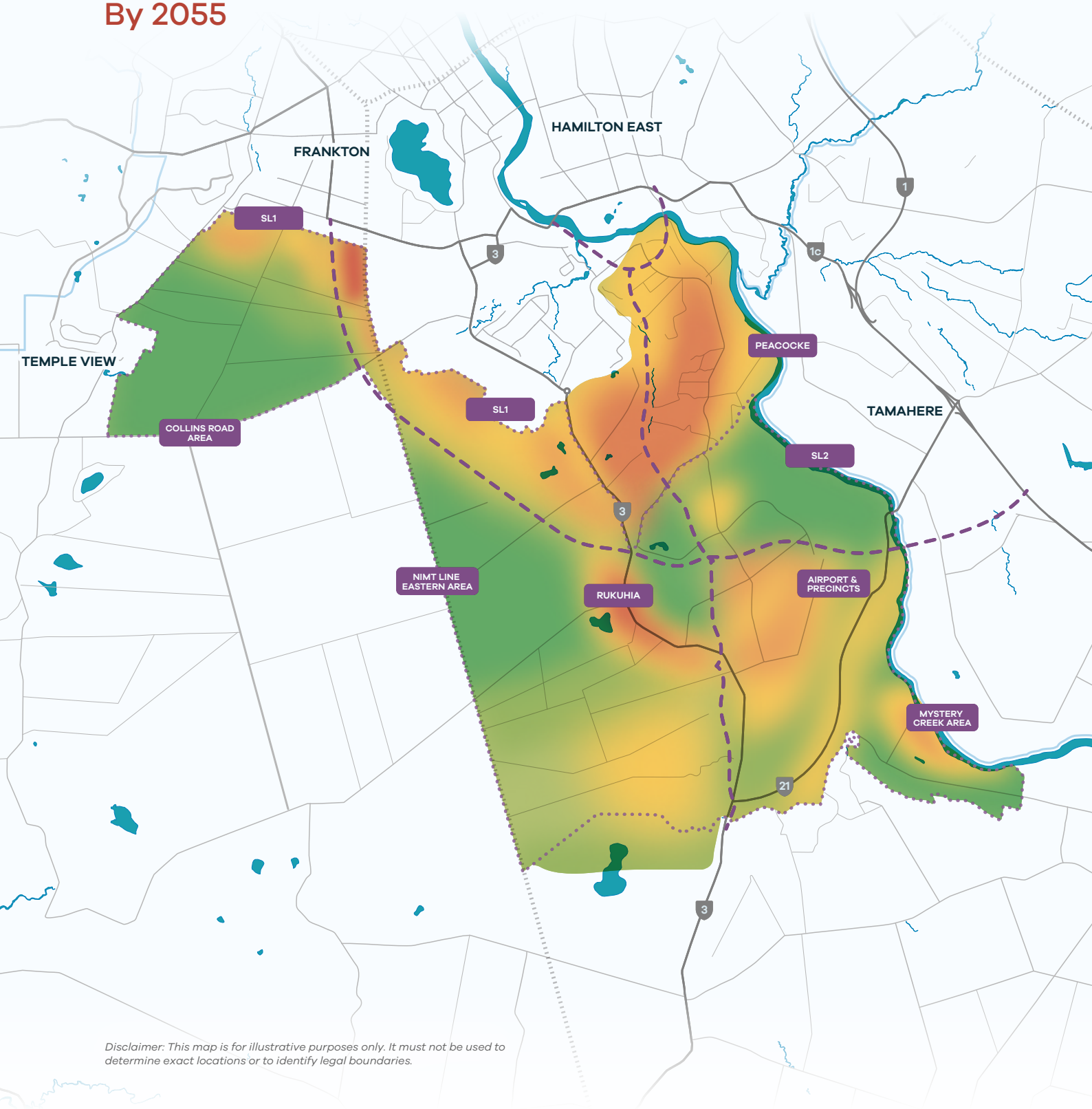
Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only. It must not be used to determine exact locations or to identify legal boundaries.

Legend

- District lines
- State Highways
- Waikato River
- Railway
- Hamilton Southern Links designation
- Study area boundary
- Lower or no development / activity*
- Higher level of development / activity*

**Level of residential, industrial, or commercial development or activity compared to the 2025 baseline.*

Scenario Two:
Staged roll-out 30+ years
By 2055



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**Level of residential, industrial, or commercial development or activity compared to the 2025 baseline.*

What does the "By 2055" scenario imply in terms of our outcome statements?

Employment and Job Opportunities

By 2055, employment across the study area is steady and resilient. The Airport precinct has grown as a specialised hub, balancing aviation-related operations with carefully managed level of industry. Planning rules give aviation associated / dependent activities primacy, ensuring that air freight, logistics, training, and support services thrive without conflict from incompatible uses.

In the area located on the eastern side of the NIMT line, remediation of former sand mining operations has enabled new commercial and light industrial activities, extending into the Airport's Western Precinct. This has created an economic cluster in high-value manufacturing, agri-tech, and supporting service industries — construction, tourism, accommodation, warehousing, and niche retail. These industries provide diverse local high-value jobs while remaining compatible with environmental constraints. Farming remains active in areas constrained by peat soils, reinforcing the rural economy.

Employment opportunities are also provided within Peacocke and SL1 through local and neighbourhood centres and some industrial land in SL1.

A Great Place to Live

Rukuhia and Ōhaupō have evolved into villages with reticulated wastewater services and moderate density (15–25 dph). They retain their connected but distinct village identity, buffered from Hamilton's urban edge while offering a range of housing options. Stronger public transport connections make commuting easier, while the slower, sequenced pace of development has allowed schools, reserves, and community facilities to keep pace.

SL1 is fully built out, with well-designed neighbourhoods connected by walking and cycling corridors, while Peacocke has grown steadily but more modestly than originally envisioned, reflecting its early loss of momentum as developers leapt into SL1. SL2 remains largely rural, preserved as a future growth area beyond 2055. The result is a balanced settlement pattern: compact, connected communities with green infrastructure embedded from the outset.

Easy to Get Around

By 2055, Hamilton Southern Links is complete in coordinated stages, providing a reliable backbone for both residential and industrial traffic. Local road networks integrate well with these strategic corridors, minimising congestion and improving freight efficiency. Freight volumes are substantial, reflecting the growth of industrial activity east of the NIMT line and around the Airport, but they are more manageable due to sequencing and design.

Public transport has improved significantly. A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service links the Airport to Hamilton's city centre, and by 2055 it has extended further south through Ōhaupō to Te Awamutu. A park-and-ride facility is now operational near the Airport, strategically located on less suitable land, and helps to manage demand. Active modes are a defining feature of new neighbourhoods: safe cycling and walking routes connect villages, and Hamilton, with green corridors doubling as transport and ecological infrastructure.

Supporting Iwi Aspirations

The deliberate, phased approach has enabled iwi to embed their aspirations meaningfully. Co-governance of environmental corridors and peat lake catchments is well established, ensuring mauri is respected and ecological restoration aligns with mana whenua values. Māori housing development has grown steadily where infrastructure allows, providing housing choice for whānau while newly established marae stand as cultural and social anchors.

Mystery Creek has matured as a tourism and events destination, hosting iwi-led cultural experiences alongside its recreational, agricultural and equestrian role. The Airport's international connections have expanded cultural exchange and created pathways for iwi-led enterprises in tourism, agri-tech, and sustainable manufacturing. Overall, iwi aspirations are better supported in this scenario than in more fragmented or developer-led futures, as staging gives space for partnership.

Caring for the Environment and the Waikato River

Environmental outcomes are a defining strength of the staged roll-out. By 2055, blue-green networks in both SL1 and Peacocke are fully

established, linking gullies and riparian areas to the Waikato River. These networks form part of the wider Future Proof ecological vision and Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao (Waikato-Tainui Environmental Plan) framework as well as other iwi / hapū environmental plans.

The Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant is fully operational, servicing SL1, Peacocke, Rukuhia, and Ōhaupō, and lifting pressure off older facilities. Wet industries remain excluded from the Airport precinct, ensuring water quality is safeguarded. Biodiversity outcomes are positive, with proactive management of long-tailed bat habitats and staged restoration of peat lake catchments. Farming remains part of the landscape, but with more sustainable practices encouraged to protect waterways. Importantly, Te Mana o te Wai principles underpin planning decisions, keeping the health of the river as the first priority.

Level of Strategic Infrastructure Alignment

While this scenario still enables a level of land market competition, the staged approach is highly guided via the use of spatial planning, long-term plan funding, development agreement and consent conditions.

Strategic boundary changes have already shifted SL1 into Hamilton City, ensuring alignment with city-led infrastructure delivery, while SL2 remains in Waipā until demand warrants release. The Airport Business Zone has been extended to the river, but with natural gullies and riparian margins limiting development, alignment with Future Proof's environmental vision remains strong.

Feasibility and Constructability

While this scenario still enables a level of land market competition, the staged approach is highly guided via the use of spatial planning, long-term plan funding, development agreement and consent conditions.

Strategic boundary changes have already shifted SL1 into Hamilton City, ensuring alignment with city-led infrastructure delivery, while SL2 remains in Waipā until demand warrants release.

