



Waitakere City Council
Te Taiao o Waitakere

NOTICE OF MEETING

POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE

I hereby give notice that a meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee will be held on:-

DATE: Thursday, 8 April 2010 **TIME:** 9.30 am

MEETING ROOM: Council Chamber

VENUE: Waitakere Central, 6 Henderson Valley Road, Henderson, Waitakere

to consider the business as set out herein and to take any necessary action connected therewith.

31 March 2010

Judith Moore
COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Telephone (09) 836 8000 extn 8950

MEMBERSHIP:

Deputy Mayor	PA	Hulse (Chairman)
Councillors	LA	Cooper, JP (Deputy Chairman)
	DQ	Battersby, QSM, JP
	BA	Brady, JP
	MFP	Chan, JP
	JM	Clews, QSO, JP
	RI	Clow
	AK	Corban, OBE, JP
	RP	Dallow, QPM, JP
	WW	Flaunty, QSM, JP
	MM	Jolley
	JP	Lawley, JP
	PG	Mitchell
	VS	Neeson, JP
Mr	W	Paki, JP (Chairman, Te Taumata Runanga)

Mayor RA Harvey, QSO, JP (ex officio)

(Quorum 5 members)

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(Meeting Room could be subject to change)

(The reports and recommendations contained in all agendas are reports and recommendations only and are not to be construed, in any way, as Council policy until adopted.)

**AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE POLICY AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE TO BE HELD IN
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON VALLEY ROAD,
HENDERSON, WAITAKERE, ON THURSDAY, 8 APRIL 2010,
COMMENCING AT 9.30 AM**

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1 APOLOGIES



2 URGENT BUSINESS

Section 46A(7) of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987 provides that where an item of business is not on the agenda, it may only be dealt with at the meeting if:

- (i) the Committee by resolution so decides; and
- (ii) the Chairman has explained at the beginning of the meeting (when open to the public) that the item will be raised for discussion and decision, why the item is not on the agenda, and why it cannot be delayed until a subsequent meeting.

The Committee may make a decision on a matter determined to be urgent.

NOTE: Urgent Business need not be dealt with now and may be delayed until later in the meeting.



3 CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Council has acknowledged in its Code of Conduct that Members need to be vigilant to stand aside from decision making when a conflict arises between their role as a Member of the Council and any private or other external interest they might have. This note is provided as a reminder to Members to check that no such conflicts arise in relation to any items on this agenda.



4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Meeting Minutes – Thursday, 4 March 2010

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee resolve to:

Receive the minutes of the meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee held on Thursday, 4 March 2010, as circulated, and that they be taken as read and now be confirmed.



5 PRESENTATION – COMMUNITY WAITAKERE PARTNERING AGREEMENT

Signing of the refreshed Partnering Agreement with Community Waitakere.



6 GREEN NETWORK RATES RELIEF AND COVENANT PROGRAMME 2009 - 2019

GLOSSARY

Green Network Rates Relief Policy	(the Policy)
Queen Elizabeth II National Trust	(QEII Trust)
Green Network Conservation Covenants	(GNCC)
Green Network Conservation Covenant Programme	(GNCCP)
Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019	(LTCCP)
Business and Economic Research Limited	(BERL)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Council has operated a modest but successful covenanting programme under its Green Network Programme whereby areas of significant vegetation/habitat on private land are protected in perpetuity to ensure the enduring protection of those features. Rates relief for these areas has been used as an “incentive” to landowners to enter into protective covenants, and to reflect the “public good” element of the agreements.

In February 2009, the Council resolved to change this incentive, and to limit relief to a five year period.

This change in policy has caused consternation to the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust (QEII National Trust) (who holds some covenants) and to some landowners and is causing some hardship.

A review of the current Green Network Rates Relief Policy (the Policy) is sought and further changes are recommended.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee resolve to:

1. **Receive** the Green Network Rates Relief and Covenant Programme 2009 – 2019 report.
2. **Agree** to change the Green Network Rates Relief Policy to return to the Policy in place prior to 23 February 2009 working within the approved Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019 budget.
3. **Invite** the Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan Committee to implement the Policy and Strategy Committee policy recommendations (April 2010) regarding the Green Network Rates Relief policy.
4. **Invite** the Auckland Council to consider and adopt a consistent rating/non-rateable policy for covenants, as part of its review of the rating system for Auckland.

BACKGROUND

1. Covenant rates relief is provided for properties that meet the conditions of the Policy. The proportion of rates (non uniform standard charges) that are relieved relate to the area and quality of bush protected. To date there are 12 QEII Trust covenants receiving rates relief, and 17 Green Network Conservation Covenants (GNCC) (see section 77 of the Reserves Act).

2. Traditionally the rates relief component of the 2003 Green Network Conservation Covenant Programme (GNCCP) has been held within the overall Green Network Economic Incentives budget. Rates relief is now separated into a separate line item for improved financial management.

