

The Northern Action Group
Incorporated



**Electoral Boundaries
and Names**



**NAG submission to the
Representation Commission**



“Campaigning to get Democracy for the people of North Rodney”

17 February 2020

Appreciation:

- NAG wishes to thank:
 - the Representation Commission for allowing us this opportunity to speak to our suggestions...
 - and support staff who have graciously assisted with arrangements and looking at population numbers and alternative boundaries.

NAG acknowledges data and maps from NZ Stats, Linz, and Map extracts from the New Zealand Atlas and official records

Responses on the name “Helensville”

- The Commission received 53 objections (including 3 Counter-objections) to the proposed name “Helensville”;
- Only 13 objectors proposed alternatives to the name “Rodney”; the most common was “Atuanui” (4 objectors);
- 40, or 75%, prefer retaining the name “Rodney” for the electorate area.

Responses on boundary changes

- 17 Objections were received to the boundary changes proposed (no counter-objections);
 - 10 favoured no change from current boundaries;
 - 2 supported the proposed changes (or with variations);
 - 4 favoured alignment of Rodney or North Rodney with the East (Hibiscus) coast communities.
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- This does not appear to show any particular consensus of view. However:
 - Feedback shows community support for name retention; and
 - the association of North Rodney people with their eastern coastal communities may be inferred from 14 out of 17 objections.

Constraints and Principles

- The Act sets:
 - The population range per electorate as a constraint;
 - Criteria for consideration in revision of boundaries as:
 - community of interest;
 - facilities of communications; and
 - topographical features
- As these are factors used in setting territorial boundaries for Local Government, we submit that they support a principle of alignment of areas of representation where possible.
- In AC, there is considerable variation in population across Local Board areas, making full alignment impossible, but alignment may be possible in areas such as Rodney.

Why Alignment?

- Alignment of Local Government and electoral boundaries provides representation synergies:
 - It simplifies and strengthens representation (especially important in rural and coastal community areas which are minorities in an urban-led population-based local government representation system;
 - It aligns and improves communications and engagement with representatives;
 - It strengthens national support for local communities of interest.
- The Commission has proposed largely aligning the Rodney electorate with the Local Board area.
- We support that and recommend any reasonable changes to further improve alignment.

Starting Point

- Rodney is the natural starting point for electoral realignment of the area which has to change, not Helensville. This reflects:
 - Historical support;
 - Community of interest;
 - Geographical alignment;
 - Communication – within the Local Board area.
- The Rodney Local Board Area (LBA) population is 66,417 (2018 Census). Excluding the Maori roll voters the population for the area is 62,447, or 3.8% under quota.
- This is clearly in the range (61,654-68,144) for an electorate.

Improved Representation

- The population of the proposed electorate is 65,617, or 1.1% over quota.
- That would mean a 5% lower representation ratio than for a Rodney LBA - based area.
- Obviously, Rodney voters would prefer a higher representation ratio per capita as they already suffer from being a rural minority in Auckland.
- Given the expected growth in the Rodney LBA, being under quota is a good starting point.

