

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

TAKARO: DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL  
CHARACTERISTICS OF A STATE HOUSING SUBURB

A Thesis Presented in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Geography  
at Massey University

By

ROYCE AVERN HUNT  
Massey University

1970

## PREFACE

State housing areas are an accepted and typical part of the New Zealand urban landscape. However, little research has been carried out on this topic and existing findings in the disciplines of geography, sociology, education and architecture are largely unrelated. The need for further and more intensive investigation has been stressed by Pool in his study of the areal groupings of the social characteristics of inhabitants of the Auckland urban area. Pool defined State housing areas as one of his ten 'social regions' and concluded that "State suburbs are unique and their character and problems require separate research".<sup>1</sup> This thesis aims to investigate the physical characteristics of a State housing suburb and the demographic and social characteristics of its residents. The hypothesis will be explored that within a suburb planned by the State, different policies on housing administration have led to different demographic patterns.

The name 'Takaro' is applied loosely and inconsistently by residents in Palmerston North to a wide area to the west of the city. For the purposes of this thesis Takaro is defined as the part on the outskirts of the city that was planned as an entity by the Housing Division of the Ministry of Works, also including Monrad Street as a boundary (Figure 3). Takaro covers an area of 287 acres and contained in August 1969 an estimated 3,368 people. It is a relatively new housing suburb, for the main period of building construction was between 1959 and 1966. The majority of houses are State-built (52 per cent) or State-financed group houses (22 per cent). The remaining private houses include a number built for the Department of Maori Affairs.

This study consists of a survey and an analysis of findings and their implications. The basic research tool was an interview survey carried out in order to gain information related to the aims of the thesis. The nature of the survey and the methods used are detailed in Appendix A. The work is

in three parts. The first establishes the legislative setting, in which the introduction of State housing in New Zealand, its growth and development are outlined. The second consists of the study of Takaro, its physical growth and structure, and of the demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the residents and their patterns of community interaction. In the third part the implications of State policies are discussed upon the basis of research findings and suggestions are made for future policies.

The author is grateful for the supervision and encouragement of Professor K.W. Thomson and Mr B.G.R. Saunders of the Geography Department, Massey University. Appreciation is also extended to the members of the Housing Division of the Ministry of Works, Palmerston North, for their very willing assistance; to the Town Planning Department of the Palmerston North City Council for their co-operation and providing the base map for Figure 3; to Mr B.J. Allen for his constructive criticism; to Miss E. Scott of the Central Photographic Unit, Massey University, for reproduction of photographs, maps and graphs and to Mrs J.C. Herbert for typing the final manuscript. Thanks are also due to the many others who have assisted in a variety of ways, including the people of Takaro for their interest and co-operation in the interview survey.

#### References:

1. Pool, 1959(a), 115.
2. Estimate based on interview survey, see reference 2, Chapter III.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Preface	11
<u>PART I.</u>	
CHAPTER I. THE INTRODUCTION, GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF STATE HOUSING IN NEW ZEALAND	1
Early attempts at Government Participation in Housing	1
The Introduction of the 1936 State Housing Scheme	2
The Growth of State Housing, 1937-1945	4
Post-War Developments	5
State Housing in Palmerston North	10
<u>PART II.</u>	
CHAPTER II. TAKARO SUBURB: GROWTH AND PHYSICAL COMPOSITION	14
The Growth of Takaro	14
Physical Composition	16
CHAPTER III. TAKARO SUBURB: DEMOGRAPHIC STRUCTURE AND PATTERNS	29
Population Growth	30
Age-Sex Structure	31
Ethnic Composition	33
Population Movements	36
Household Composition	42
Summary of the Demographic Structure and Patterns of Takaro	45
CHAPTER IV. TAKARO SUBURB: SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS AND PATTERNS OF COMMUNITY INTERACTION	47
A. Socio Economic Characteristics	47
Employment	48
Income	53
Possessions	54
Education	55
Socio-Economic Characteristics of Takaro Suburb	55
B. Patterns of Community Interaction	56
Use of Local Amenities and Facilities	57
Participation in Community Activities	59
Takaro: A Residential Suburb or a Community?	62
<u>PART III.</u>	
CHAPTER V. THE CHARACTERISTICS, PROBLEMS AND IMPLICATIONS OF A STATE HOUSING SUBURB.	65
The Relationship of Takaro to other State housing areas in New Zealand.	65
Comparison of Occupants in State Housing and Private Housing	69
Is Takaro a Problem Suburb?	72
State Housing: Aspects and Implications of Future Policies.	76
APPENDIX A.	81
BIBLIOGRAPHY	90

