



Long Bay - Okura Great Park Society

NEWSLETTER * MARCH 2014

Annual general meeting

7.00pm Thursday 27 March 2014
East Coast Bays Community Centre
2 Glen Road, Browns Bay

General meeting topics:

**Auckland Unitary Plan
Proposed residential development at Okura**

**Guest speaker:
Dr Roger Grace (7:30pm approx.)
'Protecting the Hauraki Gulf'**
All welcome to AGM and/or to hear Dr Grace.

Dear Long Bay-Okura Great Park supporters.

We are now well into the New Year and I am glad to at last be able to up-date you on where we are up to in regards to the concerns we have had with the Auckland Unitary Plan.

As you may recall, when the first version of the Draft Plan came out almost a year ago, we were upset to see that many of the successes the Society had achieved in the development of the Long Bay Structure Plan (LBSP), the Council rules which shape the new development at Long Bay, had been dismissed. It felt as though all the work that the Society had done to provide a range of protections for the marine reserve, the archaeological sites, and the view points, including raising almost half a million dollars, and a long involvement in the Environment Court, may have been for naught. The Society protested loudly, and of course, many of you gave voice to our concerns. We believed that all the rules that remained relevant (given that by

this time some stages of the development were almost completed) must be included in the Plan.

The PAUP and the LBSP

The next draft – the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan (PAUP) - came out towards the end of last year. The Unitary Plan is a long and complex document, covering the proposed development of all of Auckland. Some of the Long Bay rules have been retained in a specific Long Bay Precinct Plan, others have been covered by the general rules that apply Auckland-wide. As it would require expertise to ensure our hard fought for rules were indeed included in the Plan, we engaged a town planner, Simon O'Connor, to do the comparative work. We had expected that this work would be completed before Christmas, but due to the complexity, we received Simon's draft feedback mid February.

We are pleased to tell you that most of the rules of the Long Bay Structure Plan appear to have been covered in the PAUP. There are some errors, but these appear to be errors of oversight due to the haste in which Council staff had to work rather than intentional changes or omissions. We appreciated that Phil Yates, who with Fiona McLaughlin, was most intensively involved in the LBSP development process on behalf of our Society, worked closely with Simon and our lawyer, Alan Webb, to complete the submission which we were able to get into Council at the eleventh hour. We now await the outcome of our submission. If it is favourable, it is unlikely we will take any further action. If we still have concerns at the next version of the Unitary Plan, we will likely need to take legal advice and possibly legal action.

We had anticipated keeping you informed of the process we have been going through, but this was difficult as we did not know how well the PAUP did reflect the values and rules of the LBSP until the last minute. If there had been major concerns, we would have turned once again to you, our loyal friends and supporters, for your submissions too. As it is, we feel that our submission, overseen by our lawyer, has covered our concerns adequately so we have not had to call for your mass response. A copy of our submission has been posted to our website.

PAUP and OKURA

Our other concern of course is the proposal for residential development of the Todd-owned land lying between the Long Bay Structure Plan area and the Okura Estuary. I informed you of this in our last newsletter.

Two Environment Court decisions (1996 and 2003 respectively) lead to the zoning

of this land at minimum sized lots of 4 ha in order to give a number of protections to the Okura Estuary, the last unspoilt estuary on the eastern side of North Shore. The first draft of the Unitary Plan reduced allowable size lots to 2 ha. The PAUP has reinstigated the zoning to 4 hectares, and designated it as being outside the rural urban boundary (RUB). We have therefore strongly supported this change.

However, although the PAUP shows that the land in question remain at minimum 4 ha lots, there is a threat that development could be considered here under the Special Housing Accord about which the Council has an agreement with Government.

In response to proposals for development of the Okura land, the Okura Environmental Group (OEG) has been reconstituted. The group comprises several interested member groups, including our Society, the Okura Residents and Ratepayers Assn, Keep Okura Green, East Coast Bays Coastal Protection Society, Forest and Bird North Shore, Dacre Cottage Management Committee. The OEG was a party to the 2003 Environmental Court hearings, and also involved in the development of the Long Bay Structure Plan. The OEG prepared a submission in response to the PAUP strongly supporting the protection of the whole of the Okura catchment. As a member group, the Society endorsed this submission.

The Society recently attended a presentation by Todds regarding the proposed development of the Okura land and the Society is looking carefully at the implications and considering its response.

2014 SUBSCRIPTION

As subscriptions barely cover the cost of the newsletter, further contributions towards the cost of running the Society would be gratefully received. To save paper and postage costs we encourage members to receive the newsletter by email. If this suits you please and enter your email address in the form and send it to us with your membership subscription or advise us by email (chris@bettany.org).

Check your mailing label for subs overdue.



1 Jan. - 31 Dec. 2014 SUSCRPTION
RENEWAL AND MEMBERSHIP FORM

LONG BAY - OKURA GREAT PARK SOCIETY
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We will forward a receipt with your next newsletter.

FUNDING.

The Society incurred major legal expenses in engaging our town planner and lawyer. We anticipate further expenditure on expert advice in regards to the proposed development at Okura, and possibly for participating in the next stage of the development of the Unitary Plan, in particular, the parts that relate to the Long Bay development. We greatly appreciate any contributions towards these expenses.

AGM

We are thrilled and feel privileged to have such a prominent scientist agree to speak at our AGM. Dr Roger Grace is a marine biologist and one of NZ's foremost underwater photographers. He is an active campaigner for marine conservation both in NZ and internationally. Dr Grace has been researching marine reserves and actively fished areas for over 30 years. He has long term data about recovery of marine life and habitats following protection from fishing.

Dr Grace is a most interesting speaker. What he is talking about all Aucklanders should hear if interested in protecting the waters of the Hauraki Gulf. Please pass details of our meeting on to anyone you think may be interested in hearing Dr Grace.

Our Society is a proactive one, which has achieved considerable success. We still have important work to do in protecting the land and sea of Long Bay and Okura, and welcome new members as well as new committee delegates. If you are interested in joining our lively committee, or know of others who may be, please contact any one of our committee members if you would like further information. We also welcome supporters with specific skills for some ex-officio tasks such as formatting our newsletter and maintaining our website.

We look forward to seeing you at our AGM.

Kind regards

Chris Bettany

Convenor

Convenor

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www.longbaypark.org.nz