Community of Interest

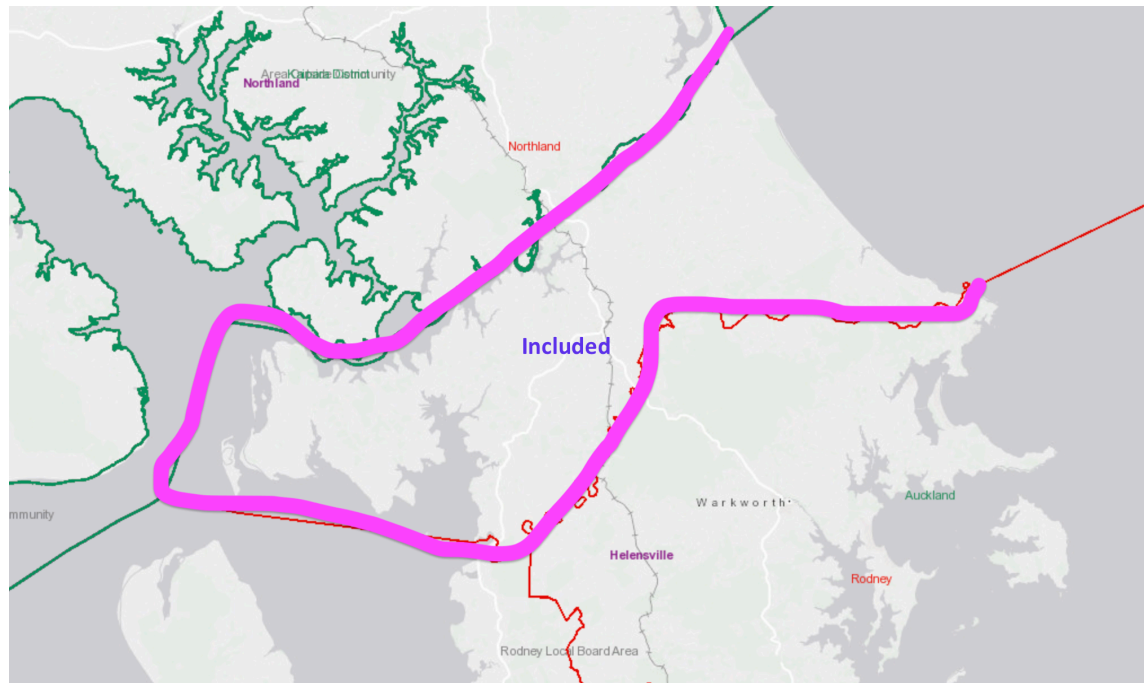
- The recent study* for the Auckland Reorganisation process shows:
 - support for alignment of the northern boundary (this is a natural geographical boundary, with little functional connection between Kaipara and North Rodney (NR));
 - that there is no real community of interest between NR and South-West Rodney;
 - there is more community of interest between S & NR and the Hibiscus coast - i.e Eastern Coastal areas (this is being reinforced by the motorway extension and likely future associated ribbon development),
- **BUT....**

