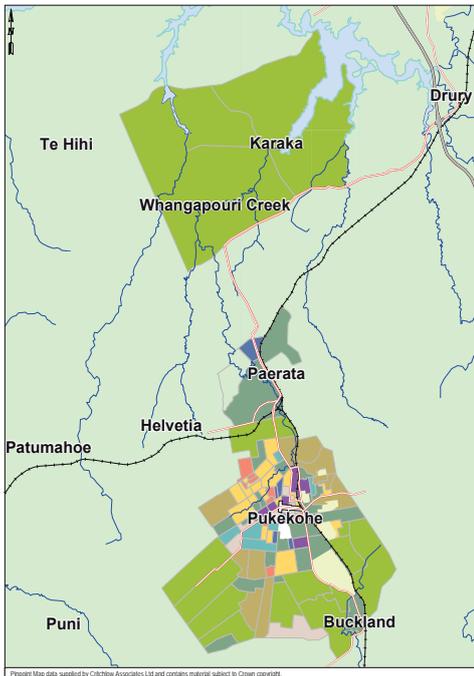




Pukekohe is a small, but growing town. Situated 50 kilometres south of Auckland city, the Hills of Pukekohe and Bombay form the natural southern limit of the Auckland region. Being the service focus for a large and reasonably isolated rural area, and being off SH1, means that Pukekohe has retained its identity and its usefulness. It's a genuine large country town, not an antique-shop-filled rural enclave prettified for day-trippers. Pukekohe has excellent facilities, including everything the traditional Kiwi shopper requires. If you're shopping for a combine harvester or a back hoe, you'll probably find just what you need and be able to celebrate with a cup of tea and a lamington. Rising prices in suburbs closer to town and a greater appreciation of all things rural have led to this area now being added to many would-be homebuyers' shopping lists.



For colour key, see page 230

### Population Profile

Population	16,284
% Aged Under 15 Years	25.90
% Aged Over 65 Years	12.66
% European	63.68
% Maori	18.06
% Pacific Peoples	5.88
% Asian	8.59

### Who Lives There?

The population is predominantly European, but there are also Maori, Indian and Chinese. Pukekohe is attractive to those who need to be near to Auckland but also want a rural lifestyle with all of the amenities of an established country town. People here are mostly middleclass, although there are a few seriously wealthy people, too, especially in Karaka.

### Typical Homes

Dwellings run the full spectrum, from old farmhouses, villas and bungalows, through to more modern brick-and-tile and weatherboard homes. The new developments tend to be brick-and-tile or have plaster finishes.

## Amenities

### Schools ★★★

Pukekohe and its rural environs have at least 11 primary schools (six include intermediate years), an intermediate school and two secondary schools.

The private schools ACG Strathallan and Pukekohe Christian School are also in the area, catering for all levels. The high decile Pukekohe East School continues to receive favourable ERO reports along with the equally well-regarded Pukekohe Hill School.

The semi-rural Pukekohe Intermediate has recently been renovated. The decile six Pukekohe High School is the main state co-ed secondary school here, with a roll close to 1500. Wesley College (for girls) is also in the area. For a full list, see page 270.

### Shops ★★

Pukekohe has excellent main-street shopping, revamped in a pretty country-style a few years ago. The busy town centre has more than 200 businesses offering everything from tractors to fine wines. There is also a booming retail area in Manukau Rd, with large car parks. Big retailers like Bunnings and Harvey Norman have arrived in town, but there's no room for them in the main street – and that will ensure that it keeps its much-loved character.

### Leisure ★★★

Locals are spoiled for choice, especially if they're keen on outdoor activities.

Pukekohe Park is the home of motorsport and A & P shows are still going strong. The area has its own Fieldays now, and horse racing has reached the point where a huge training complex has been placed in nearby Kingseat at Byerly Park.

Pukekohe has a stadium, tennis and squash courts, gyms, an all-weather hockey ground, excellent golf club, a recreation centre with a heated pool and courts. The fairly new Cosmopolitan Club sports complex has indoor and outdoor bowling greens, 10-pin bowling and more. There's also a clay target-shooting club not far out of town. Spookers is located in the former nurses' hostel on the old Kingseat Hospital grounds. Basically, you pay for the pleasure of having freakily made-up actors frighten the bejeezus out of you in either the corn maze (summer only), the haunted forest or the haunted house.

Whether you're after a simple cup of tea, an espresso or a glass of bubbly, there are restaurants and cafés aplenty. The top-flight Bracu restaurant at the Simunovich Olive Estate just out of town boasts a menu designed by renowned chef Peter Thornley. Highly recommended.

