

Special Meeting with Auckland Council

On 9 September 2014, The Kumeu-Huapai Residents and Ratepayers Association Incorporated had the privilege of hosting a meeting with Auckland Council at the fabulous Soljans Winery Restaurant in Kumeu. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss directly with Auckland Council the future direction and growth of the Kumeu-Huapai area, and the fundamental issues facing the area as a result of the Proposed Unitary Plan changes. This was a rare opportunity to talk directly with some of the key Council members working on the Unitary Plan, including Penny Hulse (Deputy Mayor of Auckland Council and Chairperson of the Auckland Development Committee), Roger Blakeley (Chief Planning Officer), Penny Pirrit (Manager of Regional and Local Planning), and Penny Webster (Local Counsellor for Rodney).

The evening progressed very well, and many key topics were traversed with what can be described as a fairly 'frank and open' dialogue between the Community and Auckland Council. Discussions focused around the "big" issues being faced by the area including Engagement and Consultation with the Community around the Structure Plan, Roading, Special Housing Areas, Funding for the Structure Plan, Density of Development, Timetable for Growth, Public Transport, Zoning, Cleanfill, Developer Contributions and Retention of Character.

While the meeting was only set down for two or so hours, a carefully planned and structured meeting (spearheaded by Peter Sinton, Chairman) ensured that many of these issues had a chance to be raised and discussed, with further time even being left over for other questions, comments and discussion from those in attendance. The evening ended particularly well with a commitment being given from Auckland Council to come back to the Community on the key issues. We will therefore eagerly await their response.

The meeting with Auckland Council was, in my view, a special opportunity and one that I was pleased that the Community seized upon. As Deputy Mayor (Penny Hulse) noted, the opportunity to meet had really only resulted from the Association's attendance and presentation at the recent Auckland Development Committee Meeting (14 August 2014) in which a direct presentation was made on behalf of the Association about the lack of structure planning in the Kumeu-Huapai area to support the mass development taking place. To that end, I therefore think it appropriate to acknowledge the hard work of the Association's Committee in preparation and attendance at that earlier meeting for without that, this most recent meeting would not have eventuated.

While I have very recently resigned as Secretary for the Association (due to relocation to Cambridge), I would have to put this meeting down as one of my highlights during my role as Secretary. For those who were unable to attend but do want more information about the meeting, please contact the Association's new Secretary (Mark Hall) on secretary@khrra.org.nz or (09) 412 7015, or visit the Association's website at www.khrra.org.nz.

Yours faithfully

Chadleigh Danswan.