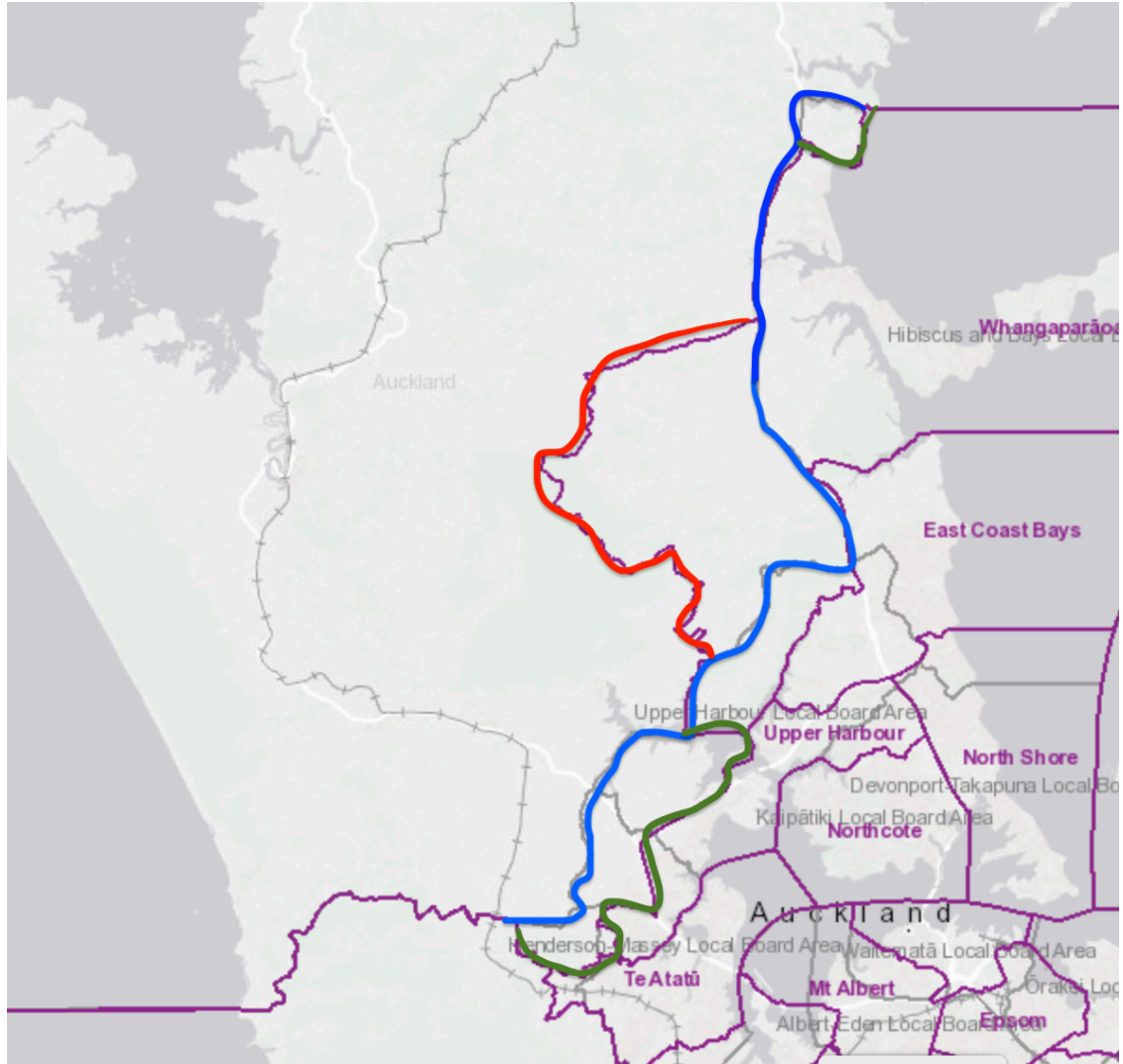
Community of Interest

- We consider at this time that alignment with the current LBA and boundaries is preferred to any alternative East-West split grouping;
- The synergies referred to from National representation on Local matters is important to rural communities – e.g. having additional list MP representation by MPs from Rodney has helped people with local matters.
- In time, development may reshape both local and national representation boundaries, but the shape of that future is currently an unknown.

Northern Boundary Change

- The Commission has moved to align the Rodney electorate with the Local Board area. We support that and thank the Commission for this proposed change.
- The Commission has recognized past difficulties for North Rodney communities affected from having split national representation.





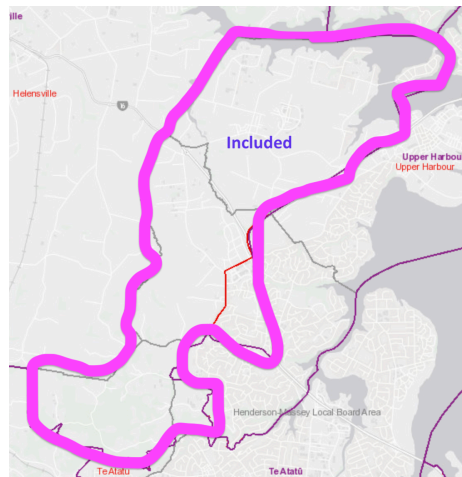
Commission proposed variations from Rodney Local Board Area

Green – additions
Red - deletions

Southern Boundary Changes (1)*

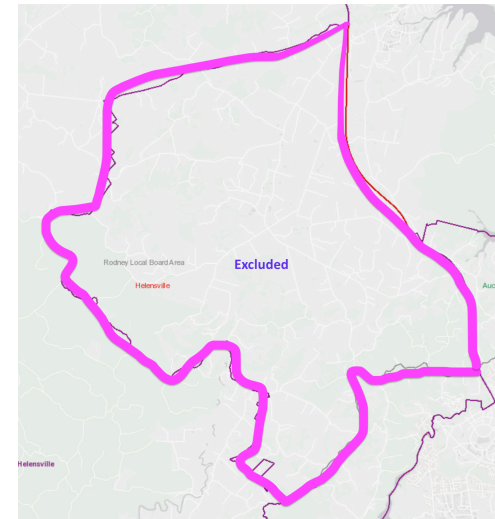
* Relative to the Rodney Local Board area.