Scenario 3: Accelerated land zoning capacity and competitive land market

At a glance

- This scenario examines an accelerated version of Scenario 2, in which development and infrastructure outpace current population projections, which occurs faster than anticipated and may later slow down.
- Growth occurs at speed and across multiple fronts, with developers leapfrogging into all available areas. Industrial and residential activity expands simultaneously in SL1, Peacocke, Rukuhia, and around the Airport.
- Wet industries are only considered when wastewater services are available after 2040, retail nodes proliferate, and infrastructure struggles to keep pace with the rate and spread of urban development.
- Environmental pressures intensify, with fragmented blue-green networks and risks to biodiversity.
- The centre's approach outlined in the Future Proof Strategy and the Regional Policy Statement is undermined, lacking a clear plan or staging for local and neighbourhood centres. Significant commercial activity at the Airport competes with other centres, suggesting that while the overall centres approach may endure, a strict hierarchy will likely not.
- By 2055, the area is busier and more economically diverse — but also less coordinated and harder to service sustainably.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Anticipated Regulatory Environment and Population Projections	• This scenario is most aligned with the upcoming Resource Management reforms in terms of housing targets, live zoning for 30-years of capacity and creating a competitive land market, focusing on enabling housing and industrial land supply and fast-tracking approvals. • National policy requires councils to identify and release significant amounts of land for development, often beyond existing long-term growth plans. Structure plans can be prepared, but in this scenario, they are mostly led by developers and are executed at a much smaller scale. • With no initial and comprehensive spatial planning for the study area, the first approved have an advantage as they establish the intent and requirements for future servicing in surrounding areas. • Population projections here are maintained at a sub-regional scale but are accelerated within the study area. This could be driven by large-scale economic opportunities, possibly through the emergence of large-scale industries, such as the growth of the agritech sector, which may attract significant numbers of workers and their families to the region, or the development of new urban centres linked to new transport corridors could create substantial employment opportunities and draw populations to previously less populated areas. • Given the above, there is a risk that other areas within the subregion will experience low or delayed growth.	
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development	• Across **SL1**, both areas previously under fast-track applications and the remaining balance are being delivered ahead of infrastructure sequencing, with residential, commercial, and industrial activities emerging in parallel. The initial SL1 concept plan has been challenging to coordinate, and the piecemeal approach has created land use inefficiencies. • There are minimal neighbourhood centres and community facilities – existing facilities are relied on instead. • With the accelerated population growth adding pressure on housing demand in the area, **Peacocke** is developing at pace, with a largely developer-led roll-out resulting in the expected density outlined in its structure plan. Peacocke also includes a larger neighbourhood centre than initially planned for. • The **area north of Collins Road** and **SL2** begin to receive interest for urbanisation well before its long-term horizon. This creates issues of constructability given the significant amount of building activity occurring. • Given the above, other areas outside the study area, such as Cambridge Te Awamutu, and some Hamilton City growth areas, experience a slowdown in development, raising concerns about possible stranded assets and loss of value	• **SL1 and Peacocke** are fully built out at medium to high density. • **SL2** is partially urbanised, with growth concentrated in the northern area along Peacocke's edges and the river. • **Rukuhia** is fully reticulated and urbanised, and has become small town rather than a rural village, with significant commuting to Hamilton and the Airport precinct. • Additional urban development has been consented **along State Highway 3 (SH3)** towards **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō. Ōhaupō's** growth is significantly affected by severance issues arising from traffic on the state highway that bisects the now larger village. • **Around the Airport** and its industrial precincts, development continues to host a mix of dry and wet industries, with both commercial and high-value industrial activities located across its expanded footprint. Constraints (gullies, riverbank, peat soils) limit some areas, but intensive industrial clusters fill available developable land. • **Mystery Creek** is a national and international tourism/events hub, leveraging proximity to the Airport and the emerging agricultural innovation hub. • The **area on the eastern side of the NIMT line** is emerging as a large-scale industrial

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development (continued)	as the expected economic activity or demand didn't materialise. • **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō** have experienced continuous growth and feel the ripple effect of their northern counterpart. However, and still not reticulated, both villages offer a different lifestyle in a rural environment compared to their northern neighbourhood. • In this scenario, both **dry and wet industries are enabled**, opening the door to a broader range of industrial profiles within the study area. • The **Airport and adjacent precincts** support a diverse mix of aviation and non-aviation industries, including wet industries, once the wastewater treatment plant is operational. Aviation training is currently ongoing. Wet and dry industries are enabled, the area can accommodate all major industry sectors; however, the area is targeting promising sectors, including high-value manufacturing, which encompasses value-added food production, and the establishment of an export gateway for high-value manufactured goods such as quality food products and medicinal items. There is also a growing interest in healthcare and social assistance, as well as professional, scientific, and technical services. The area aims to grow as a hub for knowledge-based industries. • A rezoning has allowed the Airport Business Zone to be extended to the Waikato River, and the **area north of the golf course and Mystery Creek** is now enabled for agri-tech industries and high-value manufacturing. However, parts remain undevelopable due to gullies and riverbank constraints. • **East side of the NIMT line**, sand mining ceased in 2038, with remediation beginning around 2040. Possible future reticulation enables the potential for wet industries alongside a mix of commercial and light industrial activity, some overlapping with the Airport's Western Precinct. • The scale up of the area has brought new opportunities to **Mystery Creek**, building on its tourism role, expanding as a significant recreational and events-based hub to service the increased population.	hub, benefiting from the industrial growth on the eastern side of the Hamilton South Links. It hosts sectors such as agri-tech, agri-processing, logistics, healthcare and social assistance, along with professional, scientific, and technical services. • Retail centres of varying scales have appeared in the vicinity of the **Airport and Rukuhia**, directly competing with established retail hubs in Hamilton such as the CBD and The Base in Te Rapa, as well as Waipā's main towns. • The boundary between rural and urban, once defined by the railway line, has become blurred, and rural communities and farming activities are under pressure.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development (continued)	• The previously intact rural area has experienced significant fragmentation and is under pressure from land use changes away from farming. Rural edges are kept for now along the western part of the train line. The rural farming community benefits from having the agricultural innovation hub close by through easy access to innovations, land use changes in line with agritech and acting as trial farms.	
Infrastructure - Water	• **Water allocation** is confirmed for Peacocke, but availability in other growth areas remains uncertain and is based on a first-come, first-served basis. • The **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** has not yet been fully established and is under construction. Development has continued with on-site wastewater solutions. However, the initial land use assumptions for its construction have already been exceeded, and additional funding is necessary to upgrade the plant to meet the increasing demand. Furthermore, retrofitting small-scale solutions for centralised services is expected in the future, and these costs will need to be included in long-term planning.	• The **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** is operational and fully scaled up modularly to meet high demand. • Retrofitting costs from early on-site systems remain a financial burden. • Water allocation remains stretched; bulk storage and alternative supply options are investigated.
Infrastructure - Transport	• **Hamilton Southern Links** is completed earlier and operational, but the unstaged nature of growth has challenged network planning, leading to uneven prioritisation of road upgrades and increased traffic volumes. • **BRT services** to the Airport are operational, remain well used, but face catchment and route efficiency issues due to unplanned suburban sprawl and patronage dispersal. • **International passenger flights** are steadily increasing, and freight activity is growing in parallel. • Development contributions and levies have funded more active mode corridors and other facilities, but the lack of staging has limited the ability to deliver a fully connected, integrated and coordinated network. • Accelerated growth has precluded efficient planning of a **park and ride** facility in the area.	• **Hamilton Southern Links** is fully operational. • Freight volumes remain very high, with congestion a constant challenge despite upgrades due to the failure to complete the supporting roading network. • Increasing demand for intermodal transport (air/rail/road) to service freight demand and separate freight from private road traffic for safety has led to investigations for freight connections to the airport, supported by rising freight demand and regional connectivity requirements. • SH3 through Rukuhia/Ōhaupō/Te Awamutu/ Kihikihi is now experiencing very significant congestion, and the highway is creating even further community severance in Ōhaupō (particularly for the primary school with a diminished access). • **BRT networks** extend to Te Awamutu and Cambridge, but capacity and reliability issues remain due to the dispersed urban

