

**BEFORE THE AUCKLAND UNITARY PLAN INDEPENDENT HEARINGS PANEL**

**IN THE MATTER** of the Resource Management  
Act 1991 and the Local  
Government (Auckland  
Transitional Provisions) Act 2010

**AND**

**IN THE MATTER** of Topics:  
016 zoning in the North/West

**IN THE MATTER** of submissions and further  
Submissions, set out in the  
Parties and Issues Report and  
Auckland Council evidence

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**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF PETER ALEXANDER SINTON**

**ON BEHALF OF KUMEU-HUAPAI RESIDENTS & RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION INC**

**And**

**DYSART LANE GROUP**

**16<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

## **SUMMARY**

1. The purpose of the evidence is to support the position taken by the Kumeu-Huapai Residents & Ratepayers Association Inc & Dysart Lane Group over the RUB boundaries and likely timetable & zoning options.

The visions concept for Kumeu & Districts will be presented in the 081 Hearing in 2016.

- 1.2 The evidence applies only to the North-West area of the Unitary Plan and the required 'Future Urban' areas proposed in Kumeu-Huapai and Riverhead areas.

## **KUMEU-HUAPAI AREA**

- 1.3 There is no justification for the extensive area in the District being zoned 'Future Urban' without the research, Structure Planning and community consultation being completed by the Auckland Council.

Such consultation will confirm the extent of the area required with the community.

- 1.4 The area of 'Future urban' area does not recognise the rural township character of the District and the Council proposal is to intensify areas of FUZ without the complimentary Infrastructure Planning being undertaken.

- 1.5 The urban densities and areas are being proposed in inappropriate areas inside the current RUB boundary.

- 1.6 The lack of separation in the Council's zoning classification has resulted in 'Large Lot' zones being included in urban considerations despite the fact that Auckland Council infrastructure is not required for such a zoning category.

- 1.7 The extent of the 'Future Urban' zone without refinement creates excessive demands for infrastructure planning and costs which can unnecessarily be imposed on ratepayers as a result.

- 1.8 The area between Motu, Tawa, Puke & Trigg Roads because of contours, storm catchment area and remoteness is unlikely to be suitable for intensity urbanisation within the planning period.

3.

- 1.9** The RUB boundary fails to include other easy contoured land closer to the Kumeu township suitable for future urbanisation.
- 1.10** The evidence of Auckland Transport together with the lack of structure planning & timing by the Council, has resulted in a lack of certainty over the extent of the RUB boundary and the zoning timing and density.
- 1.11** The RUB boundary definition cannot be separated from the individual zoning areas without those being considered together.
- 1.12** The proposed Rural Urban Boundary has created huge speculative sales pressures for urbanisation, 17 additional requests for SHAs in the area over and above the two approved, by the Housing Office have been proposed by landowners or groups, all turned down by the Auckland Council & Rodney Local Board
- 1.13** The RUB boundary does not make use of the likely future roading patterns proposed by Auckland Transport.

## **RIVERHEAD**

The proposal to extend the proposed urban area in Riverhead is contrary to the regional planning objective in that it proposes to use horticultural soil for urban purposes.

## **2.0 INTRODUCTION**

My name is Peter Alexander Sinton

- 2.1** I am a resident of Kumeu and living on our 3<sup>rd</sup> property in the 'Countryside Living' zone off Orahia Road. I now reside at 288 Old North road in a restored 1920 villa.  
I am Chairman of the Kumeu-Huapai Residents & Ratepayers Association Inc. Having been in That role for 5 years. I have acted for community groups and development in the area.
- 2.2** I have practiced as a Town Planner since 1979 with a post Graduate Diploma in Planning 1979, and Diploma in Surveying from Otago University in 1969.
- 2.3** My ancestors being Farmers & storekeepers in Brighams Creek & Huapai areas, have been in this District since 1860.