- South west Rodney:
 - Proposed for inclusion is an area of Te Atatu in the South currently part of the Waitakere Local Board Area; parts of the Henderson-Massey Local Board area and part of the Upper Harbour local board area.
 - These Areas have an urban development focus and have their main community of interest outside their local communities with Auckland rather than Helensville or Warkworth or eastern coastal centers.



Southern Boundary Changes (2)

- Southern and South East Rodney:
 - The Coatesville and Dairy Flat communities are less urban and more lifestyle semi-rural – thus more associated with rural/coastal interests and unlikely to develop quickly into higher density urban communities.
 - They should be part of Rodney. Cross-community interests in this area around Coatesville are likely spread between the local coastal centers of Albany, Silverdale and Orewa, and general Auckland.



Southern Boundary Changes (3)

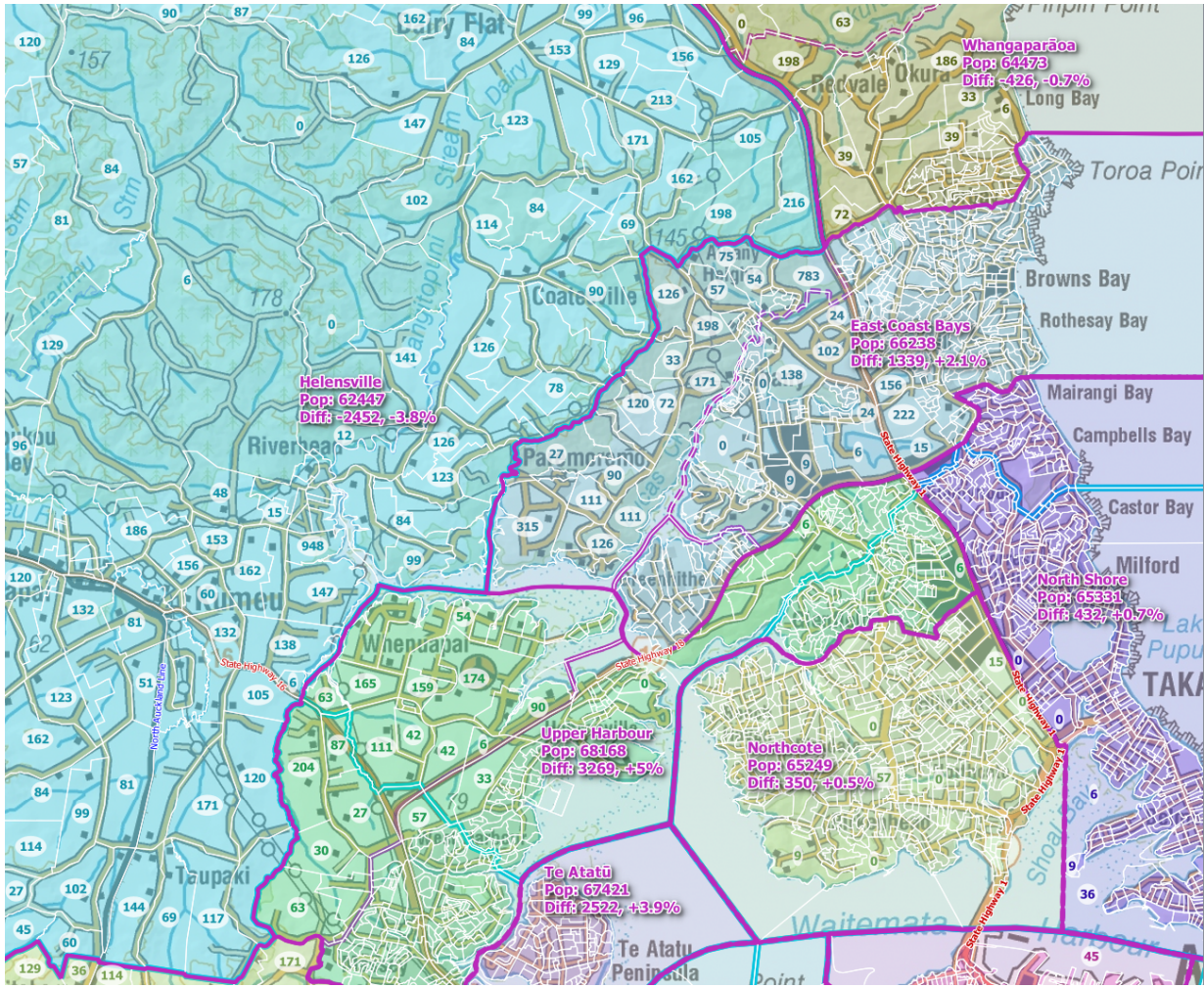
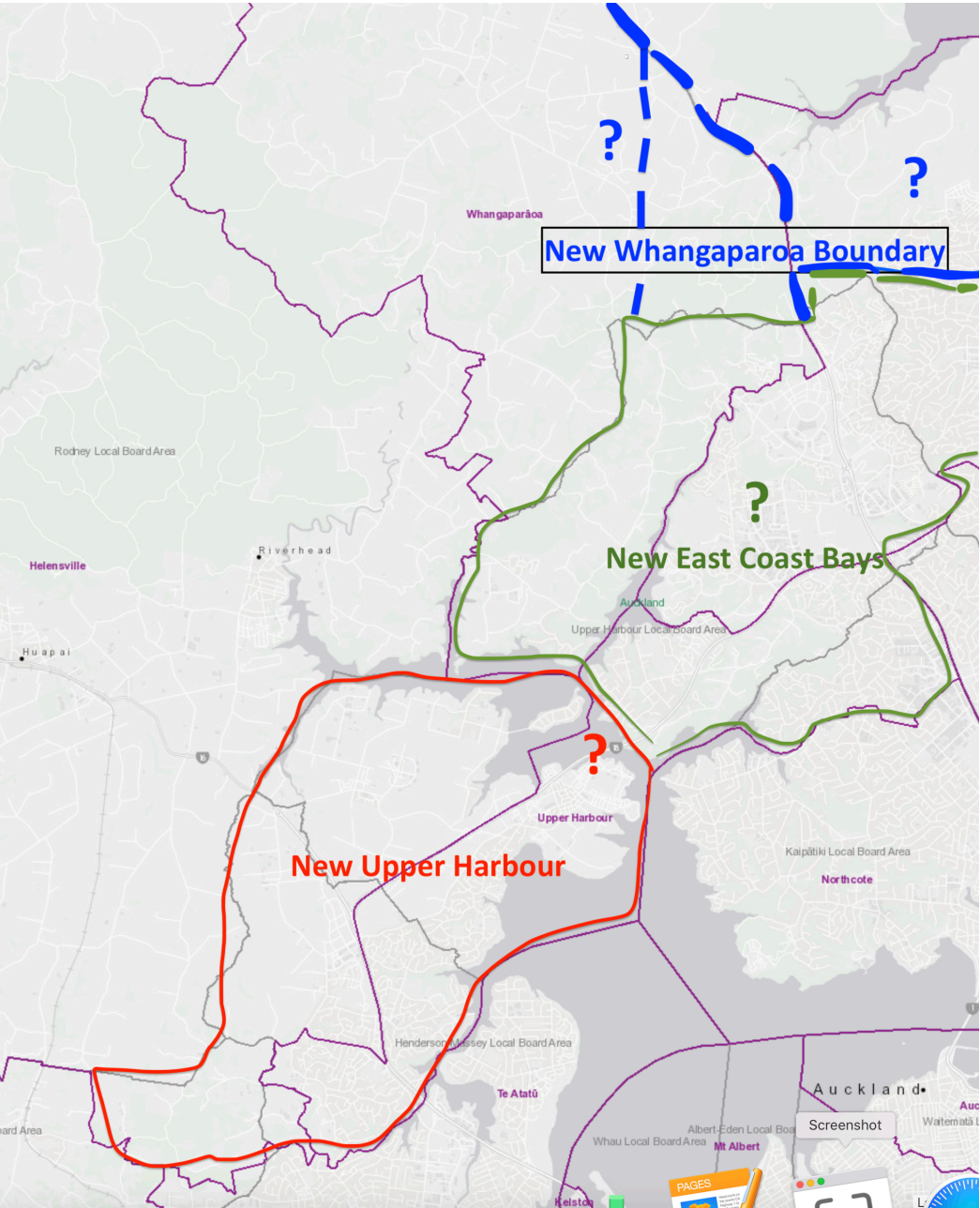
- Proposed for inclusion in Rodney (Helensville) is a small section of Waiwera north of Hatfields Beach. This area should be in Whangaparaoa.
- Waiwera generally is the point of geographical separation between the North Rodney area and the more populous areas to the south and along the coast.
- The Community of interest, communications and roading connections all favour Waiwera being part of Whangaparaoa.
- Inclusion in Whangaparaoa will not affect compliance with quota for either electorate.