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

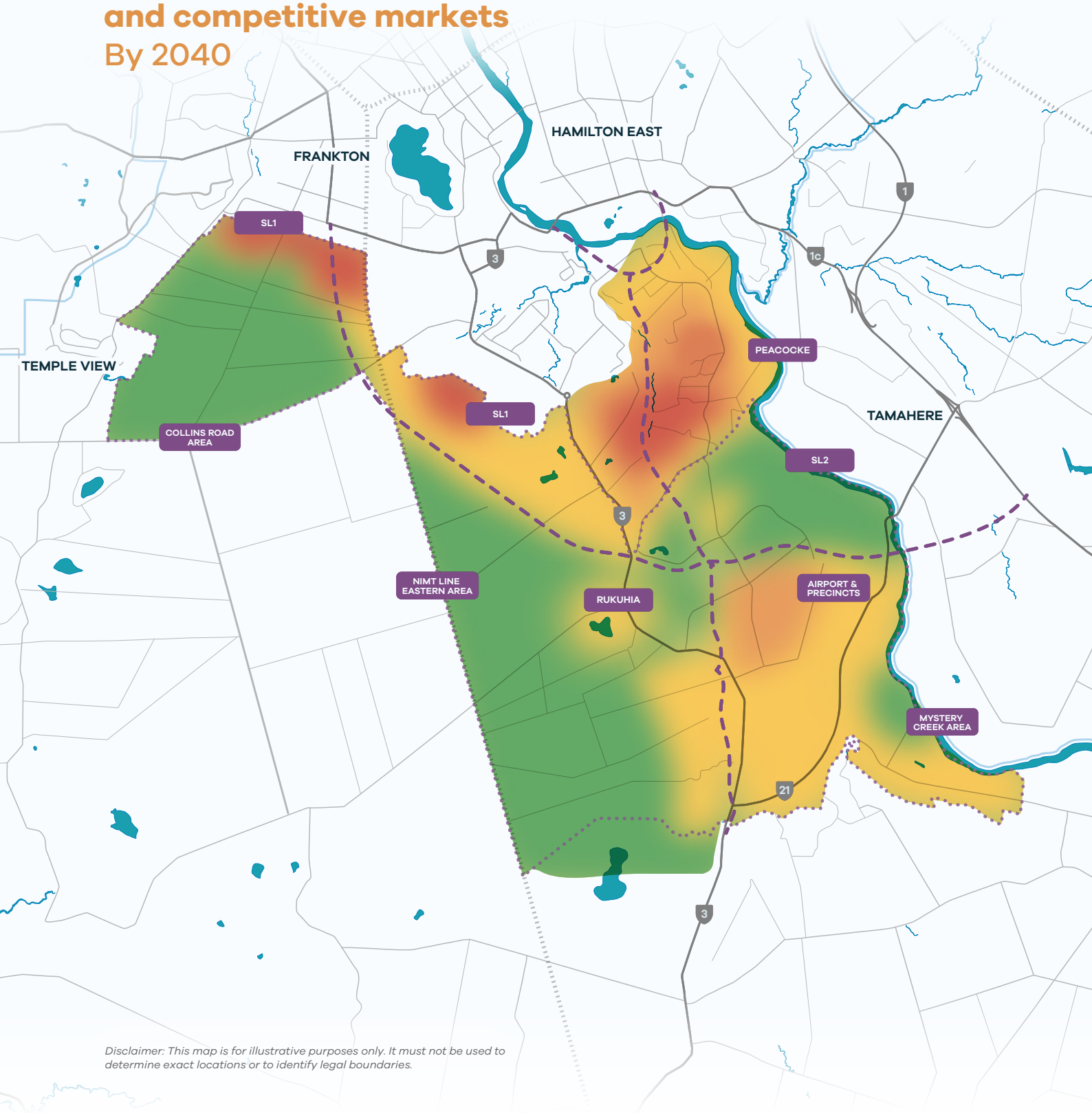
Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Infrastructure - Transport (continued)		pattern and congestion at pinch points within the study area. • The lack of advanced planning for bypasses and the lack of significant investment along the current route to cater for increased traffic have created pressure points on the roading network. • **Park and ride** for the BRT is less feasible in this scenario as there is less available land and it is more costly. More likely to occur post 2055.
Infrastructure - Social	• Rapid growth in multiple locations is more challenging to plan for. • Schools and community facilities lag behind demand and has added pressure on existing schools. Expansion at existing sites has necessitated multiple and complex projects, especially where school sites were constrained. • Councils are also struggling to deliver community facilities in line with population growth.	• Community infrastructure and schools provision has eventually caught up, but in a reactive, patchwork manner.
Environment / Heritage/ Culture	• The spread of development across multiple fronts has resulted in the loss of land across all classes of **highly productive land**. • The pace and extent of development have placed added pressure on **sensitive habitats**, particularly for the Peka Peka (long-tailed bat). • **Blue-green networks**, envisioned in structure plans and the Future Proof Strategy, have not been fully realised and are inconsistently delivered due to the lack of coordinated planning. Some subdivisions have incorporated them well, but others are omitting or deferring them. • This scenario sees **Te Ture Whaimana and environmental limits** being used as sole end targets and/ or as defining the lowest boundary of an operating context, limiting ecological improvement and restoration. • Developments apply limited restoration under Te Ture Whaimana. • Long-tailed bat habitats, peat soils, and riparian corridors are fragmented or degraded.	• Environmental protection is actively being achieved through the identification of areas unsuitable for development as determined by Te Ture Whaimana and engagement with iwi and mana whenua ensuring the identification and protection of sites of historic and cultural significance. • Environmental outcomes are, however, weaker as 'elite' and 'prime' soils have been significantly developed, long-tailed bat habitats have declined, and river sub-catchments face cumulative pollution pressures, exacerbated by climate change (less rainfall, extreme weather events like flooding and droughts). • Blue-green corridors exist in parts but are fragmented by rapid land release.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Planning and Staging	• **The Airport Business Zone** has extended to the Waikato River. • A **strategic boundary adjustment** has brought the SL1 and SL2 areas into Hamilton City. • Changes required to enable development **east of the NIMT line.**	• Changes required to enable higher density development at Rukuhia and Ōhaupō. • Changes required to enable SL2 development.

Scenario Three: Accelerated land zoning capacity and competitive markets

By 2040



Disclaimer: This map is for illustrative purposes only. It must not be used to determine exact locations or to identify legal boundaries.

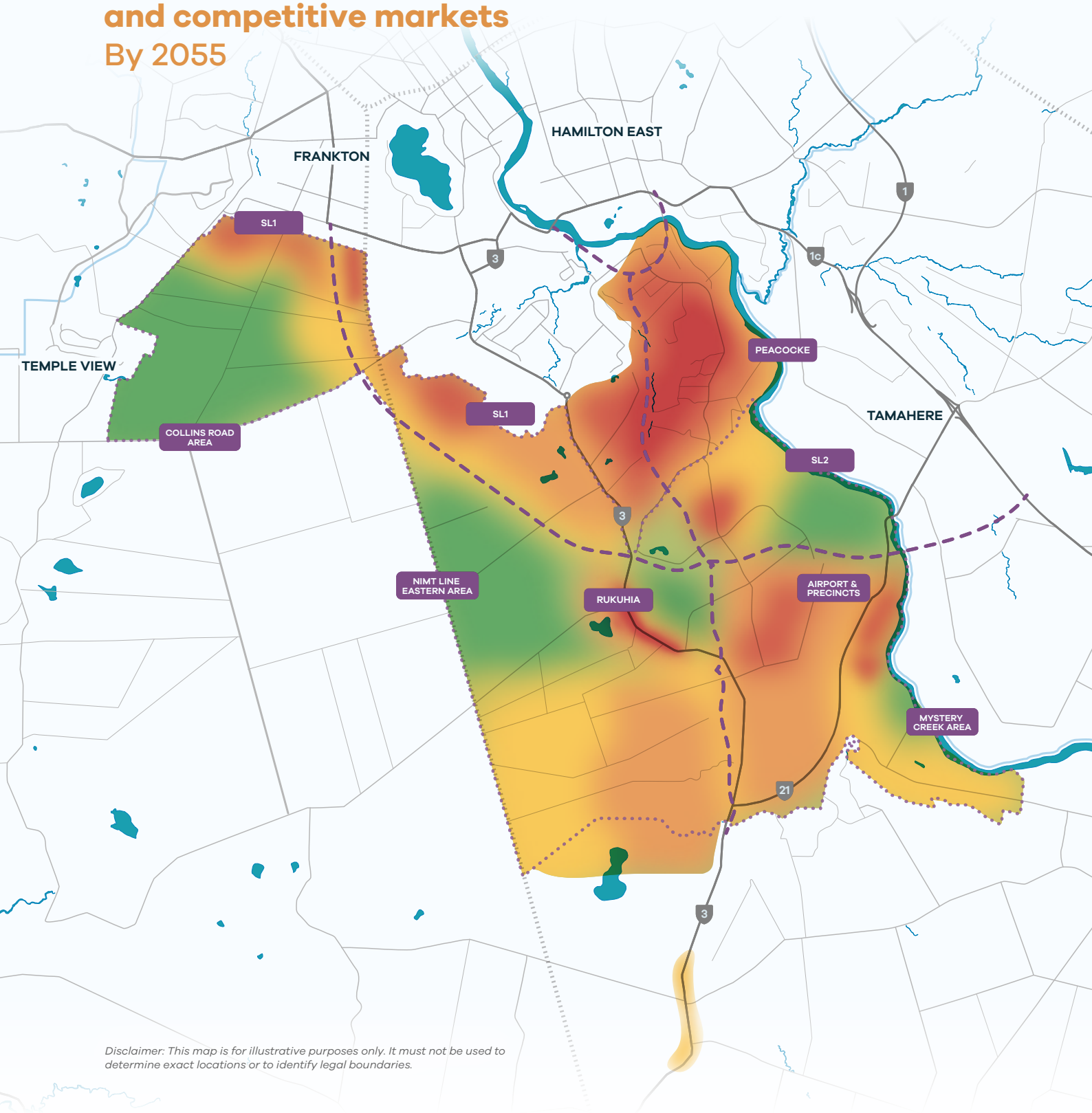
Legend

- District lines
- State Highways
- Waikato River
- Railway
- Hamilton Southern Links designation
- Study area boundary
- Lower or no development / activity*
- Higher level of development / activity*

**Level of residential, industrial, or commercial development or activity compared to the 2025 baseline.*

Scenario Three: Accelerated land zoning capacity and competitive markets

By 2055



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Legend

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- Higher level of development / activity*

**Level of residential, industrial, or commercial development or activity compared to the 2025 baseline.*

What does the "By 2055" scenario imply in terms of our outcome statements?

Employment and Job Opportunities

By 2055, the study area is booming with industrial and commercial activity. Planning reforms have led to widespread and largely uncontrolled land release based on exercise of private property rights: both dry and wet industries are permitted in many precincts once infrastructure is enabled. The Fast-track Approvals mechanism has allowed many housing and industrial projects to go ahead, boosting job creation, especially in manufacturing, food processing, logistics, and freight. The area hosts mixed industrial clusters, however, the lack of buffering zones and regulatory overlays has led to increased sensitivity issues and ultimately operational effects.

A Great Place to Live

Housing is plentiful, though quality is mixed. With land freed up aggressively, many residential subdivisions appear in periphery areas, including SL2, Rukuhia, Ōhaupō, and outlying rural zones. Demand has pushed density up in part of SL1 and Peacocke, though community amenities, green space, and school provision sometimes lag behind. Some neighbourhoods are well-planned with active mode links and parks; others are more utilitarian, built quickly to meet demand. Because of strong central direction, rule changes have required councils to allow more housing typologies and smaller lot sizes, with variable impact on affordability.