### **3.0 SCOPE**

- 3.1** I have already in early evidence and mediation indicated that the bulk of my and other evidence, will be present in the zoning topic of 081. However, the RUB issues are definitely linked and seriously overlap the zoning issues.
- 3.2** The evidence will cover the zoning classification and their possible application to the 'Future Urban' zone.
- 3.3** The evidence also uses the plates from the Council's planning witness but draw different inferences from their analysis.
- 3.4** The land supply strategy and the supply of SHAs are referred to as they have had an adverse effects on the Kumeu District. The supply of land with matching infrastructure is only geared to SHA development in the Decade One of sequencing of development released by Auckland Council in July 2015.
- 3.5** The background of 'Future Urban' zoning is outlined with its origins and the research.
- 3.6** Reference is made to the links in my evidence to financial instruments and how the infrastructure costs are potentially likely to be recovered.
- 3.7** The evidence covers the density issues and the problems created by SHAs in inappropriate areas.

### **4.0 BACKGROUND TO KUMEU-HUAPAI**

- 4.1** The Auckland Council in the Unitary Plan and associated documents acknowledges that Kumeu-Huapai is a small rural township which was co-joined over time sited around a railway line which originally serviced the farming and orchard District from the 1900's onwards. Population we believe including adjacent lifestyle blocks is about 5,000.
- 4.2** Subdivisions were either around 10 acre blocks in the late 1960's or pockets of residential sections existing around north of Huapai and a block of 70 sections are adjacent to the Huapai School south of the NIM railway line. That was the extent of development until the late 1980's.

Six years ago, the development of Huapai North housing commenced. That area will provide 2000 homes when completed. The development is about 60% complete with another 3 years to run before being fully developed. (see plate 1)

## 5.

**4.3** The area will contain a second Primary School, with residential sections all being 600m<sup>2</sup> or larger. There are some concessions to smaller sites around the Reserve location.

**4.4** Surround land is in 'General Rural' zoning apart from the two significant areas of 'Countryside Living'. With transferable titles, the 'Countryside Living' zone is largely taken up with large Homes on 1 hectare sites.

These areas because of topography or ownership, will not be subdivided further.

### **5.0 FUTURE URBAN AREA**

**5.1** The Rodney District Council in the legacy plans provided for 'Future Urban' zoning as shown on plate 2.

This area had extension of Kumeu-Huapai south of the main railway line and west of the industrial area. None of this land was made a 'live zone' simply because there were no sewerage or water supply made to this area.

**5.2** The draft March 2013 Unitary Plan contained the same area and didn't make any changes to the existing areas of 'Countryside Living' on the north & south sides of Kumeu. The result was there was some residential growth planned but no timetable established.

Some land owners on Access Road have been waiting for zoning changes for 15-20 years having 'Future Urban'.

**5.3** Bob Howard Rodney Board Chairman, when the Unitary Plan was advertised and Penny Webster Auckland Council representative for Rodney, proceeded to extend the 'Future Urban' boundary to what was finally advertised for the formal submission phase.

Both have confirmed to me that the changes were made at the last minute to try and accommodate the proposed growth for the next 30 years.

Penny Webster confirmed to me that there was minimal Council planning involvement or research. It was a case of having to do something for the Unitary Plan to be advertised.

**5.4** The changes proposed an increase to the west up to the Puke Road ridge and a change north of Kumeu township, changing Orahā & Koraha Roads from 'Countryside Living' to 'Future Urban'.

Dysart Lane was originally included for 'Future Urban' but was left out in the notified version.

6.

- 5.5** The extended area for 'Future Urban' as advertised has fuelled land speculation by owners, many from overseas.

The failure to identify timing of development densities, infrastructure location and transportation planning, has resulted in a speculative applications for approvals through the SHA process. That in my view has resulted in projects by individuals and groups being advanced to the Auckland council for approval, all of which were unsupported locally or by the Rodney Local Board.

## **6.0 SHA – LOCATIONS & EFFECTS**

- 6.1** I am aware of 17 application for SHA approvals, all of which have been declined by the Auckland Council. Only 2 SHAs have the Ministers approval.

