

2 April 2015

Kumeu – Huapai Residents & Ratepayers Association Inc
P.O. Box 687
Kumeu 0841
Auckland

Dear Peter

I am writing to you, as representative of your Transport Liaison Group, to convey the Mayor's appreciation of your attendance at the meeting on Saturday 14th March to progress discussions about the provision of transport infrastructure in Kumeu/Huapai in anticipation of future growth and to explain his position regarding a way forward.

I appreciate that this meeting took place within the context provided by earlier meetings in which the Rodney Local Board and Cr Penny Webster participated and also the process around Proposed Plan Variation 4 – Huapai and concurrent qualifying development under the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 ("HASHA Act"), which is intended to progress development in the Huapai Triangle Special Housing Area.

It was good to hear from the members of your group, including two members of the Rodney Local Board, Cr Penny Webster and the representatives of NZTA, Auckland Transport and the Council's Housing Policy Office who attended.

THE MEETING ON THE 15TH MARCH

The meeting on the 15th March followed your meeting with the Mayor at a local Long Term Plan consultation. The purpose of the meeting as we understood it was to progress discussions about the provision of transport infrastructure in Kumeu/Huapai in anticipation of future growth. The key points from the meeting were:

- The existing structure plans for the local centres are "out of date" and not comprehensive for the area;
- There is not capacity in council's planning area to do the work this year. Perhaps it could be similar to the Pukekohe Structure Plan process – high level; incorporating existing plans.
- There was a wide-ranging discussion on roading and rail issues.
- The Mayor expressed his support for the development of a "structure plan." He undertook to review to see if it could be supported and to come back with a time frame.

RODNEY LOCAL BOARD INITIATIVES

Since the meeting, I have been advised of the initiatives of the Rodney Local Board that are relevant to this response.

Local Boards make decisions on local matters, provide local leadership and support strong local communities. They develop relationships with the governing body, the community, community organisations and special interest groups in the local area

The Rodney Local Board Plan 2014 identifies as an outcome "Roads, Paths and Public Transport enable us to get around easily and safely". Key projects include "Undertake transport planning to accommodate growth in the Kumeu/Huapai/Riverhead area. The Rodney Local Board supports the Community leading the planning for their own future.

The plan identifies community initiatives, including "Undertake consultation in Kumeu/Huapai to understand community values and perceptions prior to developing a comprehensive plan". It identifies the local board's role as decision-maker and partner in a process which will involve the local community and mana whenua. A budget of \$60,000 has been allocated. We understand that this work is commencing shortly and is proposed to be completed by the end of June 2015.

The Plan also identifies that the board/community should develop a comprehensive plan (similar to a structure plan) for the Kumeu/Huapai area within the next two years. The Local Board's role in this will be advocacy. Key partners will be the local community and mana whenua. The project is still to be costed and funded.

The first part of the comprehensive plan will provide a broad outline of land use in the future Urban (Greenfields) area within the Rural Urban Boundary, including the infrastructure needed for growth to happen and how it might be staged over 30 years within financial constraints. A public consultation process will take place later in the year on this work.

Once this is agreed, further work can be carried out on social, economic, cultural and community development issues.

As the Rodney Local Board is ready to commence its initiatives, the Mayor's position is that he supports them and will encourage the governing body, Council CCOs and other agencies and groups to work together to achieve the outcomes they have identified and will own, on behalf of their community.

THE HOUSING ACCORD AND SPECIAL HOUSING AREAS

The Auckland Housing Accord between the Council and the Government is intended to result in increased housing supply and improved housing affordability in Auckland in the interim period until the Auckland Unitary Plan becomes operative. It will achieve this through a more flexible process for development approvals and consenting, available through the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013.

The Huapai Triangle Special Housing Area is an area where it is hoped that housing development can progress, through this process.

PLAN CHANGE 4

Submissions on Proposed Plan Variation 4 – Huapai and concurrent qualifying development under the HASHA Act closed on the 27th of March 2014. The applicant is the Huapai Triangle Landowners Group. Submissions received are understood to cover a range of matters, including the adequacy of transport infrastructure to service growth in the area, rail transport and infrastructure, roading details and the desire for a “Structure Plan” for the greater area.

TIMING OF A STRUCTURE PLAN STUDY

The Council is therefore in a statutory process and will have to respond to submissions and prepare a report on the proposal for planning commissioners. The Mayoral Office is not involved in the regulatory part of the Council and should not comment on the application in advance of a hearing, where the final decision will rest with the Accord Territorial Authority (hearings panel). The applicant has discretion whether or not to contact submitters prior to the hearing to discuss any matters referred to in their submissions on Plan Variation 4 and the Qualifying Development. This is not something that the Mayoral Office can facilitate.

Meanwhile, the Local Board is progressing its planned work and we look forward to seeing the outcomes of the community engagement phase.

I appreciate that the Mayor expressed his intention to meet with your group every 3 to 4 months. He will need to see how the Plan Variation 4 process proceeds, but meanwhile he has been assured by the Local Board and ward councillor that they will keep him advised of progress.

Yours sincerely



Michael Joseph
Portfolio Manager
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR OF AUCKLAND