Easy to Get Around

Transport infrastructure has expanded, but not uniformly. Hamilton Southern Links is completed, with major strategic corridors built early. The accelerated growth has not hindered priority roads and freight links. Public transport (including BRT) exists in multiple corridors, however, catchment shifts and demand pressure mean some routes are stretched. Some areas are not well serviced by public transport putting pressure on the roading network. Walking, cycling, and active mode infrastructure are present in newer suburbs but less so in rapidly developed fringe zones. Freight volumes are high, leading to congestion, especially where road capacity lags or wastewater truck movements persist.

Supporting Iwi Aspirations

Planning reforms have challenged iwi involvement. Maaori housing developments become more visible in growth cells, compared with more isolated Maaori land holdings. Mystery Creek and cultural event hubs perform well as places of cultural expression and enterprise. Cultural and heritage sites are not well protected given the pace of growth and there is an increased loss of sites given the limited focus on their identification and protection.

Caring for the Environment and the Waikato River

Under the new planning regime, there are environmental limits (water quality, biodiversity, natural hazards) that must be respected. Blue-green networks are established but due to sheer scale and volume of growth, many ecosystems are under pressure. Peat lake catchments see some restoration, but remain under pressure from surrounding land uses. Long-tailed bat habitats are fragmented in some areas; offset mitigation is common but not always sufficient. The health of the river improves in parts, but some sub-catchments show declining metrics due to cumulative runoff, sewage overflows, or inadequate stormwater treatment in fringe growth areas.

Level of Strategic Infrastructure Alignment

This scenario aligns strongly with the Going for Growth / Housing Growth national agenda - freeing up land, and fast-tracking. It meets many national legislative and policy goals and council obligations in terms of enabling land supply through rezoning, consent streamlining, etc. However, alignment with environmental strategy (like Te Ture Whaimana, Future Proof blue-green networks) is weaker—often reactive rather than proactive. An inability to understand cumulative effects leads to missed opportunities for growth to pay for itself and to recoup the costs of growth fully. Some decisions also push the boundaries of consistency with environmental strategy and iwi expectations.

Feasibility and Constructability

This scenario outlines that formerly difficult regulatory barriers have been reduced. Infrastructure funding is available through increased development levies however, increases in demand for infrastructure have brought forward funding requirements which are unlikely to be affordable. Existing infrastructure elsewhere is underutilised, resulting in debt that can't be repaid. Significant risks remain - service delivery lag (wastewater, water supply), strain on transport corridors, environmental remediation costs, and possible local opposition where environmental or cultural values are affected. Some areas are built on more marginal soils; flood risk or stormwater infrastructure sometimes falls behind fast growth. Scaling up to full servicing remains a major challenge.

Scenario 4: Economic-led growth

At a glance

- This scenario assumes a high level of employment and business activity growth in the study area.
- To encourage and manage employment and business activity, a development corporation is established (as originally envisaged under the Urban Development Act 2020). The development corporation would have wide ranging powers including land acquisition, infrastructure provision, and business management, to facilitate large-scale development. This drives a higher demand for industrial / commercial land.
- Industrial / commercial development outpaces projected demand as opportunities have been created around the Airport and surrounding industrial precincts, creating a super-node for industry, research, and innovation with The University of Waikato and Iwi as partners.
- Residential land is still managed under council planning frameworks rather than the development corporation, but parts of SL1 are delayed and might not be delivered due to constructability challenges.
- Demand eventually follows infrastructure, with Peacocke and later Rukuhia and Ōhaupō picking up population.
- By 2040, infrastructure provision in the North Waipā-South Hamilton area will have outpaced population projections, with investment aimed at attracting both industry and residents to the area, but not necessarily outpacing actual demand.
- The Development Corporation stimulates demand and attracts private capital to invest in the area which lowers the cost of development and provides agglomeration benefits. Leading with infrastructure investment ensures it is in place first, avoiding lag infrastructure, and eventually provides the certainty and attraction to generate the demand to use that infrastructure. Much more so than simply releasing land (as per Scenario 3).
- By 2055, the Airport area has become a high-value industrial hub, though questions remain about whether early upfront investment has paid off.
- The centres approach to the Future Proof Strategy and the Regional Policy Statement is reshaped by a highly competitive market, with significant commercial activity at the Airport, introducing new dynamics across the established centres within the sub-region.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Anticipated Regulatory Environment and Population Projections	• This scenario replicates in part the growth sequencing of Scenario 2 but includes a Development Corporation that drives development in and around the airport. It will require amendments to the Urban Development Act 2020 to enable this to occur and to align with the Resource Management reforms. • This scenario assumes a high level of economic growth, with the establishment of a development corporation driving a higher demand for industrial/commercial land. • A Development Corporation has been established as a subsidiary of the Airport's owner and operator, with iwi and private partners holding equity stakes. This new entity is responsible for master planning the area, coordinating land release, tenant curation on site, while coordinating infrastructure delivery using a range of models and funds to front-load investment. • The nature of the industrial sector being attracted and the quality of the development means there is higher demand for business land, and this is complemented by population growth.	
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development	• By 2040, infrastructure provision in the study area will have outpaced population projections, with investment aimed at attracting both industry and residents to the area. • The southern edge of Hamilton has continued to evolve as a strategic location for both residential and business growth, and the establishment of a Development Corporation at the airport has further increased this interest. • Despite **SL1** fast-tracked areas, constructibility challenges have slowed down the delivery of the residential and industrial sites as per the initial concept plan. More development has occurred in the other fast track locations in the subregion which has also slowed the delivery of SL1. • The **area north of Collins Road** is experiencing the same issue as SL1 due to construction constraints and is experiencing delays. • Given the above, residential growth pressure shifts into **Peacocke**, which develops at medium density (35–45 dph) and at a faster pace, and incorporates mixed-use and retail offerings, centres aligned with public transport routes. • The ripple effect is also felt in **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō,** where wastewater reticulation is planned and in progress and therefore both gradually urbanise. • **SL2** remains rural, with deferred zoning protecting it as a longer-term growth option.	• **SL1** development finally begins, following engineering solutions to peat soil challenges, at medium–high density (35–45 dph). • **Peacocke** is fully built out with mixed-use transit-oriented centres. • **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō** have matured into compact commuter settlements supported by wastewater reticulation and frequent bus service and BRT to Cambridge, Te Awamutu and Hamilton. • **SL2** remains partially rural, with upcoming development constrained by infrastructure sequencing and elite soil protections. • The Development Corporation has consolidated its role as a special-purpose industrial delivery body with its aviation branch engaged in a collaborative consolidation study with Rotorua, Taupō, Whakatāne, and Tauranga airports to coordinate regional aviation services. • A retail centre has been built as part of the **Airport Master Plan**, reinforcing the area as a multi-use hub. • **Mystery Creek** has further cemented its role as the centre for showing agritech innovation, as well as being a national and international tourism and events destination and continues to host hundreds of events annually. • Only part of the **eastern side of the NIMT line** has been included as part of the super industrial node developed under the development corporation. The eastern section become attractive to

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development (continued)	• The Airport has exceeded passenger projections made in 2025, offering more international flights and becoming a critical international freight hub as well as an alternative to Auckland and Wellington airports, notably during weather disruptions. The establishment of a Development Corporation is underway between the airport, Waipā District Council, Hamilton City Council and Iwi, with a clear and endorsed masterplan that ring-fences land for aviation growth (e.g., runway extensions, taxiways, facilities, etc.) while sequencing other land for logistics, offices, and industrial uses and possibly a future retail centre. Aviation activities are on the rise, and non-aviation industries are growing at an even faster pace. This hub complements the rural economy of the rest of the Waipā District and the airport's freight operations, delivering innovation in sustainable farming. • The site currently located **north of the golf course and Mystery Creek** has now been integrated into and forms part of the corporation hub. • Wet industries are excluded to protect water resources and aviation safety. • Industries are drawn to participate in this emerging industrial cluster, which offers convenient access to air, rail, and road infrastructure, enabling them to transport products and supplies more cost-effectively. Additionally, clustering occurs as similar industries tend to group together. • **Mystery Creek's** size and amenities expand as an internationally renown hub for showcasing agritech innovation, as well as a national events and tourism, hospitality, and accommodation node. Its reputation as a prominent hub for recreation and events has been steadily growing. • Sand mining operations on the **NIMT line eastern area** ended by 2038, with remediation beginning around 2040. The development corporation aims to gradually convert only part of the area (to limit the loss of productive land, avoid peat soils, and reduce impacts on the peat lake catchment) into light industrial and commercial uses.	agri-industries, with commercial and light industrial activities overlapping with the Airport's Western Precinct. • The site currently located **north of the golf course and Mystery Creek**, along with land south of SH21, has been developed into an agri-tech precinct. • The precinct serves as an export-facing hub, with The University of Waikato playing a key role in agricultural research partnerships. • The airport's commercial development is aligned with **Mystery Creek** to ensure complementary, rather than competing, growth. Together with Ruakura, the Airport forms part of a super-industrial node at a sub-regional level, attracting high-value technology and premium New Zealand food businesses rather than low-value, transient warehousing. • The delivery of major infrastructure ahead of demand has drawn developers into the area. Ultimately, the goal is to unlock near-term commercial/industrial growth, coordinate infrastructure, and curate tenants around the airport and on the airfield. • Industrial and residential development is contained within key development areas. Farming activities in the study area are maintained similarly to Scenario 2.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development (continued)	• Industrial and residential sprawl is contained within key development areas. Farming activities in the study area are maintained similarly to Scenario 2.	
Infrastructure - Water	• Due to the slowdown in some development projects, the pressure on water allocation is not as severe. However, investigations into both small and large-scale community storage solutions are currently underway. • The **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** has not yet been fully established, and development has continued with on-site wastewater solutions. The initial land use assumptions for its construction have already been exceeded, and additional funding has been allocated as necessary to upgrade the plant to meet the increasing residential and industrial demand.	• The **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** is operational at full modular capacity, servicing residential and industrial areas supported by staged funding from the development corporation revenues. • Retrofitting of early mini-treatment plants is complete, with industries linked to central servicing. • Bulk water storage in SL2 supports resilience in high-demand areas.
Infrastructure - Transport	• The **Hamilton Southern Links** is completed and operational. • Rural roads along **SH3 and SH21** are experiencing intensified traffic. • A **bus rapid transit (BRT)** service now links the Airport to Hamilton CBD and the wider network. The service has been supplemented by an internal shuttle service, well used by the growing Airport and hub workforce. A highly competitive market could have implications for intensification and residential development in the CBD, with a possible knock-on effect to BRT. • Freight volumes rise, with rail links to the Airport under investigation.	• **Hamilton Southern Links** is complete in full, providing integrated freight and commuter corridors. • **BRT** spine connects Hamilton, the Airport, Ōhaupō, and Te Awamutu, supporting compact residential nodes. For SH3, this provides the opportunity for bus priority. The revocation process should reflect this new road function. Revocation will enable more flexibility for local access to those affected sections of the existing State Highway. • Active transport networks are continuous, aligned with blue-green infrastructure. • As demand for air cargo and plans for an agri-tech hub near the airport are rising, a **freight rail connection** from the NIMT line to the airport is being investigated. • A zero-emission **public transport** recharging depot and a park-and-ride facility are under construction in the vicinity of the Airport, further supporting its role as a transport node. • Rail is extended to the Airport along with electrification of the NIMT between Pukekohe and Hamilton Airport. This is primarily for freight; however, the improved rail links have allowed for increased passenger rail between Hamilton and