- 6.2** The Huapai Triangle area has the Auckland Council approval for 1200 sites, the approval Being granted on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2015.

The second location in Oraha Road has submissions for the Plan Variation 10 closing on the 17<sup>th</sup> November 2015. That application proposed 227 sites on a 16 hectare site which under the operative 'Countryside Living' zone would permit a maximum of 16 sites. An increase of 14 times current densities with no infrastructure, roading, sewerage, reserves or transport in place. Advice I have received is that the site didn't qualify in the first place.

- 6.3** That identification has only arisen as a result of the Auckland council providing a 'Future Urban' zoning with the ability for land owners to apply for a Scheme Change for a 'live zone' over their land using one of the zoning categories in the Unitary Plan.  
Naturally the landowner selection is at the highest density of 'Mixed Housing Suburban' for a zone change.

- 6.4** In my opinion, the lack of structure planning, agreed densities and timing has made it difficult for the Council to refuse such applications. The Oraha Road site has resulted in the Auckland Council refusing any further applications for 'Special Housing' areas until such time as a Structure Plan is completed in the Kumeu District.

- 6.5** I believe that it is the correct position but it does raise the question of the suitability of identifying the extent of the 30 year growth at the outset without it being matched with infrastructure planning, funding and timing.

## 7.0 ASSESSMENT OF GROWTH

- 7.1** Based on a base line of 5000 residents in the Kumeu-Huapai & Riverhead Districts including Rural lifestyle blocks, it is projected that the population is to reach 20,000 – 30,000 in the District. Auckland Council Planner Warren McLennan, has confirmed that growth to the Kumeu community in a public meeting late last year. That is a 5 time increase over existing numbers. That represents including existing sites, a density of 10,000 dwellings in the District over 30 years.
- 7.2** The urban growth strategy earmarks most of the growth as in the decade two between 2022-2026. The decade one provides in the Kumeu-Huapai area the SHA developments only. The SHA growth if approved and built, will produce a maximum of 1500 sites.

## 8.0 ZONING TYPE & RURAL URBAN BOUNDARY

- 8.1** The most significant division is where the Council services are supplied between the rural area and urban zones.

In the Council's 'Suite' of residential zones, the Council have proposed:-

- |                            |                    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| (a) Large Lot Residential  | 4000m <sup>2</sup> |
| (b) Single Dwelling        | 600m <sup>2</sup>  |
| (c) Mixed Housing suburban |                    |
| (d) Mixed Housing Urban    |                    |
| (e) Terrace Housing        |                    |
| (f) Apartment Housing      |                    |

The Rural Zoning the following are proposed:-

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Countryside Living | 2 hectares minimum |
| Mixed Rural        | no subdivision     |
| Rural Production   | no subdivision     |

- 8.2** That division in my opinion is fundamentally wrong. In mediation on urban issues the Council planning staff confirmed that 'Large Lot' category was an unsewered Lot with no water supply

**8.3** The Large Lot was therefore a 'stand alone' site being self contained not requiring Council services, then the following will occur:-

1. The RUB boundary will not have to include the Large Lot category inside that area
2. The infrastructure costs for Auckland Transport & Watercare Services can be reduced as the area they have to serve will only be the intensive serviced area inside the RUB
3. Exclusion of the Large Lot zoning from infrastructure costs will enable a more focussed Rural Town Centre with contained residential development based on a known reduced infrastructure costs and supply. The zoned land outside the serviced area does not have to be part of the budgeted plan for Auckland Council.
4. Roading servicing for Large Lot zoning will be solely the responsibility of landowners and developers.
5. Many existing landowners on properties of high value in the 'Countryside Living' zone on Old North Road, Orahā & Koraha Roads don't want high intensification proposed by the 'Future Urban' zone.

