

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 Topic 081c Rezoning and Precincts
(Geographic Areas)

**STATEMENT OF CHRISTINA BETTANY
ON BEHALF OF
THE LONG BAY-OKURA GREAT PARK SOCIETY**

Long Bay Precinct

10 February 2016

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE

1. The purpose of this evidence is to consider the submissions, further submissions and evidence to the Proposed Unitary Plan (PAUP) Topic 081 Rezoning and Precincts (Geographical Areas) in relation to the Long Bay Precinct.
2. The Long Bay – Okura Great Park Society's (the **Society**) submission and further submission to the Unitary Plan regarding Long Bay focused on ensuring that the provisions of the Long Bay Structure Plan (**LBSP**) were carried over into the final Auckland Unitary Plan.
3. The Society has reviewed Council evidence for Topic 081c Long Bay Precinct by David Mead and considers that the provisions of the operative LBSP have largely been upheld in Mr Mead's *Attachment B, Track Changes* version of the text for the Long Bay Precinct except for one area that Ms McLaughlin will outline in her evidence.
4. The Society has reviewed the submission by Long Bay Communities Limited (Submission 4691) in relation to the Long Bay Precinct. It is the Society's opinion that the suggestions in this submission would not provide adequate safeguards for the special nature of the Long Bay area, the Long Bay-Okura Marine Reserve and Long Bay Regional Park.

INTRODUCTION

5. I am Christina Bettany, I am the Convenor of the Long Bay – Okura Great Park Society. I have been a member of the Long Bay-Okura Great Park Society executive committee for fifteen years and have been the Convenor of the Society for the past four years.
6. I have a Diploma in Education with Distinction. For the past thirty years I have worked in the area of social services for Government. I was instrumental in developing a number of community based social services in the North Shore prior to becoming a community funding agent for the Department of Child Youth and Family for ten years. I took a lead role preparing a number of consumer health publications for the Ministry of Health. My position for the past fifteen years has been assessing

the family circumstances of young people estranged from their parents for the Department of Social Services.

7. I am authorised by the Society to give this evidence.

BACKGROUND

8. The Society was formed in 1996 shortly after the release of the 1996 Environment Court decision which moved the Metropolitan Urban Boundary (now referred to as the Rural Urban Boundary) and allowed for development to occur within the Long Bay catchment. With the notification of Plan Change 66 by North Shore City Council in 2004, the Society became very active in trying to protect the highly-valued qualities of Long Bay and Okura, including the adjacent Long Bay Regional Park (one of the most popular and easily accessible Regional Parks for Aucklanders), the Long Bay-Okura Marine Reserve, and the outstanding landscapes, the streams and wetlands, and the archaeological and heritage values of the area by providing a buffer between Long Bay Regional Park and proposed development.
9. In the 19 years of its existence, the Society grew to have over 1,600 paid-up members, with many more supporters. The Society has members throughout Auckland, New Zealand, and the rest of the world. In addition to its members, the Society has many like-minded supporters who number in the tens of thousands as demonstrated by the 57,801 people who signed the Society's petition against the development in 2002. These supporters assist the Society through donations and volunteer work.
10. The reason that the Society is still in existence after 19 years is that the public are passionate about the preservation of Long Bay and Okura. People want the experience of Long Bay and Okura that they have enjoyed throughout their lives to remain available to them and their children, an experience they often tell us that they cannot easily get from anywhere else. There are three things that are repeatedly stressed to us by supporters of the Society:
 - a. The amenity value of the Long Bay Regional Park and the Long Bay - Okura Marine Reserve as an essential and valuable resource for the people of the Auckland area and New Zealand.

b. The importance of the preservation of the special features of Long Bay and Okura: ecological, cultural and heritage as well as the natural landscape, wetlands, streams and Marine Reserve.

c. The ease of access to Long Bay Regional Park compared with other large coastal parks, allows many people from all over the North Shore and Auckland to enjoy its benefits.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LONG BAY STRUCTURE PLAN

11. Since 1996, the Society has been involved in consultation on the Long Bay Structure Plan. It was a major party alongside the North Shore City Council, the Auckland Regional Council, and the developer, Todd Property Group, in the development of the Plan. The Society dedicated an enormous amount of time and incurred significant expense in the litigation associated with the Plan in the Environment Court.

12. It engaged the services of a barrister, landscape architect, town planner, marine biologist and archaeologist for the case, and was an active party in all the hearings and caucusing discussions involved over the four years with two Executive Committee members giving up fulltime employment so they could deal with the workload the case presented.

13. In excess of \$500,000 was needed to be raised by the Society to cover the costs of its lawyer and experts. The majority of this funding was raised by the public from initiatives such as movie nights, raffles, donations and letter box drops. This was a substantial fund raising exercise which involved two fulltime volunteers and a dedicated fund raising committee who worked tirelessly to obtain the funds required. In addition, the Society received some funding from Ministry for the Environment.

14. The LBSP came into being after lengthy litigation. The decision made by the Environment Court in respect to Long Bay was the result of very careful deliberation and attention to detail with full consideration of all issues, resulting in a comprehensive plan.

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15. At the time of the release of the Draft Auckland Unitary Plan in March 2013, the LBSP had only been operative for 1 year and 5 months.

16. As so much careful preparation had gone into the development of the LBSP the Society has been concerned that the provisions for the plan are carried over into the final Auckland Unitary Plan.
17. The Society made submissions on both the initial consultation document of the Unitary Plan (Draft Auckland Unitary Plan) and the Proposed Auckland Unitary Plan. It has participated in the hearing process of a number of hearings topics which related to the provisions for the Long Bay Precinct.
18. The Society has reviewed the submission by Long Bay Communities Limited (4691) in relation to the Long Bay Precinct. This submission requests that much of the LBSP be discarded. It is the Society's opinion that the suggestions in this submission would not provide adequate safeguards for the Long Bay-Okura Marine Reserve and the amenity and visual values of the Long Bay Regional Park. In addition, if the submission was accepted, it would fail to protect the outstanding landscapes, the streams and wetlands, and the archaeological and heritage values of Long Bay.
19. The Society has reviewed the Council's evidence for Topic 081c Long Bay Precinct as prepared by David Mead, and considers that the provisions of the operative LBSP have largely been upheld in Mr Mead's Attachment B, Track Changes version of the text for the Long Bay Precinct. Apart from one issue which Fiona McLaughlin will address in her evidence, this plan has addressed the Society's concerns.

CONCLUSION

20. The Society considers that the suggestions in Long Bay Communities Limited submission (4691) would not provide protection for the special nature of the Long Bay area, the Long Bay-Okura Marine Reserve and Long Bay Regional Park.
21. If Mr Mead's Tracked Changes provisions are amended to include the change suggested in Ms McLaughlin's evidence the Society agrees with Mr Mead's Tracked Changes provisions for Topic 081c Long Bay Precinct.