Possible Consequent Adjustments?

- Adjustment to boundaries is obviously possible because proposed electorates within the area are all within quota.
- Rodney LBA alignment would require adjustment of the proposed boundaries of East Coast Bays, Rodney, Whangaparaoa and Upper Harbour.
- Consequential adjustments to Auckland focused electorates further southwards than these are not seen as practical (except perhaps for a small area of proposed Helensville that could be in either New Lynn or Upper Harbour).
- While it would unsettle the “good” electorate of East Coast Bays, alternatives the Commission might consider to improve Rodney LBA alignment could be:
 - Shifting the East Coast Bays boundary with Upper Harbour to absorb more of the increased Upper Harbour population:
 - Realigning the East Coast Bays and Whangaparaoa boundary to balance the population across these three areas and avoid a “split” Whangaparaoa area.

Possible adjustment alternatives



Consequent Adjustments?

- So it appears it might be possible to make further adjustments that would comply with quota and community of interest concerns. NAG has not had time to consider or recommend how that might best be done.
- We understand it is the Commission's role to decide what if any further adjustments are practical and reasonable, and we register our support for any moves which increase alignment.

Electorate Name: **Rodney**



Helensville is not representative of the area and never has been. It is a town name and not an area (District, Region) name.



Rodney, and at times, Kaipara (but for a wider region) have been names representative of the wider general area.

Rodney throughout the
last century....