3. At the 5 June 2008 Policy and Strategy Committee meeting, it was resolved as follows:

“The Policy and Strategy Committee resolved to:

1. **Approve** option one as outlined in the agenda report, which is the status quo option by restoring the current funding levels and including funding for the rates relief in the 2008/2009 budget.
2. **Agree** that the Parks and Strategy units report back to the Policy and Strategy Committee on a review of costs, funding, incentives and the future of the Green Network covenanting programme, including covenants proposed under the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act.
3. **Invite** the Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan Committee to consider a report on the funding options for the 2009-2019 Long Term Council Community Plan rates relief budget based on the current rates relief policy.”

905/2008

4. At the 17 February 2009 Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan Committee meeting, it was resolved as follows:

“The Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan Committee resolved to:

1. **Receive** the Green Network Rates Relief and Covenant Programme 2009-2019 report.
2. **Agree** to amend the Green Network Rates Relief Policy to allow the provision of rates relief for covenanted properties for a maximum of five years from the date of registration for new covenants and for five years from this date for existing covenanted properties.”

160/2009

5. Consequentially, the Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019 (LTCCP) includes provision for funding rates relief from \$37,000 in 2008/2009, rising to \$91,000 in 2012/2013 (not Business and Economic Research Limited (BERL) adjusted), then falling to \$68,000 per year thereafter not BERL adjusted, as shown in table 1.

	2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019
<i>Unadjusted</i>	51,000	64,000	78,000	91,000	68,000	68,000	68,000	68,000	68,000	68,000
<i>LTCCP BERL adjusted</i>	51,000	65,984	82,508	98,953	76,010	78,214	80,560	82,654	84,470	86,414

Table 1: LTCCP 2009 provision for covenants following decision 160/2009.

6. The BERL adjusted budgets were the budgets approved by the Council in its LTCCP.

7. All existing covenant holders were advised of the policy change and the effect on them in August 2009.
- A1-A2 8. One holder of a recently negotiated major covenant agreement has written to the Council seeking *“that the policy change be rescinded immediately, and the former rates relief be reinstated, to ensure that ongoing relief is provided.”* The request concludes *“the covenanting of such a large area of environmentally significant land at Bethells Beach is a taonga for all New Zealanders.”* The entering into a covenant, in perpetuity, binding future generations of the Bethell family, was not a decision taken lightly. The covenant was contingent on the provision of ongoing rates relief.” A copy of this letter is attached at pages A1 to A2.
- A3 9. The QEII Trust, has written to the Council on behalf of the covenants it holds in Waitakere. The QEII Trust notes that the change in policy suggests that the Council is not supportive of landowners who have protected their land in perpetuity. The QEII Trust points out that the average ‘cost’ to the Council is \$463.91 per covenant. *“For such a nominal amount this change in Council Policy will undermine the existing good working relationship between the Council, the QEII Trust and Covenant Landowners and put at risk collaborative projects such as the “Waitakere Threatened Plant Project.”* A copy of this letter is attached at page A3.
- A3 10. The QEII Trust also asserts that the Council is not adhering to the Local Government Rating Act 2002 that states *“land owned or used by and for the purposes of the Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust is non-rateable.”* A copy of this letter is attached at pages A3.
11. No new GNCC have been concluded so far in 2009/2010. Four proposals for covenanting are at various stages of negotiation.

DECISION MAKING

Issues

12. The policy change in February 2009 was an outcome to address financial implications of the GNCCP at that time. This had two issues. Firstly, the budget catered for a range of environmental programmes, so as the cost of rates relief increased it caused a reduction in services available to other programmes and to the community. This was rectified by separating the cost of rates relief into a separate budget.
13. Secondly, the previous budget was not increasing over time to take into account ongoing expansion of covenanted land in the City. In February 2009, the decision was made to put in a place a cap on rates relief (both budget and the five year period for rates relief).
14. The result of this decision has caused some concern about whether Council is still achieving its policy intent.
15. In the discussions leading to this policy change in February 2009, there was no suggestion that the GNCC were not achieving the Council’s policy intent, or that they were not an essential tool for achieving the Council’s stated objective.
16. The change in policy was not a particular matter consulted on in the LTCCP as this is not a statutory policy.

17. Covenants are legal agreements between two parties. In this case, the Council is obliged to provide rates relief according to the current Policy. The Council is within its rights to change that Policy. Each covenant states that the rates relief component was an incentive and may be subject to the current Council Policy. However, in entering into a covenant, there is an expectation of "good faith" on both sides. To some the change of Policy is seen as a breach of that good faith, and damages the reputation of the Council.
- AI-A2 18. It is evident that at least one landowner is significantly adversely affected by the change in policy and feels aggrieved (attached at pages A1 to A2). Holders of QEII covenants have written to the QEII Trust.
19. Some councils do treat QEII Trust covenanted land as non-rateable, as with reserves. Some treat all covenanted land in this way. There is no consistent policy across the region or New Zealand.
20. The new Auckland Council will inherit different systems from existing councils, and would be expected to rationalise those policies in the LTCCP 2012-2022. Only Waitakere City Council has a time-limited system of rates relief grants for land protected in perpetuity.
21. The correspondence attached to this report is considered to provide a sufficient basis for undertaking a further review of the Policy.
22. Any significant financial implications of a policy change may trigger Auckland Transition Authority verification in terms of section 31 of the Local Government (Tāmaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009.