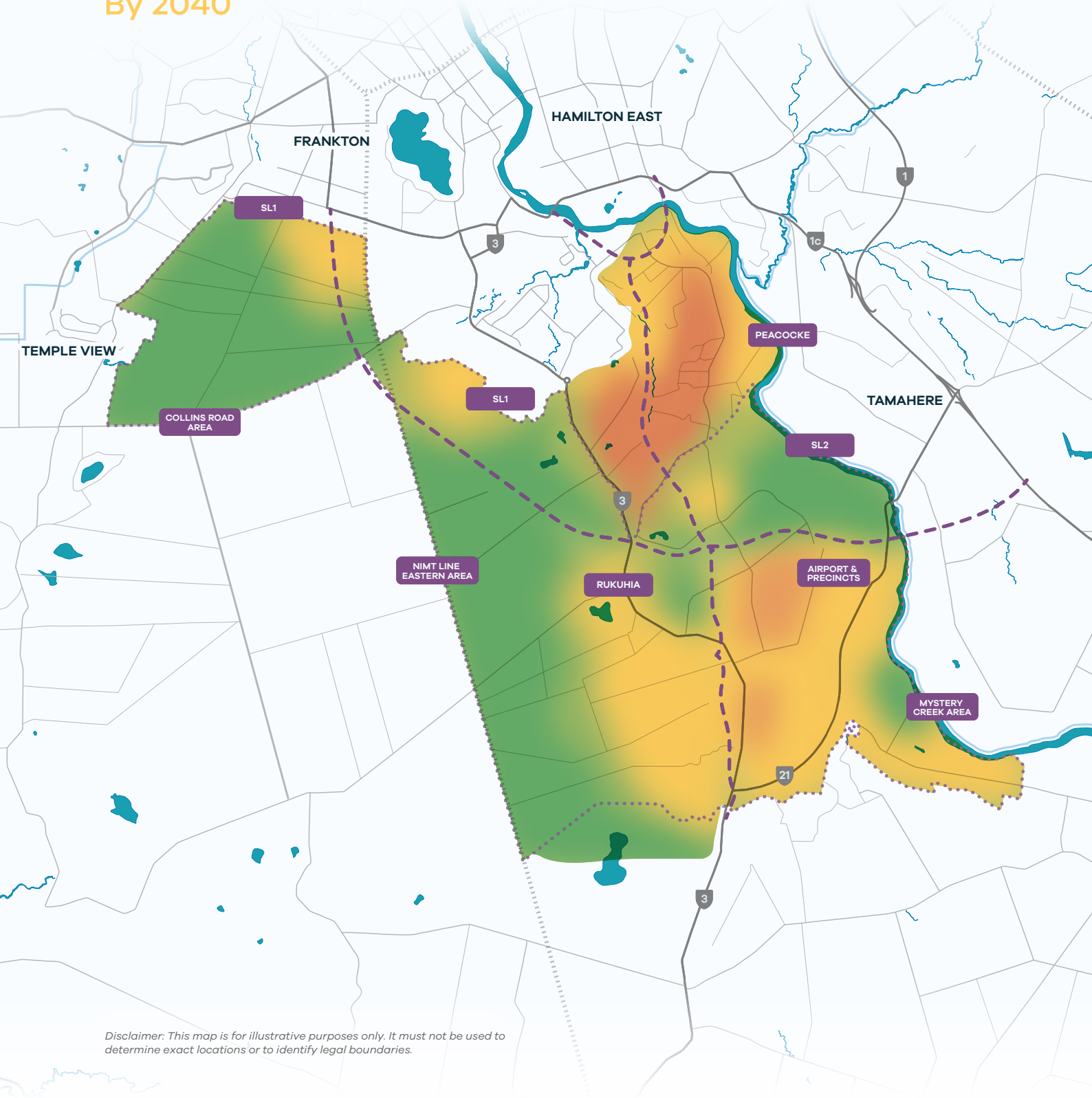
Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Infrastructure - Transport (continued)		Auckland. By 2055, a link connecting to Hamilton Airport is being investigated. • The lack of advanced planning for bypasses and the lack of significant investment along the current route to cater for increased traffic have created pressure points on the roading network. • Park and ride for the BRT is less feasible in this scenario as there is less available land and it is more costly. More likely to occur post 2055.
Infrastructure - Social	• Demand for student places will potentially soon exceed supply in the existing school network, requiring the planned primary schools in Peacocke and additional space at existing schools. There is also a higher demand in Rukuhia. • Community facilities such as libraries and open spaces have also been delivered in accordance with the structure plan in Peacocke.	• Educational and recreational facilities across the growth areas have been met with staged investment.
Environment / Heritage/ Culture	• Iwi aspirations are integrated through the development corporation governance structures and co-management of ecological corridors. • Te Ao Maaori, cultural heritage and sites of significance are celebrated, with authentic partnership between mana whenua and council in both planning and day-to-day management. Built form, landscape, and water systems incorporate Maaori design principles and maatauranga Maaori, including reference to Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao and other relevant iwi management plans. • Blue-green corridors expand in Peacocke and Mystery Creek, but some areas around the Airport face pressures despite the corporation's masterplan incorporating environmental safeguards into the industrial precinct planning. • Potential impacts on biodiversity and long-tailed bat habitats are under threat. These require further investigation.	• The Development Corporation's agreements enforce strong sustainability standards for industrial tenants. Development is able to quantify its contributions to achieving restoration of the River. • Blue-green corridors and peat lake protections are embedded across both council- and corporation-led developments. • Co-management with iwi ensures cultural heritage and ecological restoration are delivered alongside industrial growth.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Planning and Staging	• The strategic boundary agreement had been proceeding, and SL1 has moved to HCC. SL2 is under pressure to be further developed, and SBA for the SL2 area needs to be accelerated. • Airport Business Zone has expanded to the riverbank. • Mystery Creek Events Zone has expanded to include more activities linked to its tourism activities. • A process would need to be established to determine the lead infrastructure and ensure coordination across different infrastructure types.	• Further boundary adjustments are now unnecessary as the Councils have been able to adopt a boundaryless approach to planning and infrastructure funding. This has been achieved through the alignment and/or merger of the two water entities and the joint control of the Development Corporation.

