

**Before the Environment Court
At Auckland**

In the matter of the Local Government (Auckland Transitional Provisions Act 2010 (**LGATPA**) and the Resource Management Act 1991 (**RMA**)

And

In the matter of appeals under section 156(1) of the LGATPA

Between **Weli Yang, Zhi Lu & Jing Ni**

(ENV-2016-AKL-000196)

Okura Holdings Limited

(ENV-2016-AKL-000211)

Appellants

And **Auckland Council**

Respondent

And **Weiti Development Limited Partnership**

Section 274 Party

(continued on next page)

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ANDREW MOUNT ON
BEHALF OF THE LONG BAY - OKURA GREAT PARK
SOCIETY INCORPORATED**

28 JULY 2017

And Long Bay-Okura Great Park Protection Society

Section 274 Party

And Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society Incorporated

Section 274 Party

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 My name is Andrew Mount.
- 1.2 In this evidence I set out my views with regard to the proposed development of the land adjoining the Long Bay Okura Marine Reserve, Okura Estuary, Okura Bush Walkway and the Long Bay Regional Park. Specifically, I comment on the proposal by Okura Holdings Limited to rezone land for urban purposes and extend the rural urban boundary into the Okura catchment.
- 1.3 I am a Senior Lecturer at the Auckland University of Technology who as a professional Outdoor Educator has developed an appreciation for the unique opportunity that exists within the Okura, Long Bay setting. It is unique in that it is a place that is conveniently accessible to a large number of people within the Auckland region, and one that is frequented by myself and other educators as a place to engage young people in a meaningful natural, learning context. The ability for people to enter a place that remains largely undisturbed within an otherwise urbanised metropolitan area provides a non-exclusive environment, in which valuable learning can take place.

2 INTEGRITY OF THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- 2.1 I have been directly involved in facilitating many activities which encourage people to develop skills, attributes and values that enable them to recognize the important contribution that they and others have to maintaining the welfare of people and the natural environment. An appreciation of the importance of building and maintaining healthy relationships between people and nature is able to take place in this setting, and the Okura Marine Reserve/Long Bay Regional Park in particular. I believe this opportunity would be unacceptably compromised by further development.
- 2.2 There is a growing body of evidence that indicates that it is essential for young people to participate in initiatives that expose them to the views of others, the impact people have on each other and nature. It is also recognized that people are empowered by making a genuine contribution in a real, natural context.

- 2.3 This has been realized by many students, through the restorative planting of native shrubs and trees in the Karepiro Bay area. This is a powerful and meaningful activity that intimately connects learning and the value and responsibility associated with contribution to nature, self and others.
- 2.4 I have been exposed to the positive outcomes when people realize that they are able to make a difference as individuals, and the benefit is not only to them, but also to many others who follow.
- 2.5 It has also been evident that through exposure to the fragility of existence of wildlife in the region, people are able to develop an intimate appreciation of the impact humans have on the natural world and subsequently how they can modify behaviour to the benefit all organisms.
- 2.6 There is also evidence that it is of value to the ongoing physical and mental health of people to be able to exist in the uninterrupted presence of nature, and given the rapidly growing population in Auckland, it would be extremely sad to compromise the scarce opportunity for people to benefit from such a noteworthy place.
- 2.7 The learning potential in this setting is rich and meaningful and in my view, best not compromised by further urbanisation.
- 2.8 If we are genuinely concerned for the welfare of young and old people alike as well as the planet on which we all draw existence from, it is imperative that the Long Bay Okura Marine Reserve, Okura Estuary, Okura Bush Walkway and the Long Bay Regional Park maintain their current integrity, with continuation of restorative endeavours.

Andrew Mount

28 July 2017