

Designation for a New Secondary School by the Ministry of Education (Executive Summary)

This Executive Summary (Summary) has been prepared on behalf of the Ministry of Education (MOE) to help inform people who may be potentially affected by a proposed designation for a new Secondary School and two early childhood education centres (ECE) (the Project) in Hobsonville, Waitakere City. The land to be designated is in the vicinity of the future roads of Hobsonville Point Road to the south, Squadron Drive to the east, Western Avenue to the west as well as the existing Buckley Avenue to north.

This Summary provides a synopsis of the documentation provided by the MOE under the statutory processes of the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA or the Act), including the Assessment of Environmental Effects (AEE).

This is a summary only and parties who consider themselves affected by the Project should consult the complete set of documents if they wish to obtain further information. A full description of the Project, Notice of Requirement (NOR) documentation, the AEE plans, and the accompanying technical reports can be viewed at the offices of the Waitakere City Council (WCC), Council Libraries (Glen Eden, Henderson, Massey, New Lynn, Ranui, Te Atatu Peninsula and Titirangi) and online at www.waitakere.govt.nz.

Additional locations for viewing the documentation are specified in the Public Notice.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Hobsonville Development and Growth

The Hobsonville Peninsula area has been identified as an area of future urban growth. It is anticipated that approximately 3,000 households will be accommodated within the area once development is complete. This is likely to equate to a population of approximately 8,100 (based on an average household occupancy rate of 2.7). In addition, the areas of Hobsonville Corridor and Massey North are also anticipated to be key growth areas within the North West Waitakere area.

The Hobsonville Land Company (HLC) has been granted resource consent to implement the *Buckley - Hobsonville Comprehensive Development Plan* (CDP), the first stage of residential development on the Peninsula. Civil works for Stage One are currently planned to get underway in late 2009, with housing construction to follow in 2010.

Project Necessity

The existing secondary school network does not have sufficient capacity to cater for the anticipated future demand for schooling that will result from the proposed development of the Hobsonville Peninsula outlined above. A new secondary school is therefore required to provide adequate capacity to meet demand, and may also relieve pressure on the existing school network from future population growth within existing urban areas.

Project Objective

The objective of the Minister of Education (the Minister) is to designate the subject site in order to protect the land for the *“construction, operation and ongoing maintenance of a Secondary School and Early Childhood Education facilities”* to cater for proposed residential development and population growth in the area and resulting demand for schooling at a secondary level and early

childhood level. The secondary school is also likely to cater for students from further afield, thereby relieving pressure on existing, nearby secondary schools.

Project Overview

The designation will provide for the construction, establishment, operation and maintenance of the secondary school and two early childhood education centres, including buildings and ancillary structures, parking, landscaping and general recreation space.

The maximum roll for the secondary school will be 1500 students. The maximum number of children per session attending each of the ECEs will be 50. The rate of population growth on the Peninsula (and therefore school roll) is uncertain and it may take a number of years to reach the maximum school roll. No date has currently been set for construction of the school. For this reason the designation seeks a 15 year lapse period.

The ongoing management of the school would be the responsibility of the elected Board of Trustees, in the same manner as applies to all other State schools.

Location

The school will be located within the site of the former Hobsonville Air Force base and front roads that are being constructed as part of the CDP, namely Hobsonville Point Road to the south, Squadron Drive to the east, Western Avenue to the west as well as the existing Buckley Avenue to the north. The location of the school in the context of the existing road network is shown below.



A copy of the designation plan is also attached to this Summary.

Built form

The purpose of the designation is to protect the land for educational purposes, namely a secondary school and two early childhood education centres. The design of the school buildings and layout will be developed in the future with a focus on creating quality learning environments within the funding

available. While a maximum school roll of 1500 is envisaged it may take a number of years to reach this peak and therefore the built form of the school will evolve over time.

Regard will be had to the General Urban Design and School Building conditions that the Waitakere City Council applied to the resource consent to implement the CDP for the Buckley Precinct, a consent which is held by HLC.

The Ministry is proposing the following conditions to address potential adverse effects whilst maintaining sufficient levels of flexibility for the future design of the school:

- n School classrooms, administration buildings, and halls/gymnasiums will have primary frontage to Hobsonville Point Road to contribute to the built form of the street;
- n ECE facilities will likely front Western Avenue;
- n The maximum setback for buildings fronting Hobsonville Point Road be 20m;
- n The maximum building coverage on the site will be 35%;
- n The maximum impermeable surfaces coverage will be 40%;
- n The maximum building height will be 15m.