Rodney County 1876



Rodney Electorate 1870-1881



Rodney Electorate 1946-1954



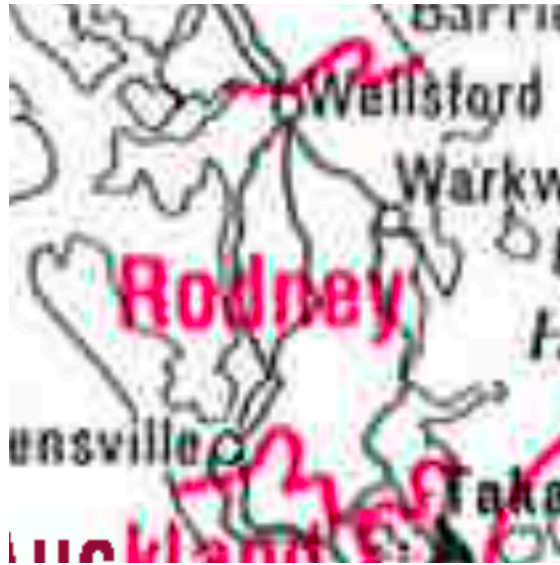
Rodney Electorate 1957-1963



Rodney Electorate 1972-1978



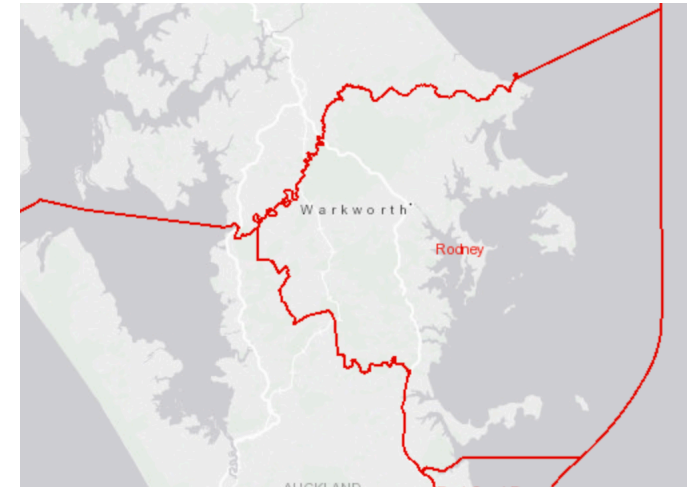
Kaipara Electorate 1978-1984



Rodney electorate 1984-1987



Kaipara electorate 1987



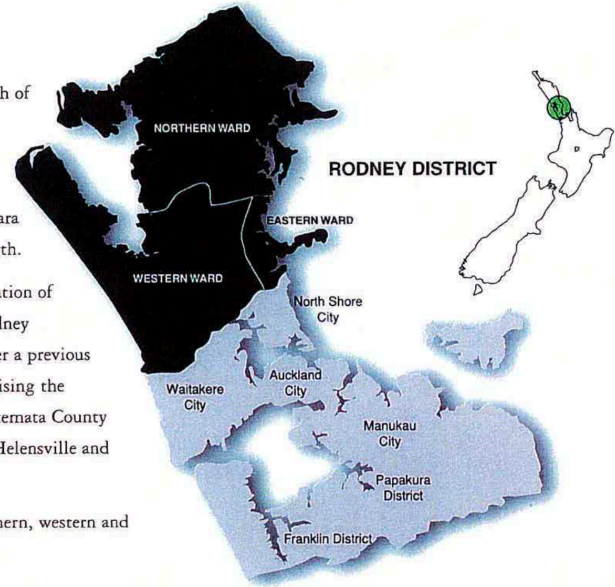
Rodney electorate 2014

● About Rodney District

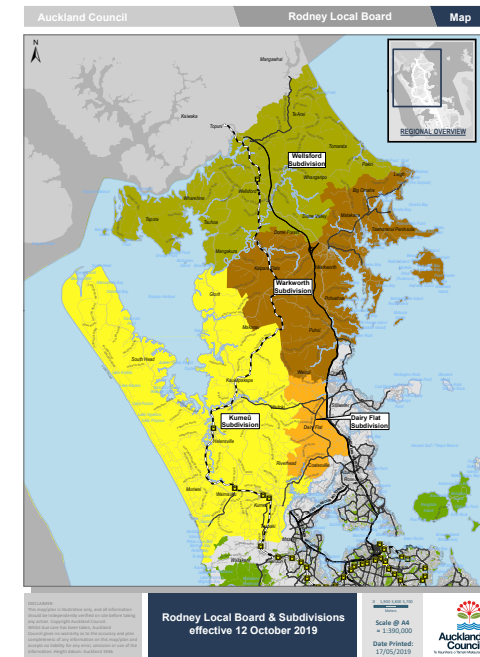
Rodney District stretches between coasts just north of metropolitan Auckland. It is the most northern of the seven local authority areas that make up the Auckland Region. Its neighbours are Waitakere and North Shore Cities to the south and the Kaipara District (part of the Northland Region) to the north.

The district was formed in 1989 by the amalgamation of the Helensville Borough and Rodney County. Rodney County Council had been constituted in 1974 after a previous amalgamation of a smaller Rodney County comprising the northern part of the present district, and the Waitemata County comprising the present Hibiscus Coast, Wainui, Helensville and Kumeu areas.

Rodney District comprises three wards - the northern, western and eastern wards.



Rodney District 2003



Rodney LBA 2019

Electorate Name: **Rodney**



If there is no need to change the name because it is not needed for association with imbedding any other material change - **why change it?**



If the proposal aligns the electorate more closely with the Local Board area, then using the same name is sensible and practical (no confusion, no negatives, and no costs of any changes).



The Rodney name has traditional historical support and thus has strongest association with the area.



Look at the history since 1870. In **2020 it will be 150 years** since the first Rodney electorate was formed!



Celebrate the electorate **Sesquicentenary** and help unify the community!