Drive 40 minutes east or west and you're at the sea; many locals have baches on the Coromandel Peninsula.



## Real Estate

### Trends

There are lots of new houses in and around Pukekohe, and they're in great demand. Dwellings tend to be four-bedroom, brick-and-tile, on reasonably sized sections, priced \$500,000–\$600,000 with a few at \$700,000. Older homes here will cost from just under \$300,000. The low to mid \$300,000s will buy a new home in a reasonable area or, a four-bedroom home in Tuakau a little closer to the motorway.

Interest is also strong in nearby Tuakau and Waiuku, which bodes well for this area. Little old family farms may no longer be economical to farmers but they are in great demand from ex-townies as lifestyle blocks, with prices being greatly influenced by location.

### Best Streets

Sunset Drive, Rushland Rise, Cloverlea Place, Butcher Road, O'Connor Drive, and Emsworth Court are among the best streets in Pukekohe.

## Karaka

To the north of Pukekohe, Karaka is a lifestyle area of mainly four-hectare blocks, popular with the same sort of people who flock to Whitford to live. Karaka Lakes is a 600-home

development underway just off the motorway, slightly closer to Auckland city.

Westbury, the 37ha Karaka stud farm of Australian businessman Gerald Harvey, for example, is estimated to be worth about \$60million.

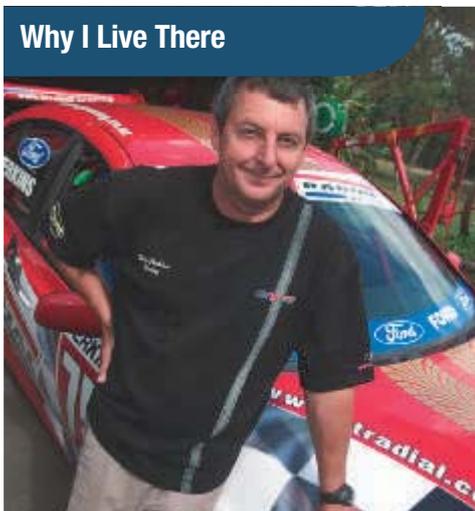
A hectare of land in Karaka will cost anything upwards of \$750,000, and that's without a view or a house. Mind you, they're rare. In Karaka Park, enclaves of lifestyle properties sell for \$1million plus. Fees for senior students at local private school ACG Strathallan are over \$12,000 a year. Strathallan is one of the largest independent school complexes in New Zealand, set on 14.5ha of gently rolling country with a tranquil tidal inlet winding round the property.

The Karaka Sales Centre is well-known as the home of the National Premier Yearling Sales where, each year, tens of millions of dollars passes from one well-shod horse-lover to another.

Yes, this is a land of privileged souls, a world away from their neighbours across the Pahurehure Inlet: Weymouth, Wattle Downs and Conifer Grove. But when you're just passing through, Karaka could be any pretty part of rural New Zealand – except, of course, that it's so close to urban amenities: Pukekohe is less than 10 minutes' drive south, Papakura about the same to the east.



## Why I Live There



### Racing Driver Dean Perkins

Racing driver Dean Perkins and his wife moved to Pukekohe 17 years ago because they wanted to raise their family in the country. For Dean, who says he's always been a petrol-head, the fact that New Zealand's top motor racing track was nearby was definitely a bonus.

They bought a 3ha block and moved an old house on to it. The 200-pupil Buckland School was "brilliant" for their children. Dean says Pukekohe's a very friendly place, and as a self-employed engineer it was easy for him to make good contacts and get to know everybody.

The "muscle car" his team built and ran about six years ago was always a crowd-pleaser at the track. Now Dean's involved in the New Zealand V8 Touring Car Championship, considered the pinnacle of local motor racing.

## Look Out

Prices have rocketed in Pukekohe for lifestyle blocks recently and there are some question marks about its continued growth.

## At a Glance...

### House Prices

#### House

Bedrooms	
Price	\$380,000+
Bedrooms	
Price	\$300,000 - \$550,000

#### House on a big section

Bedrooms	
Price	\$700,000 - \$900,000+

#### Large lifestyle block

Price	\$100,000 - \$2,200,000
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#### Residential section

Price	\$350,000+
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### Average Rents

#### Flat

Bedrooms	
Price	\$350/wk

#### House

Bedrooms	
Price	\$390/wk
Bedrooms	
Price	\$480/wk

### Travel Times

CBD	peak 75 min off peak 35 min
Southern motorway	10 min
Airport	30 min
Manukau city shopping centre	20 min

The area is served by buses and trains; the trains are not very frequent, as most don't currently go further south than Papakura.