Scenario Four: Economic-led growth By 2040



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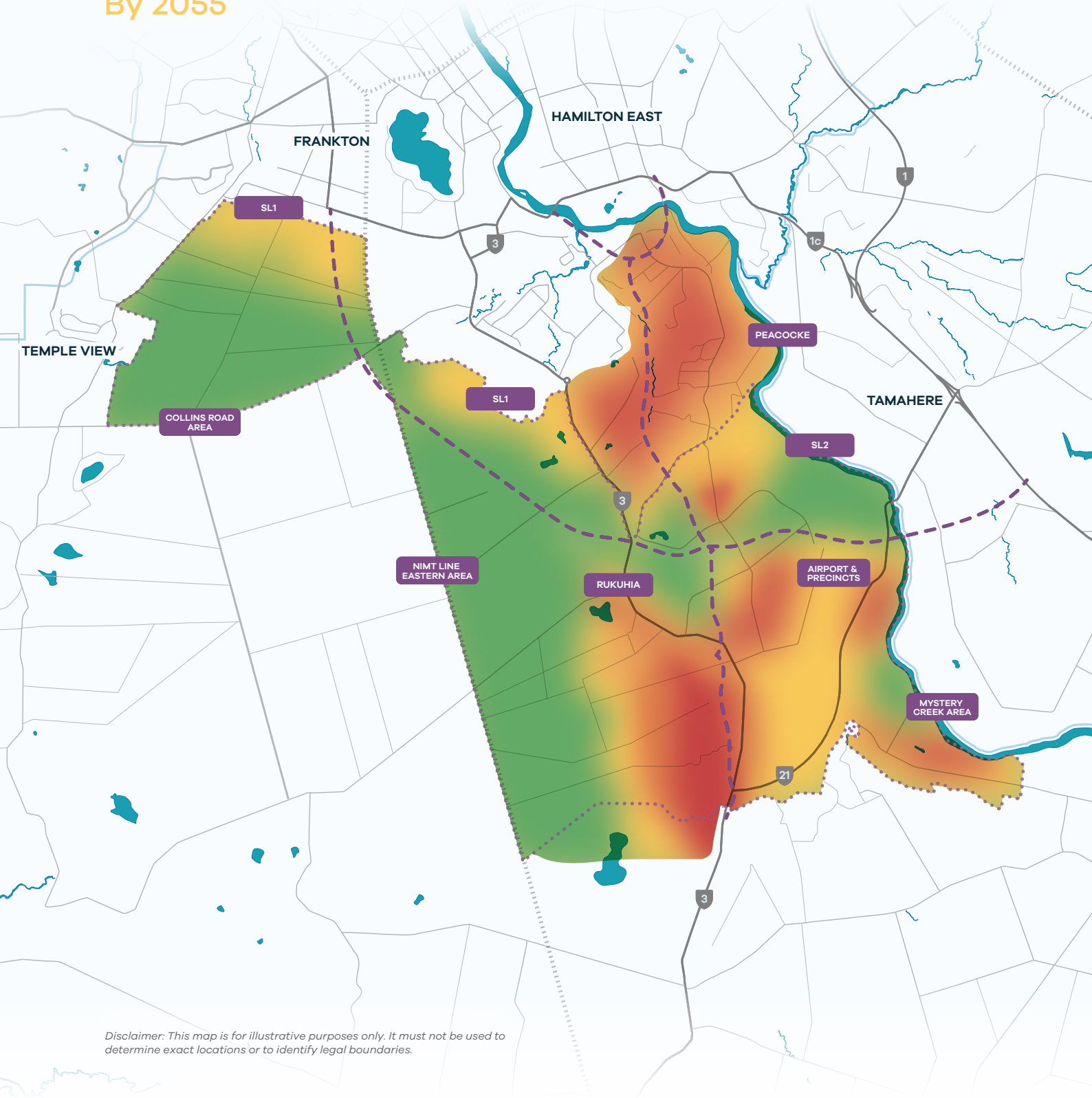
Legend

- District lines
- State Highways
- Waikato River
- Railway
- Hamilton Southern Links designation
- Study area boundary
- Lower or no development / activity*
- Higher level of development / activity*

**Level of residential, industrial, or commercial development or activity compared to the 2025 baseline.*

Scenario Four: Economic-led growth By 2055



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Legend

- District lines
- State Highways
- Waikato River
- Railway
- Hamilton Southern Links designation
- Study area boundary
- Lower or no development / activity*
- Higher level of development / activity*

**Level of residential, industrial, or commercial development or activity compared to the 2025 baseline.*

What does the "By 2055" scenario imply in terms of our outcome statements?

Employment and Job Opportunities

By 2055, the Airport precinct and Ruakura together function as a super-industrial hub for the subregion, leveraging each other's strengths. The development corporation has curated a portfolio of high-value, globally competitive sectors — advanced logistics, clean tech manufacturing, agri-tech processing, and export-oriented food innovation. Waikato University research partnerships and mana whenua enterprises anchor the innovation ecosystem, making the precinct a key national driver of employment. Thousands of jobs are created across aviation and non-aviation industries, with strong training pipelines established in collaboration with tertiary institutions.

A Great Place to Live

Residential growth has been slower and more controlled, shaped by council-led staging through the regional spatial plan and long-term plans. Compact, medium-density neighbourhoods have flourished in Peacocke, Rukuhia, and Ōhaupō, with high-quality green infrastructure and active transport networks integrated from the outset. Communities are well-served by local schools and shared facilities, though housing affordability pressures remain due to demand around the industrial employment centres. SL1, after decades of delay, has only begun development towards the late 2050s, ensuring that elite soils remain largely intact until constructability solutions were secure.

Easy to Get Around

By 2055, Southern Links is fully operational, providing efficient freight and commuter access to the airport, Hamilton and the southern part of the Waipā district. A Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) spine links Hamilton, the airport, and Te Awamutu, complemented by feeder services. Freight rail connections to the airport are also under investigation. Walking and cycling corridors run through all new residential areas, linking into the Te Awa River Trail and Future Proof's blue-green network. However, high freight volumes still dominate SH3 and local corridors, creating tension with liveability in nearby settlements and, at times, creating further community severance.

Supporting Iwi Aspirations

Mana whenua influence is embedded in governance through the Development Corporation and directly in land development opportunities. Papakaainga are integrated within growth cells, and iwi-led eco-tourism and cultural hubs at Mystery Creek and along the Waikato River are thriving. Co-governance arrangements extend across environmental management, river health monitoring, and reserve design. The return of whānau to rural and peri-urban villages has strengthened cultural identity, while iwi enterprises in agri-tech, logistics, and training programmes ensure Maaori are active partners and beneficiaries of growth.

Caring for the Environment and the Waikato River

Environmental management has been elevated as a binding constraint. The Development Corporation requires all industries to meet stringent discharge standards, with wet industries excluded from the precinct to protect water supply and river health. The Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant provides highly treated, modular servicing for industrial and residential users, reducing reliance on trucked wastewater. The blue-green network is fully realised, with restored gullies, riparian corridors, and peatland buffers linking across the study area. Continuous monitoring under Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato ensures that the river's health is the primary test for new growth and there is an ability to quantify the positive contribution of development to the restoration of the River.

Level of Strategic Infrastructure Alignment

This scenario demonstrates strong alignment with the central government's framework by encouraging industrial and economic growth and leveraging infrastructure investment. It also aligns with the Future Proof Strategy objectives of compact urban form and coordinated investment. The development corporation model provides certainty and reduces fragmented delivery in industrial land, ensuring national infrastructure priorities (airport, freight, innovation hubs) are supported. Residential growth remains under council control, meaning the balance between local needs and regional strategies is retained.

Feasibility and Constructability

Feasibility challenges continue to centre on SL1's peat soils which delayed development until at least 2055. Elsewhere, the development corporation has been able to leverage pooled capital, central government investment, and private partnerships to deliver industrial land efficiently. The separation of industrial (corporation-led) and residential (council-led) development has reduced risks of over-investment.

Scenario 5: Environmental gateway

At a glance

- Development is deliberately compact, staged, and environmentally led. Competitive land markets can be achieved elsewhere in the subregion, and in this scenario, this is an area where development occurs in a way that ensures the protection of environmental and ecological resources.
- Te Ture Whaimana and Te Mana o te Wai are given full effect, with blue-green networks, riparian buffers, and restored wetlands shaping the urban footprint. High-class soils and Significant Natural Areas are strongly protected, and farm environmental plans limit intensification.
- Stormwater management is fully integrated with blue-green corridors, wetland systems, and riparian restoration. Onsite wastewater is limited to efficient and environmentally friendly systems.
- Industrial activity focuses on clean tech, circular economy industries, and eco-tourism. There is limited opportunity for wet industries as determined by the capacity limits of the recycled water available from the Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant.
- By 2055, the Airport, Ruakura, and Mystery Creek operate as a green super-node, delivering jobs while measurably contributing to improving the health of the Waikato River.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Anticipated Regulatory Environment and Population Projections	• Scenario approach diverges from the competitive land-release approach anticipated under the Going for Housing Growth reforms. It engages in a masterplanning process to effectively coordinate all stakeholders involved, including landowners, developers, and representatives from the Central Government. Growth and industry here are shaped first and foremost by the health of the Waikato River and its tributaries, and the long-term value of highly productive land. Spatial planning tools are retained, and infrastructure is used as the primary trigger for release, but with a deliberate bias toward environmental protection. • A mechanism, such as Special Economic Zone (SEZ) that incentivise green industries, will be require to implement the "green industrial super node" aspirations. • Development, from compact housing to agricultural innovation hubs, is designed to ensure enhanced water quality, protect mauri, and restore riparian and wetland systems. • While growth is still possible and enabled at the sub-regional level, the land is protected, and development is restricted. Te Ture Whaimana's long-term progress toward the 80-year water quality targets is well advanced. Allocation regimes have tightened with new rules, and regimes for allocating rights to discharge contaminants have been in place. The coordination of farm environmental plans and increased control over land use changes have prevented further intensification of land use, leading to a reduction in diffuse discharges of contaminants in the Waikato and Waipā rivers and tributaries. • Development on highly productive land is tightly limited, with key agricultural and horticultural areas protected.	
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development	• Despite **SL1** fast-tracked areas, constructibility challenges have slowed down the delivery of the residential and industrial sites as per the initial concept plan. Fast-tracked and balanced areas in SL1, as well as the area north of Collins Road, are unlikely to be progressed. • Given the above, residential growth pressure shifts into **Peacocke**, which develops at medium density (35–45 dph) and at a faster pace, and incorporates mixed-use and retail offerings, centres aligned with public transport routes. • A **green belt** now encircles the Airport, towns, and villages, preserving Waipā's rural character and ecological corridors, providing secondary stormwater management during extreme storm events and increasing flood resilience. • The acquisition and maintenance costs are covered through an environmentally focussed funding mechanism such as a green rate. There are development levy discounts for water-sensitive design. • **Rukuhia and Ōhaupō** growth cells are reconsidered to provide larger environmental buffers, especially around peat lakes, and retain their village character with only limited intensification.	• By 2055, **SL1** and **north of Collins Road area** development have been placed on hold. Developers have moved to other areas that are more affordable and easier to develop close to and within Hamilton. • **SL2** remains largely untouched, functioning as a green buffer with integrated water management systems. Limited residential development is still taking place along the river. Investigations are underway to acquire properties and develop a large swale to be used as a pre-treatment areas tempering and filtering flow before channeling to Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant. • **Rukuhia** and then **Ōhaupō** are evolving into fully reticulated larger villages (15–25 dwellings per hectare) with development occurring along SH3, yet retaining a compact, walkable, village feel. • The **Airport, Ruakura, and Mystery Creek** operate as a coordinated "green industrial super node" — home to global agri-tech, sustainable food production, and research ventures in partnership with the University of Waikato, Waikato Tainui and mana whenua enterprises. All activities meet or exceed Te Ture Whaimana objectives, with regular monitoring measuring gains in river health.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Residential / Industrial / Commercial development (continued)	• **SL2** area has been held back from development, it remains rural with green infrastructure and catchment buffers. • The **Airport** has emerged as an international gateway and an eco-destination, reinforcing the vision which has long been carried by the Waikato Destination Management Plan, hosting small-scale eco-retail, green logistics, and events. Operations are managed to minimise carbon emissions, with all aviation activities offset and sustainability embedded in day-to-day practices. Industrial activity is limited to clean-tech manufacturing, agri-tech innovation, some of which are looking to reuse water from the Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant as it becomes operational, and circular-economy industries. Eco-retail and eco-tourism linked to the airport are emerging. • **Mystery Creek** has become both a key access point to the Waikato River and a significant stop along the Te Awa Cycleway. The national equestrian centre is looking to relocate here, benefiting from the setting and connectivity. • The area is experiencing growth in the farmstay and farm experience tourism niche, attracting both national and international visitors. There is also an opportunity for greater linkage with Maungatautari Ecological Island. The growth in hospitality, accommodation, and eco-based tourism is being led by Iwi. • Industrial and residential sprawl is contained within key development areas. Farming activities in the study area are maintained similarly to Scenario 2.	• The multi-model node offers a vital connection to other regions, making it an ideal hub for adventure seekers looking to connect and explore.
Infrastructure - Water	• Green gateway has become part of the CCO's business development vision, and the first stages of the **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant** have been advanced and are now operational. The plant is highly energy-efficient and requires pre-treatment before inflows. • **Stormwater** is managed through an interconnected green network, using swales, wetlands, and biofiltration. • **Wet industries** have been enabled in this scenario, however, they operate at limited capacity using recycled water from the Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant.	• All urbanised areas are either reticulated or will be to the advanced, energy-efficient **Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant,** with wastewater pre-treated on-site. • **Rainwater harvesting and greywater reuse** are standard in residential and commercial buildings.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