In my opinion to help consolidate Kumeu-Huapai rural township, reduce infrastructure costs and target suburban development areas that Large Lot zoning needs to be excluded from the residential zonings.

## **9.0 INFRASTRUCTURE NETWORK COSTS 'FUTURE' URBAN ZONE**

**9.1** The July 2015 release of costs to the Auckland development Committee confirmed some staggering expenditure needs to service bulk infrastructure over the 30 year period. The schedule of staging and costs for Auckland wide Greenfield development. Looking at those costs and isolating the North West costs and out of the collective package, I have deduced the following of the \$2.8 Billion budget. NorWest represent about 7% of those costs – that is \$124,000 per site. The SHAs in Kumeu total 1500 sites so the costs total - \$18.6 Billion.

**9.2** In recent times with the approval of the Huapai Triangle ready for development, the Auckland Council have committed \$9.9 Million towards the infrastructure of that development. The balance cost presumably will be involved in the Orahā Road 'Special Housing' area.

**9.3** Even allowing for development contribution \$25,000 per site which Council charge at approval of subdivision, it would not cover the residue costs. Rating, special development infrastructure costs and other financial instruments, will be used to recover over time, infrastructure costs.



9.

**9.4** The Decade two of 2022-2026 shows a further capacity of a average 7,600 dwellings being produced.

Averaging costs and excluding other areas on a pro-rata basis, cost per site equal \$202,857

Say \$200,000

That works out at per year per site \$6,660.00

**9.5** That cost will of course be greater than the annual rate take on most properties in the area. It is clear that the Council will have to obtain funds for infrastructure from targeted rates, loans, Government or borrowing. Whatever mechanisms are decided on, the substantive costs will never be covered from development contributions alone.

**9.6** I believe the costing exercise of infrastructure and placement of timing must precede the confirmation of any 'Future Urban' zone.

The Watercare Services & Auckland Transport solutions have to determine the actual growth in the Kumeu-Huapai area.

**9.7** Density of development will determine the capacity of sewerage systems and water supply. The timing of that infrastructure determines in my opinion the land release strategy.

**9.8** The current land release strategy has not been released by the Auckland Council. I understand that will be released at the end of November.

Until that is available and can be scrutinised, the extent of the RUB cannot accurately be determined.

**9.9** In my opinion the identification of a RUB boundary proceeding the structure planning process will create more problems than it attempted to solve. There is also issue of determination of a 30 year boundary, when the internal layout at timing hasn't been resolved.

## **10.0 ROADING & TRANSPORT**

**10.1** Ever since the completion of the 4 lane motorway to Brighams Creek, the traffic levels in the Kumeu township have built up to levels which are having an adverse effect on the commercial centre of Kumeu.

I am constantly reminded of the traffic problem in Kumeu with shopkeepers finding that they can only operate successfully in, out of peak times.

I have raised the issue with the Prime Minister and been part of meetings with the community representative with Mayor Brown, NZTA & Auckland Transport.

10.

**10.2** Consistent advice over the last 3 years has been from NZTA & Auckland Transport have not Undertaken any detailed studies for the future growth of Kumeu & Huapai.

The community in feed back to the Land Supply Strategy 11<sup>th</sup> August 2015 have been consistently asking for a 'bypass road' or 'alternative access' to remove unnecessary traffic through the commercial township area.

**10.3** The absence of transport plans has had an impact on consideration of the Huapai Triangle, SHA and appropriate zonings for the proposed population increase.

**10.4** The evidence produced by Messrs Schalkwyk, Keating, Lovell & MacArthur as shown on points 8.7 to 8.11, I am in broad agreement with.

They outline the concerns about the increase urbanisation in the S.H/Way 16 Kumeu-Huapai would exacerbate congestion in the district.

**10.5** For the first time some preliminary traffic plans have been produced by Auckland Transport which start to identify the alternative access road to service the expanded Kumeu-Huapai residential area and to provide alternative access to Auckland.