# LIST OF FIGURES

		<u>Following</u> <u>Page</u>
Figure 1.	Construction of State Rental Units in New Zealand, 1938-1969	5
Figure 2.	Construction of State Rental Units in Palmerston North, 1950-1969.	10
Figure 3.	State Housing Areas in Palmerston North.	10
Figure 4.	Takaro: Building Construction	15
Figure 5.	Takaro: Ministry of Works Building Contracts, 1957-1966.	15
Figure 6.	Takaro: Land Use and Planning Zones, 1969.	19
Figure 7.	The Highbury Shopping Centre.	20
Figure 8.	Tui Place.	20
Figure 9.	Takaro: Housing Administration, 1969.	21
Figure 10.	Takaro: State Housing Types, 1969.	22
Figure 11.	Star Flat, Botanical Road.	23
Figure 12.	Two-Storey Four-Unit Flat, Hull Place.	23
Figure 13.	Two-Storey Multi-Unit, Croydon Avenue.	23
Figure 14.	Two-Storey Double-Unit, Botanical Road.	23
Figure 15.	One-Storey Double-Unit, Ellesmere Crescent.	23
Figure 16.	One-Storey Multi-Unit, Highbury Avenue.	23
Figure 17.	Detached State House, Coventry Street.	23
Figure 18.	Group House Under Construction, Stephens Crescent.	23
Figure 19.	Age-Sex Structures of Takaro and Palmerston North Urban Area.	32
Figure 20.	Distribution of Maori Population in Palmerston North by Census Tracts, 1966.	33
Figure 21.	Place of Birth of Takaro Residents, 1969	36
Figure 22.	Last Place of Residence of Households in Takaro, 1969.	37
Figure 23.	Location of Employment of Takaro Sample Population, 1969.	52
Figure 24.	Comparison of Age-structure of Residents in State Houses and Private Houses, Takaro, 1969.	69

# LIST OF TABLES

		<u>Page</u>
Table I	Proportion of Multi-Units in State Rental Housing Programme, 1958-1969.	8
II	Construction of Dwelling Units in Takaro, 1951-1966.	16
III	Land Use in Takaro.	21
IV	Housing Administration in Takaro, (Dwelling Units)	22
V	State Housing Types in Takaro.	22
VI	Population Growth in Takaro by Census Years.	30
VII	Ethnic Composition of Takaro Sample Population.	33
VIII	Proportion of Maoris in Takaro and Palmerston North Urban Area.	34
VIIIa	Percentage Increase of Maori Population in Four Sectors of Palmerston North.	35
IX	Origin of Residents in Takaro Sample Population.	37
X	Number of Moves Made by Sample Households.	38
XI	Length of Residence of Sample Households in Takaro.	39
XII	Expectation of Leaving Takaro Suburb.	40
XIII	Marital Status of Head of Household, Takaro Sample.	43
XIV	Marital Status of Persons Aged between 20 and 59, Takaro and Palmerston North Urban Area.	43
XV	Employment Status of Employed Males in Takaro Sample.	48
XVI	Occupation Divisions of Employed Persons in Takaro and Palmerston North Urban Area.	50
XVII	Industrial Divisions of Employed Persons in Takaro and Palmerston North Urban Area.	51
XVIII	Location of Employment.	52
XIX	Method of Travel to Work.	53
XX	Possession of Material Goods.	55
XXI	Participation in Activities in Takaro and Palmerston North.	60
XXII	Occupation of Heads of Households in State and Private Housing.	71
XXIII	Residents' Attitudes Towards Takaro Suburb.	72