The final configuration of buildings and the layout of the school will also be influenced by the site constraints (including avoiding the location of major stormwater and wastewater utilities which will cross beneath the site) and the stormwater wetland north of the site.

Details of the bulk and location of buildings, car parking layout and landscaping on the site will be provided through the Outline Plan process once a construction date and funding are confirmed.

Parking and access

Vehicle access to the secondary school and ECEs will be provided via separate accesses.

An Integrated Transport Assessment (ITA) undertaken by Beca Transportation recommends that the main point for vehicular access should be taken from either Buckley Avenue or Western Avenue. If the Ministry seeks an additional access from Hobsonville Point Road for a drop off facility or bus parking then further assessment of the effects of an access in this location will be considered further in terms of impacts on traffic safety and intersection operation.

Staff, student, visitor and disabled parking for the secondary school site and ECEs will be provided in accordance with the *Waitakere City Council - Code of Practice (1997)*.

The Ministry will also resource, develop, review and action a School Travel Plan which sets the standards and goals of the school with respect to sustainable travel modes and to mitigate potential adverse traffic effects. The plan will also seek to limit the provision of on-site public car parking to a minimum and facilitate the integration of the school with the surrounding transport network (including issues of pedestrian and cyclist permeability to the site). The Travel Plan will be maintained and updated annually while the school is operating under this designation. It will be developed in partnership with Waitakere City Council and Auckland Regional Transport Authority.

Further information can be found on parking and access can be found in the Integrated Transport Assessment (Appendix D to the AEE document).

ASSESSMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

Accompanying the NOR the AEE assesses the actual and potential positive and adverse effects on the environment of the Project and sets out mitigation measures to avoid, remedy and mitigate these effects.

The following provides a summary of the key effects (readers should refer to the complete NOR documentation for the full and comprehensive assessment of effects).

Social/Community Effects

Designating this land as a future school site is considered to have the following positive social effects:

- n the potential to become a piece of key community infrastructure for the new community by acting as a focal point of the local area;
- n wider benefits for the community for public meetings and as a recreational area;
- n establishment of a future site for an important physical resource (being an educational facility) to enable the new community to provide for their well being;
- n strategic location within an area identified for future residential development and in close proximity to the proposed town centre. This will enable children to walk or bike to school; consequently having a positive effect on the health of the children and potentially reducing the number of vehicle trips to and from the school; and
- n because of its location in the southwest of Hobsonville the school may also relieve growth pressures on other secondary school facilities in the local area.

Two playing fields will be provided on the site which will be accessible for community use. These playing fields are unlikely to be fenced. The Board of Trustees will be responsible for the administration of the school and will consider requests from the community for organised use of recreational facilities, as is the norm in other schools around the country.

Amenity and Character Effects

Built form / Character Effects

Schools have the potential to contribute positively to the character and amenity of surrounding areas through the areas of landscaped and green open space that interrupt more intensive residential development. However, schools also have the potential to generate adverse effects on residential amenity values through visual effects relating to building location, bulk and design and additional noise associated with vehicle movements and with activities on the site (playgrounds, playing fields and from within school buildings).

Mitigating factors or measures include:

- n Playing fields will provide visual relief to surrounding areas of residential built form;
- n While the layout of the school site and building bulk and heights have not yet been determined it is anticipated that the school will consist of a cluster of key buildings along Hobsonville Point Road which will contribute to the sense of containment and active frontages of the street;
- n The Ministry is committed to quality architecture and urban design at this site.
- n Landscaping will be provided across the site including road frontages of the school site, at the entrances, around the buildings and car parking areas.

As such, future development of the site for the purposes of an educational facility is likely to have the potential for neutral to positive effects on the character of surrounding urban area and any adverse effects will be mitigated through the recommended conditions.

Noise

Schools can generate noise effects as a result of their operation. Specifically, school bells, vocal noise, amplified music, non-amplified music, alarms and traffic movements all have potential to create noise effects. However, such noise effects should be recognised as an inevitable consequence of urban schools. Mitigating factors or measures include:

- n The majority of noise generating activities will be undertaken on weekdays during, and just outside, normal school operating hours;
- n Significant noise generating activities will not occur at night time (other than for occasional night time events);
- n Noise conditions have been nominated in this NOR in relation to operational school noise.

As such, it is not envisaged that such activities will result in noise levels which are objectionable beyond the school boundary, or which create significant adverse effects in the adjoining living environments.

