



Date: 26<sup>th</sup> October 2020

To: **Hamish Wesney**

CC: Juliet Johnson

SUBJECT: **PRIVATE PLAN CHANGE WAITARA  
OPEN SPACES TECHNICAL REPORT**

The following provides comment on the proposed Waitara Plan Change in regards to open space considerations.

**A: Open Space Provision**

The NPDC Open Space Sport and Recreation Strategy (Strategy) outlines Council's desired service levels in relation to open space provision within the District. Objective 1.1 of the Strategy provides for the following in relation to residential areas:

Neighbourhood open spaces

- All urban households will be within a 10-minute walking distance radius, or 500 metres, of a neighbourhood open space.
- The ideal average size of a neighbourhood open space shall be between 3,000m<sup>2</sup> and 5,000m<sup>2</sup>.
- There will be road frontages across at least one boundary to ensure the neighbourhood park is easily accessible and provides an attractive, welcoming ambiance to the immediate local community.

Pathway networks

- Support a secondary network of movement (walking and cycling) by providing open space that connects to places.
- Prioritise connections alongside rivers, streams, the coast and between existing open spaces.

Cultural heritage and biodiversity spaces

- Natural and cultural features will be considered when locating open spaces.

In assessing the proposed Structure Plan and associated Landscape Plan (drawing no's GA6.0 and GA5.0 by Blue Marble) in relation to Open Space Provision the following has been identified:

**Comment**

The proposed development has a good level of provision for walkways within the street network and along the proposed esplanade reserve. Consideration has been given to future connectivity, although it is noted that this in across private land and is not guaranteed.



Parts of the proposed development are greater than 500m walking distance from an existing neighbourhood park. The nearest existing neighbourhood parks are Kindkade, Victoria and Larsen. All of these parks would have to be accessed via Raleigh Street. The proposed landscape plan indicates a possible future walkway connection to Kinkade Park (located on Mayne Street). At the southern end of the proposed development, the distance to the nearest park using footpath connections is 800m. Approximately half of the proposed development is outside of the 500m walking provision.

The proposed development is sitting as an extension outside of the main existing residential area with no future provision for urban development surrounding. This emphasises the need to ensure the proposed development provides for neighbourhood park opportunities within its boundaries. Although the proposed esplanade reserve along the stream provides amenity, connections to nature and walkway linkages for the proposed development, it does not provide for neighbourhood reserve type activities such as open space and play. The esplanade is relatively restricted in land area to provide for these requirements beyond the desired riparian restoration.

Provision for a neighbourhood park would be subject to negotiation and compensation in terms of land value with the applicant.

## **Recommendations**

- 1. That a small neighbourhood park provision would be required within the southern portion of the proposed development to ensure appropriate recreation and well-being opportunities for future residents.*
- 2. That an area of minimum 3,000m<sup>2</sup> and up to 5,000m<sup>2</sup> be integrated in an appropriate location that provides for good road frontage and easy access, as a component of the structure plan. Ideally there would be some relationship and linkage to the proposed esplanade*
- 3. That the proposed walking network is maintained with consideration during developed design of best practice CPTED outcomes for the routes along the esplanade reserve.*

## **B: Esplanade Provisions**

The Operative and Proposed District Plans provide for provision of Esplanade Strip or Reserve along significant waterbodies. The proposed structure plan provides for an esplanade reserve along the stream within the site. It is recognised that the stream at both the northern and southern ends of the site has been modified, however it is considered to be an important opportunity for amenity and natural values to be enhanced for the proposed development. Esplanade Reserves are mechanisms to protect riparian margins for the purpose of:

- Contributing to the protection of conservation values, in this instance in relation to aquatic habitats;
- Enabling public access; and



- Enabling public recreational use of the esplanade reserve (where compatible with conservation values).

### **Comment**

The esplanade reserve varies in width along each side of its length from approximately 5m at its narrowest up to approximately 30m at its maximum width (from centre of stream along one side). Best practise would provide for a minimum of 10m of width and ideally 20m in width in order to establish appropriate and sustainable riparian planting with canopy cover providing shade. This is important from an open space perspective as a self-sustaining riparian ecosystem is required to ensure not only biodiversity outcomes, but efficiency in ongoing maintenance and prevention of weed invasion.