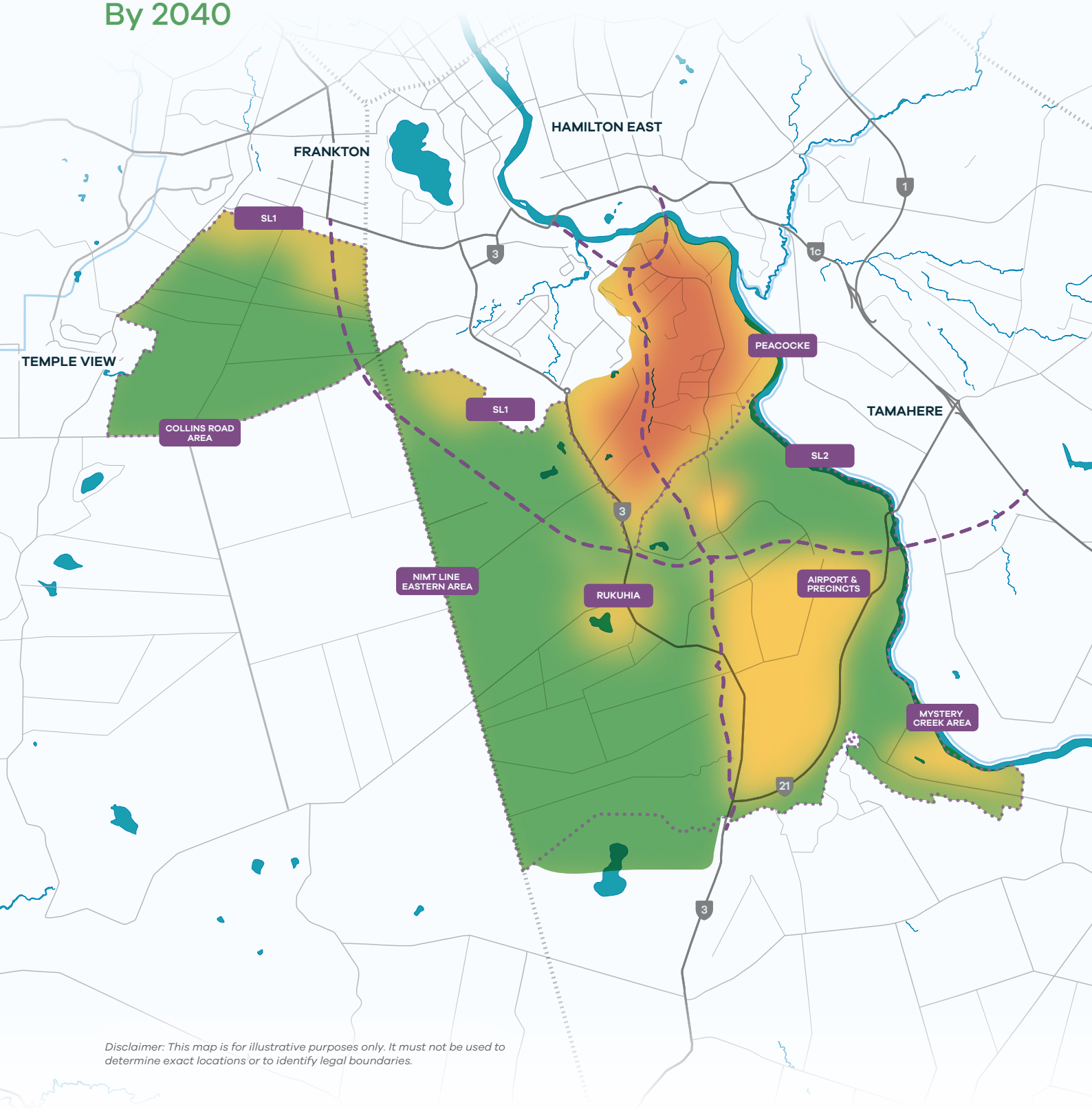
Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Infrastructure - Water (continued)	• Growing visitor numbers and new eco-accommodation at **Mystery Creek** are increasing demand for water, prompting investment in efficient water storage and reuse systems.	
Infrastructure - Transport	• **Hamilton Southern Links** is delivered in staged packages, embedding cycling and walking elements alongside road capacity. • Planning is underway to expand **Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)** services in response to intensification within its original catchment, connecting Hamilton CBD, the Airport and Te Awamutu. • Within the SEZ, transport investment prioritises low-carbon modes, with zero-emission freight fleets serving the Airport. Freight rail to the Airport is under early exploration. • All road and rail projects incorporate water-sensitive design to protect the river from runoff and sedimentation. • Cycling networks connect **Te Awa Ride** to the Waipā Cycling Network. Cycleways and walkways are co-located with gullies and wetlands, forming ecological and active transport corridors. These have become scenic cycling routes which connect eco-attractions.	• **BRT** is now fully scaled up, with high patronage and seamless connections to Cambridge, Te Awamutu, and Hamilton City Centre. • To enhance the overall travel experience, integrated transportation options have been added that facilitate seamless journeys. This includes ensuring **effective connections** for the first and last miles of travel, as well as providing adequate storage and changing facilities at destinations. • Public transport infrastructure now supports a fleet of electric buses, promoting eco-friendly travel to the sustainability-minded visitors. This is now all part of a wider Regional Eco Transport Plan focusing on sustainable practices that benefit the community and the environment. • **Freight rail** to the Airport is in early stage of construction with a focus on low-emissions transport. Consideration is also given to passenger rail between Hamilton Airport and Auckland. • SH3 provides the opportunity for bus priority and possibly BRT in the Hamilton City residential expansion areas. The revocation process should reflect this new road function.
Infrastructure - Social	• Investment in **local schools** has been staged and development has only occurred at one of the two originally planned Peacocke school sites due to earlier development in other areas. • **Community facilities** are delivered in step with population growth, designed as multi-use hubs integrating libraries, health services, and meeting spaces. • Outdoor recreation and open spaces are a key focus, with boardwalks, trails, and waterway reserves making them an everyday part of community life.	• **Green infrastructure** and public open space are core parts of neighbourhood design, doubling as flood resilience measures. • Demand for student places keeps pace with supply in the existing **school network,** requiring the second site in Peacocke and additional space at existing schools such as Rukuhia. • Education, recreation, and cultural facilities reflect design processes with mana whenua/iwi incorporating Maaori design principles and mātauranga Maaori.