**10.6** Earlier in 2013 and up to 2014 I worked on a series of concepts for alternative access around Kumeu that work was done in response to the Huapai Triangle being proposed as a SHA and find possible solutions to transport needs for the community.

The enclosed plan which was dated January 2014 prepared by myself was discussed at the KHRRA meetings and has been widely debated since. It was done in the absence of plans from NZTA & Auckland Transport.

**10.7** What is from the attachment 'F' plan of Auckland Traffic Engineer and my concept is that:-

- (a) There is acceptance of an alternative access road running parallel with S.H/Way 16 bisecting the 'Future Urban' zone adjacent to the Huapai Triangle.
- (b) Such access was to use the existing roading network where possible to bypass Kumeu to the south but connect roads leading to S.H/Way 16.
- (c) The position of the final route needs be confirmed and costed as part of the structure plan process.
- (d) The proposed road west of Trig & Motu Roads will only be needed when the Waimauku Bypass is needed.

## 11.

**10.8** The conclusion I reached in the Council roading proposal is that the position of future roading by Auckland Transport will determine when and where the land will be zoned for residential use. The land close to the road alignment should be zoned first.

I believe the proposed roading has to be identified in the structure planning document and reserved for development.

I believe the area west of Motu Road and west of the Motu & Trigg Roads intersection shouldn't be considered for 'Future Urban' zoning as the roading infrastructure will not be available with the planning period.

### **11.0 'RUB' CONSIDERATION BY MESSRES HOOKWAY, RYAN BRADLEY & ERYN SHIELDS**

#### **General**

The evidence of Ryan Bradley under item 5 of his evidence I would like to comment on:-

Without changing his plates shown as figure 1-6 inclusive, Figures 8 & 9 and Figure 12 Riverhead, I make the following observations:-

**11.1** Figure 1 shows the collective area for Kumeu-Huapai. This area has been extended without consultation to the Oraha/Koraha Roads landowners.

Similarly the western side of the RUB has been extended to the ridge line on Puke Road. The area between Motu Road & Puke Road is not in the catchment for Kumeu and has Topography not suited to urban development.

**11.2** The areas shown in Figure 3 have been divided into form groups for comments on submissions.

Sub group 1 has been identified into 2 areas, Oraha/Koraha Roads being one, and the area between Motu/Puke Roads being the second. Neither area is similar in type or has the same existing zoning.

**11.3** Oraha/Koraha Roads – north east of Kumeu has an underlying zone of 'Countryside Living' with development already at a density of 1 dwelling per hectare.

This area is in 3 types:-

- (a) Flat land north east of Koraha Road
- (b) Steep land south west of Koraha Road which is affected by power line restrictions.
- (c) The land north west of Oraha Road is undulating land. Part of the site is subject to transmission line restriction.

12.

**11.4** This area has no sewerage at present but does have a new water supply installed but but not operative.

The land collectively has been identified as for 1 hectare blocks with little structure planning completed by the Council Intensification to urban hasn't been considered apparently from the speculative consideration of 1 SHA area.

**11.5** The boundary between the 'Future Urban' boundary and the existing 'Countryside Living' Zone isn't based on a logical definitive boundary but relies on the cadastral boundaries only.

**11.6** The area defined - Sub-group 1 north of Tawa Road between Motu & Puke Roads is not even been in the 'Countryside Living' zone but zoned 'General Rural'.

The topographic features of a north/south gully and stream system together with a fall in levels from Motu Road to the valley then rising steeply to Puke Road, make this area unsuitable for urbanisation with the 30 year period.

It is significant that the roading pattern proposed by Auckland Transport doesn't go anywhere near this area in the early stages.

**11.7** I would refer you to Figure 6, page 16 of the Ryan Bradley evidence.

This plan clearly demonstrates the ridge catchment between Motu & Puke Road. That catchment takes stormwater and sewerage planning out to S.H/Way 16. This area naturally falls outside a development catchment of Kumeu & Huapai.