The southern end of the proposed esplanade reserve may create a potential ongoing maintenance challenge particularly on the side with proposed walkway included within the 10m.

It is noted that online stormwater detention is proposed within the stream corridor. In regards to open space outcomes, our recent experience with other streams in the Waitara area has shown that online detention creates ongoing issues in regards to weed invasion and maintenance of a clean, open and flowing waterway. In other streams within Waitara, such as the Tangaroa, we are retro-fitting to remove where possible online detention and ponding areas in order to improve stormwater, ecosystem and amenity outcomes.

Given the above responses within the area, it would be counter-intuitive to create an online ponding scenario on this stream and is not reflective of best practise riparian responses.

It is noted also that some of the alternative lot layouts reduce the road frontage along the esplanade reserve. In relation to ensuring good public access and ease of maintenance road frontage is a preference along esplanade reserve where possible. This facilitates ease of maintenance and improved public amenity.

### **Recommendations**

4. *That consideration be given for some additional width of esplanade at the very southern and most narrow end of the proposed esplanade reserve in order to provide for a more sustainable riparian ecosystem and open space amenity outcome.*
5. *That online stormwater detention is reconsidered, to ensure open and flowing stream environment is maintained.*
6. *That preference is given to layouts that provide for road frontage along the esplanade reserve.*
7. *That only native species appropriate to the local area are used within the esplanade reserve planting.*



### **C: Streetscape and Amenity**

Parks and open spaces are responsible in the District for maintenance and provision of streetscapes planting. The District is proud of its high urban vegetation assets, with urban vegetation cover sitting at 8.9%. The intentions going forward are to ensure that urban vegetation cover is enhanced where possible. An important consideration in this is to ensure that where street plantings are proposed these are viable in terms of outcomes, once driveway and services considerations have impacted on location. It is important therefore that indicated street amenity is not diluted over time during developed and detailed design. As such, consideration of the likely manifestation of conceptual planting is an important component of the open space assessment.

#### **Comment**

The proposed development provides for street trees within the development and this alongside the riparian planting along the proposed esplanade reserve provide a good level of vegetation cover.

Proposed vegetation cover as street trees along the street frontage of Raleigh Street has been indicated on the proposed landscape plan. The Raleigh Street frontage is considered a critical component from an urban design perspective to providing high amenity and visual connectivity of the proposed development to the existing urban area.

Our assessment indicates that the street trees proposed and the number and size of lots indicated, once driveways are provided, would likely result in a significant reduction in the proposed street tree numbers along this frontage. Consideration of lot layout and size might be possible to provide for an opportunity to have more groupings of street planting to provide a more impactful street amenity and to break up the dominance of the residential lots along this frontage. The intention would be to provide a transition along this street frontage from the surrounding rural character to the more urban character within the proposed development. This is considered to be required in order to more effectively address the amenity values and integrate the proposed development within the landscape context. It also provides for appropriate entry amenity to the existing urban environment.

It is noted that alternative layout 1 with no vehicle crossing onto Raleigh Street provides more opportunity to improve amenity along this frontage. Either this alternative or a partial implementation of this alternative (with reduced access lanes) would provide additional space along the road frontage to facilitate groupings of trees and planting. Given that this frontage is on the south-eastern side, this can also be achieved with minimal impact on solar gain within lots.

The landscape and visual assessment by Blue Marble outlines proposed mitigation that involves restrictions on fencing. This is provided in order to achieve more appropriate transitions and relationships at boundaries and along road frontages and an overall higher amenity for the proposed development.



## Recommendations

8. *That consideration be given to creating improved street frontage outcomes in terms of vegetation along Raleigh Street, with a focus on reducing dominance of the residential lots along the street through possible groupings of larger areas of planting. This may require consideration of lot access and mixing up of lot sizes in order to facilitate such a response or consideration of partial implementation of alternative layout 1.*
9. *That the fencing recommendations outlined in the landscape and visual effects assessment by Blue Marble are considered appropriate to assist with appropriate boundary relationships and amenity for the proposed development.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Renée Davies'.

Renée Davies  
Open Spaces Planner