Scenario Elements – Key assumptions (continued)

Scenario elements	Key assumptions	
	By 2040	By 2055
Environment / Heritage/ Culture	• The **blue-green network** is fully connected across Peacocke, Mystery Creek, and the Airport precinct. New wetlands, restored gullies, and continuous riparian planting link the maunga, peat lakes, and the Waikato River, which are actively monitored and enhanced in real time. • Long-tailed **bat habitats** are mapped, buffered, protected and actively enhanced. • All planning follows Te Mana o te Wai — prioritising the river's needs before human use. • Te Ture Whaimana and Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao is given full effect, guiding land-use decisions, industrial performance standards, and urban design. • Te Ao Maaori, cultural heritage and sites of significance are celebrated, with authentic partnership between mana whenua and council in both planning and day-to-day management. Built form, landscape, and water systems incorporate Maaori design principles and mātauranga Maaori, including reference to Tai Tumu Tai Pari Tai Ao.	• Continuous riparian planting runs along both sides of the river, tributaries, streams and gullies within the study area, water quality meets swimmable standards. Mahinga kai sites are re-established and accessible, reinforcing cultural and ecological values. Peat lakes are restored. • Improved benefits have been quantified and draws national and attention to the Agritech sectors. Farming continues, but only under strict controls preventing intensification, with a focus on regenerative, low-emission practices. Highly productive land close to urban centres is utilised for agriculture and horticultural research, and new high-yielding drought-resistant species are tested and utilised throughout the region. • The implementation of "Maaori-lived experiences" adds a unique cultural dimension, enriching visitors' understanding of the region's heritage and traditions.
Planning and Staging	• Planning processes integrate environmental triggers — new development is only released when it can be demonstrated that there will be no net loss in environmental quality, and ideally, a net gain. The blue-green network planning aligns with Future Proof blue-green network, and Taiao protection management is embedded as a mandatory first step in all new growth areas. • Competing interests between agriculture and natural biodiversity are resolved via integrating biodiversity into farm planning, promoting landholder buy-in through incentives and local ownership, adopting regenerative farming practices, fostering a cultural shift in what defines good farming through growth of tourism in nearby area, and utilising innovation and co-innovation to develop site-specific solutions from an Agri-tech hub.	• This scenario's defining principle is the restoration and protection of the Waikato River's health as the primary driver for all growth decisions, and the region is on track, if not ahead, toward meeting 80-year targets. • The **blue-green network,** as envisaged by Future Proof, is fully realised, ensuring that every new development contributes to the environmental, cultural, and social wellbeing of the awa and its communities.

Scenario Five: Environmental gateway

By 2040



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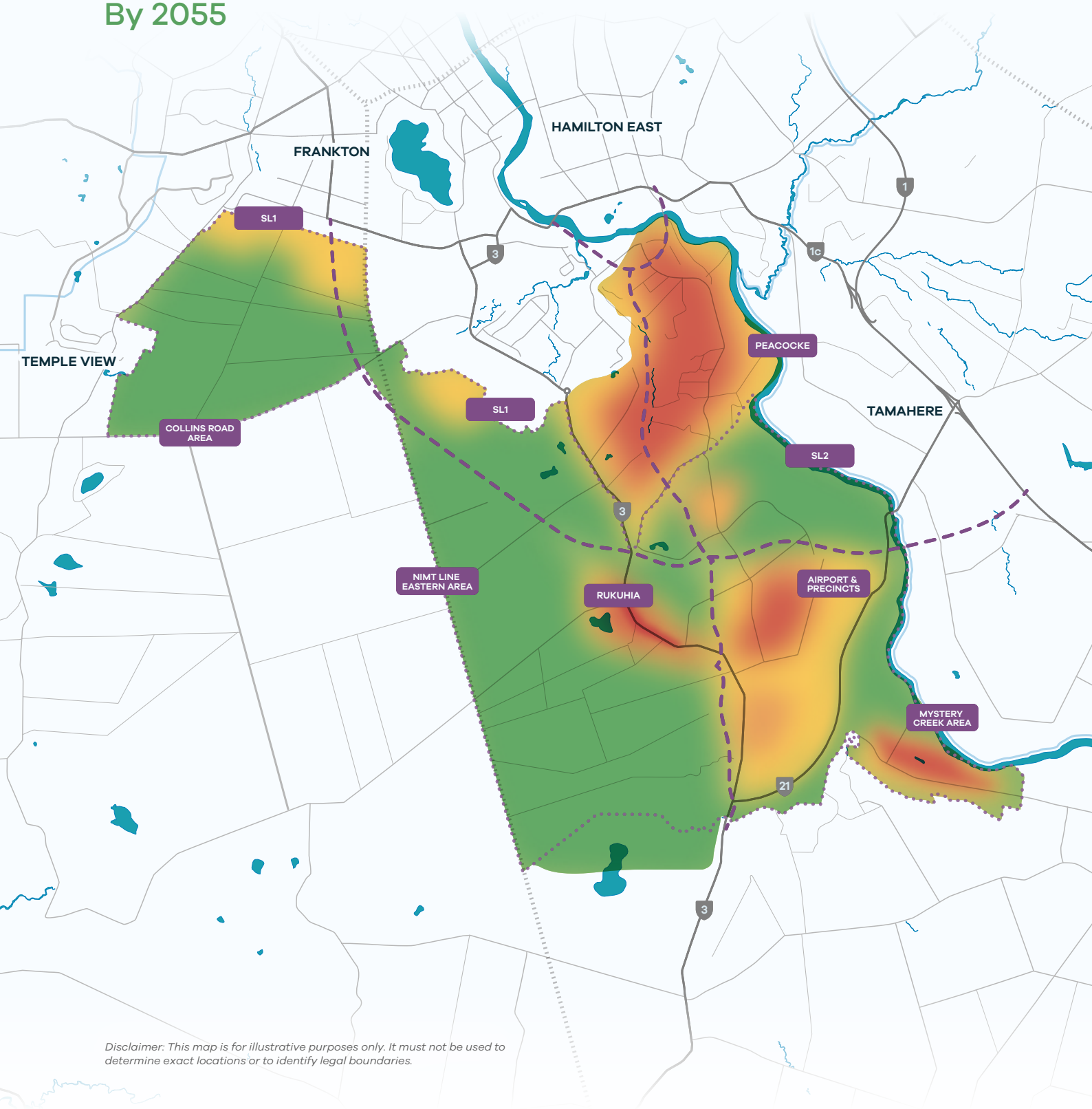
Scenario Five: Environmental gateway

By 2055



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What does the "By 2055" scenario imply in terms of our outcome statements?

Employment and Job Opportunities

The study area has become a green industrial super-node, with the Airport, Ruakura, and Mystery Creek collaborating around a shared identity of sustainability, innovation, and agri-tech. Employment is anchored by high-value, low-impact industries — clean-tech manufacturing, sustainable food production, circular economy businesses, and eco-tourism.

The University of Waikato and mana whenua enterprises are central partners, providing research, training, and pathways into skilled jobs. Seasonal employment is catered for through quality accommodation and used as a stepping stone to more permanent roles in regenerative horticulture and eco-tourism.

A Great Place to Live

Neighbourhoods in Peacocke, Rukuhia, and Ōhaupō are compact and walkable. Medium-density housing is integrated with parks, wetlands, and cycleways, ensuring every community has green space on its doorstep. Residents enjoy access to clean water, safe recreation, and vibrant cultural hubs.

Development has been deliberately contained to protect elite and prime soils and surrounding rural landscapes, giving people a strong sense of living "in the green heart" of Waikato. Quality of life is high, with housing that balances sustainability and cultural identity.

Easy to Get Around

The transport network prioritises low-carbon movement. A high-patronage Bus Rapid Transit system links the Airport directly to Cambridge, Te Awamutu, and Hamilton. Freight rail servicing the Airport is under serious development, reducing dependence on trucks.

Extensive cycleways and walking corridors are aligned with gullies and riparian buffers, forming safe and scenic routes for daily travel and recreation.

Supporting Iwi Aspirations

Mana whenua are central to decision-making in this scenario. Papakaainga and iwi-led housing developments are integrated into growth areas, with design reflecting te ao Maaori values.

Co-governance arrangements ensure iwi leadership in managing ecological restoration, cultural heritage sites, and mahinga kai. Maaori design principles are evident in the built form, stormwater systems, and public spaces. Co-governance and partnerships with the private sector also ensure high employment levels amongst Waikato iwi across all skill levels.

The Waikato River is celebrated not only as a natural and cultural taonga but also as the organising principle for planning, ensuring iwi aspirations for the awa are fully embedded in the district's identity and economy.

Caring for the Environment and the Waikato River

This scenario makes the health of the Waikato River the first priority. Diffuse discharges of contaminants have reduced significantly thanks to farm environmental plans, strict allocation regimes, and a halt to land-use intensification. Blue-green networks are fully implemented, linking wetlands, peat lakes, gullies, and the awa. Water quality consistently meets swimmable standards, with biodiversity thriving — from long-tailed bats to native fish and birds.

Urban development is designed as an extension of ecological systems, not a replacement of them. The awa and its tributaries are now visibly healthier, with cultural and recreational use increasing year by year.

Level of Strategic Infrastructure Alignment

The scenario aligns strongly with Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato, Future Proof's blue-green networks, and climate change adaptation strategies.

While it diverges from the competitive land markets lens of Going for Housing Growth, it demonstrates how spatial planning can enable growth without compromising natural capital. Its focus on sequencing, environmental thresholds, and iwi partnership provides a model of strategic alignment that privileges long-term environmental outcomes over short-term growth.

Feasibility and Constructability

Growth has been restricted but is still feasible at a subregional scale, concentrated in areas where infrastructure could be provided without degrading sensitive environments.

Compact densities make efficient use of land and servicing.

The Southern Wastewater Treatment Plant functions as a cutting-edge facility, with modular expansion tied to demand. Constructability challenges (peat soils, flooding, water allocation limits) have been mitigated by staging development and embedding green infrastructure in urban form. Costs are possibly higher than in other scenarios, but the risks of environmental and infrastructure failure are lower.

Future Proof
Te Tau Tītoki

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