There is no structure plan prepared or roading proposed to service this area. It still has a 'General Rural' zone.

**11.8** The area selected as Sub-group 3 has been extended unnecessarily by Ryan Bradley to include areas adjacent to the railway line where lower land exists.

**11.9** The Dysart Land group does not include low lying land nor does it include land for pastoral use.

If the areas south of Waitakere Road and west of Pomona Road are excluded from the consideration then different conclusions could be arrived at.

**11.10** The roading layout provided by Auckland Transport proposes to touch this area on Farrand & Access Roads.

Water supply and sewerage also is available on Access Road up to Station Road. This makes the Dysart Lane Group area already adjacent to existing services.

The roading layout proposed by Auckland Council, was not available at the time of submission to the Unitary Plan. This plan makes it clear that the Dysart Group area is closer to the Kumeu township than any other area south of the railway line proposed by the Council.

The area south of Waitakere Road including the Kumeu River Vineyard is on good quality Soils but no request for this area to be included in urbanisation is requested.

## **12.0 'COUNTRYSIDE LIVING ZONE'**

In Ryan Bradley's evidence it is suggested that this area has been requested to be in the urban area. There has been no request for the area identified under Figure 9 sub-group 4 to be included in the urban area.

The request was for the area to be re-zoned from 'Countryside Living' to 'Large Lot'. There was no request to extend the RUB boundary. That has been a wrong assumption by Ryan Bradley.

**12.1** The area identified is not sewered or serviced by water. All blocks are self contained with most being 1 hectare in size.

The problem has arisen simply because the Council have categorised 'Large Lot' as a residential land use that should be inside the RUB. There is no structure plan proposed or needed for this area.

**12.2** The problem of proposing the 'Rural Urban' zone boundary to include the Oraha/Koraha Roads area without structure planning is highlighted with the Oraha Road SHA area being accepted by the Minister of Housing.

The Auckland Council proposed under the unconfirmed 'Future Urban' area a SHA of 227 units. That is proposed on an area of 16 hectares. That wouldn't have occurred had the area remained as 'Countryside Living' as that zone would have been outside the zone.

## **12.3 RIVERHEAD**

The Council propose to extend the RUB west of Riverhead-Coatesville H/Way and south of the Riverhead Road outside prime horticultural land.

That I believe is contrary to the Regional Planning policies. The loss of quality soils in this area is not justified.

### **13.0 CONCLUSION**

- 13.1** The inclusion of 'Large Lot' as a residential category with the RUB is unjustified as the resulting development does not require capital expenditure for sewerage and water supply from the Auckland Council.
- 13.2** The 'Large Lot' zoning can be used as a category outside the RUB providing a development density similar in type to 'Countryside Living' but still rural in character.
- 13.3** The 'Future Urban' zone and the RUB boundary has to be decided after the density, timing and land release pattern is decided on by a public notified structure plan process.
- 13.4** The extended area of the 'Future Urban' zone cannot be justified west of Motu Road because of the topography and exiting land use.
- 13.5** There has been inadequate consultation by the Auckland Council over the extent of the rural urban boundary.
- 13.6** The current FUZ with no timing, densities and land release program has resulted in speculative land purchase pressures being created in the district.
- 13.7** The 'Future Urban' zone and therefore the RUB boundary can only be decided on when infrastructure elements of drainage, roading, sewerage and water supply are completed in conjunction with 'live zoning'.
- 13.8** The reluctance to confirm any further development because of an inadequate infrastructure must limit the release of live zoning in the immediate future.
- 13.9** Land zoning should be limited to 7-10 years where land is already serviced by sanitary Sewerage, water supply and roading.
- 13.10** There is no justification for land west of Motu Road and south of Trigg Road being included in the 'Future Urban' zone.
- 13.11** Land south of Riverhead Road and west of Riverhead-Coatesville H/Way, be excluded from the 'Future Urban' zone as it contains prime soils which should be protected.

Pete Sinton

16<sup>th</sup> October 2015

