

April 2009

## **Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society Draft City Plan 2009-2024 Feedback**

The Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society congratulates North Shore City Council on the production of an attractive, clear and comprehensive blueprint to guide the development of the City over the next fifteen years.

### Topic 1: Parks and People

The fundamental component of the plan is PEOPLE, in particular, the people of North Shore City, providing a safe, healthy and congenial environment, both built and natural, in which to live, work and raise their families.

Module 2, P.9, Para 3.2 *Our People* gives the following population projections:

|               |         |   |
|---------------|---------|---|
| 2006 Census   | 205,605 |   |
| 2008 estimate | 223,000 | +8.5% increase in 2 years, ie, average growth rate of 4.25% per annum |
| 2021 estimate | 261,000 | +17% increase over 2008, ie, average growth rate of 1.3% per annum    |
| 2041 estimate | 312,000 | +40% increase over 2008, ie, average Growth rate of 1.5% per annum    |

In view of the large disparity between the average annual growth rates between 2006–2008 of 4.2% and only approximately 1.5% through to 2021-2041 the downward prediction may suggest that the latter be seriously understated.

North Shore City is already suffering severe infrastructure and amenity growth pains due to its rate of growth. A further 40% increase will seriously compound these problems and, in fact, tend to destroy the very lifestyle and amenity values that make the North Shore such a highly desirable area in which to live as acknowledged in Module 2: section 2 *Structure and City Vision*, P7 (box); section 3 *North Shore City* P.8, para 4; Section 7 *City Principles* P.21, para 3; section 8 *City Direction*, P26.

The North Shore has a strictly limited and circumscribed land area that is capable of housing a finite number of people only in safe, healthy, low stress and congenial conditions. Council can lay more drains and construct more roads, but it cannot create more land, coastline or beaches. Already severe overcrowding occurs at Long Bay, Waiake, Mairangi Bay and Takapuna beaches during summer weekends and evenings. This will only get worse with population growth. One of the principal acknowledged mitigating factors for the relief of urban stress is the provision of large open green spaces where people may escape at least for a time the pressures of close urban living, in which to relax and rebuild their spiritual resources. It is vital therefore that North Shore City's remaining open green spaces be conserved to meet this basic need.

The Society is most appreciative of the \$5million recently pledged by Council towards the purchase of Area D within the Long Bay Structure Plan. We have been assured by Council this has been firmly embedded in the Capital Expenditure Budget.

We strongly urge that land within the Long Bay-Okura peninsula (not just restricted to the Structure Plan area) be given high priority within the Parks Reserve Acquisition budget (Module 4, P34) because of its outstanding capacity to provide for the passive recreation needs of the burgeoning population of the North Shore, indeed, the whole of Metropolitan Auckland.

## Topic 2 Geotechnical Instability

We are pleased to note Council's recognition of the high level of geotechnical instability of much of the North Shore terrain particularly in the northern sector (Module 1, P12, para 8; P21, Box 2). Geotechnical instability has been identified as a major problem within the Long Bay Structure Plan urban development and will require extremely close oversight by Council to ensure instability of catastrophic proportions does not occur in the built areas in the future. 'Man interferes with Nature at his peril'.

The Society is seriously concerned that all the provisions of the Environment Court decisions and ensuing Resource Consent provisions for the urban development at Long Bay are fulfilled in spirit and in substance. Because of the scale of the development and seriousness of potential consequences of mismanagement, we suggest that it will be necessary for Council to employ two appropriately qualified officers fulltime to oversee the Long Bay Structure Plan to ensure

the conduct of operations fully comply with regulatory requirements particularly in regards control of open earthworks areas, run-off during earthmoving phases, subsequent storm water catchment and treatment, revegetation etc. 'We request adequate provision be made accordingly within the budget if not already provided for.

### Topic 3 Governance

Our overriding concern with the Plan is not so much its contents as with its future implementation under the Auckland SuperCity scenario. We seek assurance that existing commitments made by the present Council and, in particular, the \$5million pledge towards the purchase of Area D in the Long Bay Structure Plan, will be honoured by the new administration if the purchase is not completed before the change-over.

We also hold grave concerns as to the ability or facility for local interest groups such as our Society (despite its Metropolitan and, indeed, National focus) being heard in the 'corridors of power' in Queen Street amid the clamour of vested interests for advancement of the 'CBD Big Picture'. We are concerned as to the future of North Shore City's assets such as Long Bay Regional Park and Piripiri Reserve following transfer to SuperCity ownership.

According to the Royal Commission's proposal, Long Bay was to lie within the new Waitemata City while Okura would be in Rodney. However, we understand that at present, there is no clear direction as to the new limits of council boundaries under the revised proposal. We urge that Council endeavour to ensure the whole of the Long Bay-Okura peninsula remain within a single North Shore authority. It would be undesirable for the management of Long Bay-Okura park area to end up lying within two separate Council jurisdictions. probably with differing agendas.

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