

# Town Planning in Auckland

## A Scheme for the Northern Boroughs

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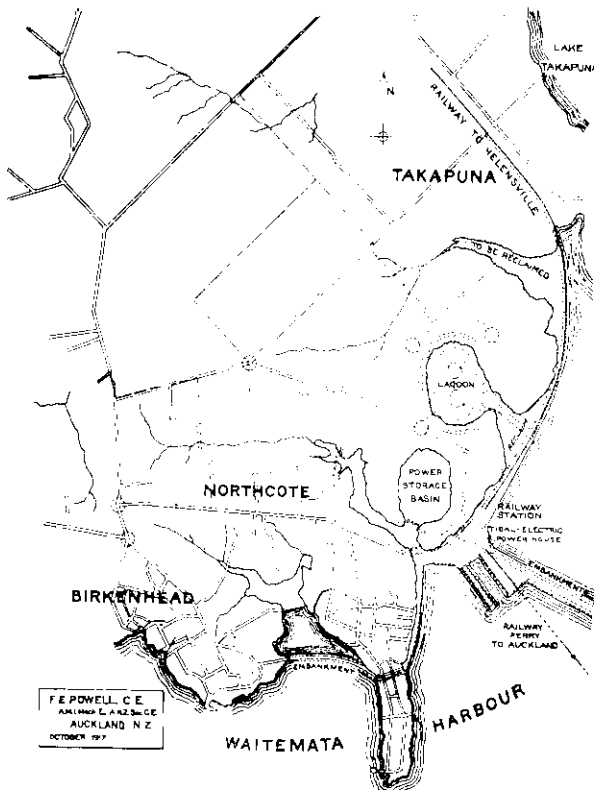
The conditions in respect of the boroughs and part of Waitemata County on the north side of Auckland harbour offer one of the most favourable fields for the work of the Town Planner. Here at present are four boroughs, Devonport, Takapuna, Northcote and Birkenhead, separated naturally by the configuration of the country and all entirely residential in character. The district is remarkable for diversity of landscape.

the eyes of many, whilst the difficulty of communication between borough and borough tends to a lack of homogeneity, if not to positive insularity. Were it possible to travel quickly and cheaply between the four centres this alone would tend to fusion and a combination of interests, although it would still leave the inhabitants isolated from their work for the most part, and subordinate to city conditions.

Evidently then, if this north side is to develop a healthy autonomy, something is required that will not only bring the scattered units of the population into easy communication with one another, but that will bind them with a common object, more or less independent of the city of Auckland, as far as ordinary pursuits are concerned. The one thing that can produce this result is the establishment of business, commercial and industrial interests—in other words, a town or city—in the midst of the people concerned, and it is the discussion of this possibility and the conditions that would arise, that forms the subject of these notes.

Now a city is not planned merely to provide a community of interests, or if so planned could not be expected to have a healthy progressive existence, unless it provides the conveniences of trade and exchange, for which purpose it must be fed by produce of the surrounding country, while on the other hand it receives for distribution the imports required by the inhabitants. Obviously then, the site must be such as to suit wharves and other facilities for receipt of goods and must be convenient for railway and other means of transport on the landward side. It should be central, and a large part of its area should be reasonably level, not too elevated above sea level, and with a sufficiently large back country to admit of extension. Every one of these conditions is complied with at the site I propose near the head of Shoal bay. Further, the land is sparsely occupied, and none of the more thickly populated areas in the vicinity would be detrimentally affected. It is adjacent to a suitable position for wharves which would be well sheltered. It has physical features that could be turned to account from the aesthetic point of view, and has other advantages which many a great city might envy. It happens that a railway has already been planned by the Government to run from the north side to Helensville, and there seems every natural reason for this to start about the position shown on my plan.

However, the first item for consideration is the means by which the four boroughs can be brought into touch with one another. This could be done to some extent by the provision of an interborough tram system over existing roads, and obviously this is in any case desirable. But I propose to link up the areas in a more direct manner by constructing embankment roads from Devonport to Bayswater, from



Mr. Powell's Plan for Auckland's Northern Boroughs.

sea and harbour views, including delightful outlooks upon the Hauraki Gulf with its many picturesque islands, and in the other direction there are lake and harbour scenery, native bush and bold headlands. The land is of the usual undulating kind and offers many vantage points whence the observer may enjoy vistas of green stretches agreeably broken by groves and plantations of trees. Taken altogether as residential areas the country leaves little to be desired.

In spite of these natural advantages, many of those who appreciate their value to the full, are aware that something is lacking. The fact that the residents are cut off from the city of Auckland by the barrier of the harbour renders the district less desirable in