Traffic Effects

Traffic Generation

School have the ability to generate significant traffic volumes which are generally concentrated around the school drop-off and pick-up times. Mitigating factors or measures include:

- n Modelling indicates that the traffic generation and distribution associated with the school has been accounted for within the Hobsonville development area;
- n Because of the location of the school walking and cycling will be a realistic and viable mode of travel for pupils;
- n Bus services within the Hobsonville Peninsula development will provide opportunities to access the schools by public transport for pupils and staff; and
- n A School Travel Plan will also be prepared for the site and will address a number of issues including school start and finish times, outcomes of discussions with ARTA, a network of Walking School Buses provision for bus loading, identification of safe access and provision of on-site bicycle facilities. The School Travel Plan will positively influence travel behaviour and travel patterns associated with the schools.

Further information can be found on traffic generation can be found in the Integrated Transport Assessment (Appendix D to the AEE document).

Access

To avoid and mitigate potential adverse effects (such as safety and queuing) from access points the following measures are proposed:

- n Accesses to the secondary school and ECEs will be separated to provide safe intersections for both sites;
- n Pedestrian / cycle access will be separated from vehicular access points;
- n A pedestrian crossing will be provided near all pedestrian accesses;
- n If provided on site, pick-up and drop-off facilities for students are provided as a through route; and
- n If buses are to enter the site, clear division between car and bus parking will be delineated.

Further information can be found on access can be found in the Integrated Transport Assessment (Appendix D to the AEE document).

Parking

To avoid and mitigate potential adverse effects beyond the school site parking will generally be provided in accordance with WCC standards unless monitoring of demand indicates that a lesser provision is sufficient. Limiting on site provision for vehicles will be a goal of the School Travel Plan in recognition that the location of the school provides the opportunity for the number of trips to the schools by private car to be reduced.

Further information can be found on parking can be found in the Integrated Transport Assessment (Appendix D to the AEE document).

Cultural / Heritage Effects

There are items of significance to tangata whenua identified in the District Plan or in the Cultural Assessment by Te Kawerau a Maki undertaken as part of the CDP for the entire Peninsula. An accidental discovery protocol will be included in all construction contracts to address the identification of unrecorded items of archaeological or historical significance during the construction process.

A portion of the school site was once part the runway for the Hobsonville Airbase. In order to recognise the historic heritage values of the former airforce runway a plan detailing how the values will be recognised on the school site will be developed in consultation with the Historic Places Trust and Waitakere City Council and submitted during the Outline Plan process.

Stormwater and Wastewater

The site does not currently have existing connections to water supply or reticulated wastewater services. HLC will provide these connections to the new school site prior to the commencement of the operation of the school.

The school will adjoin a future stormwater treatment pond to the north of the site. This reserve will provide for the treatment of stormwater from the school site and the wider catchment. The gully is noted as having moderate ecological values. The MOE is interested in exploring opportunities for integrating the landscaping, earthworks and connections to this wetland area with the school. The MOE will work with WCC officers and HLC through the detailed design process in accordance with the principles of the existing Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

Future buildings will not be located within the overland flowpath or within 5 metres of the stormwater mains connecting to the stormwater pond.

Geotechnical

Geotechnical investigations indicate that the site is appropriate for a new school with respect to geotechnical stability provided appropriate site investigations and foundation/pile designs are undertaken prior to the construction of buildings or other structures.

Further information can be found can be found in the Geotechnical Appraisal (Appendix E to the AEE document).

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT

The Minister of Education is approved as a requiring authority under section 167 of the RMA and has the ability to serve a NOR to designate land for education purposes. The accompanying AEE supports the NOR pursuant to section 168 of the Act.

The AEE considers the proposal against Part II of the Act and the relevant objectives and policies of statutory documents and other relevant matters. The conclusions of this assessment are that the designation of this site for education purposes is consistent with these provisions.

CONSULTATION

Consultation has been undertaken with Waitakere CC, HLC, tangata whenua, Auckland Regional Council, Auckland Regional Transport Authority, the NZ Transport Agency and the wider community.

Feedback has been taken into account in the site selection process and informed the development of proposed conditions and the assessment of effects.

CONCLUSION

This Summary has been prepared by the MOE and provides an overview of the Project, based on the information provided in the AEE and accompanying plans and appendices lodged with the NOR.

The AEE concludes that, whilst the Project has some localised adverse effects, the community benefits are significant, that the necessary statutory tests can be met, and that any adverse effects on the environment can be appropriately avoided, remedied or mitigated.

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