Options Identified

23. Three options have been identified for consideration:
- (a) Do nothing;
 - (b) Rescind the policy and return to the pre-February 2009 policy; and
 - (c) Treat some or all covenants as non-rateable.

Assessment of Options

24. **Option A – Do nothing**
This option would cost \$786,767. That cost has been considered affordable. However, the Policy is out of step with the rest of the region, creates situations of unintended hardship, might damage the reputation of the Council through perceived breach of faith, and might engender a stronger challenge from QEII Trust.
25. **Option B - Rescind the policy and return to the pre-February 2009 policy within the approved LTCCP budget**
This approach would be in line with other councils' policies on this issue and would restore any damage done to the Council's reputation. It would satisfy QEII Trust and GNCC holders. It would place a constraint on entering into new covenants, involving the rates relief incentive, towards the end of the LTCCP period but is anticipated to allow the unconstrained application of the Policy to new covenants for at least six years.

26. **Option C - Treat some or all covenants as non-rateable**
The QEII Trust case for on-rateable status for its covenants is strong but contested. The drafting of the relevant section of the Local Government (Rating) Act 2002 is not unambiguous. In this context, it is considered that the Council should recommend to the new Auckland Council that it should consider the rating/non-rateable policy issue as part of its reform to establish a single rating policy for the region.

Consideration of Community Views

27. Community views were discussed at the June 2008 Policy and Strategy Committee in detail. The issue of inconsistency with the direction the Council is taking with the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area is considered imperative for the community. Many residents support Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 and may approach the Council seeking Heritage Covenants. The provision of rates relief for these areas is seen as an incentive to allow the protection of private property for the benefit of the wider community, particularly where public access is granted.
28. Should a decision be made to cease the provision of rates relief, covenant holders may approach the Council seeking removal of their covenants due to an inability to afford to maintain their protected land. One land owner presently holds a covenant with the ability to remove the covenant if rates relief is no longer provided. Rates relief is an incentive and any changes to the policy may affect the uptake of future covenants.
29. The Council wishes to continue to encourage the protection of private property for the long term, and for the benefit of all. The GNCCP offers more assistance to landowners than the QEII covenants, by way of surveying and pest control assistance, engendering deeper engagement with the community in order to achieve greater community outcomes.
30. The Council's resolution in June 2008 was well received by covenant holders; calls were received by officers commending the Council on their decision to continue the programme without change.
- A1-A3 31. Attached to this report as attached at pages A1 to A3 are copies of correspondence on this issue.

Preferred Option

32. **Option B - Rescind the policy and return to the pre-February 2009 policy, and operate within the approved LTCCP budget**
This is the preferred option because it reduces costs, deals honourably with existing covenant agreements, is flexible and easily implementable and is within the budget provided in the LTCCP.
33. It is further recommended that the issue of the rating/non-rateable policy for covenants should be referred to the new Auckland Council to consider as part of the single rating policy.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

34. The Green Network is a strategic platform for the Council and has been in place since 1997 in response to the development of the Green Print and the Council's adoption of the eco city title. Covenanting contributes to the Green Network strategic platform by ensuring our streams and green corridors are protected, bringing nature into people's everyday lives.

RESOURCES

35. The preferred option has no budget impact. Funding provided in the LTCCP 2009-2019 is considered adequate to cover the cost.

Green Network Rates Relief LTCCP Budgets										
2009/ 2010	2010/ 2011	2011/ 2012	2012/ 2013	2013/ 2014	2014/ 2015	2015/ 2016	2016/ 2017	2017/ 2018	2018/ 2019	Total
51,000	65,984	82,508	98,953	76,010	78,214	80,560	82,654	84,470	86,414	786,767

Table 2: Green Network Rates Relief LTCCP Budgets.

CONSULTATION

36. Consultation has been thoroughly conducted with internal staff, and a report was presented to the Policy and Strategy Committee on 5 June 2008 and to the Long Term Council Community Plan and Annual Plan Committee on 23 February 2009, around these issues.
37. Through consultation with the previous report it is noted that there were dissenting views around the options presented.

AUCKLAND TRANSITION ISSUES

38. The decision making proposed in this report is not constrained by section 31 of the Local Government (Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009, as it does not directly or because of its consequences: significantly prejudice the reorganisation, significantly constrain the powers or capacity of the Auckland Council or any subsidiary of the Auckland Council following the reorganisation, or have a significant negative impact on the assets or liabilities that are transferred to the Auckland Council as a result of the reorganisation.
39. No consequential changes to statutory plans or policies are envisaged prior to the coming into existence of the Auckland Council.

Report prepared by: Graeme Campbell, Director: Strategic Planning.



7 WAITAKERE RANGES FOOTHILLS WALKWAY FEASIBILITY INVESTIGATION STUDY

GLOSSARY

Auckland Regional Council	(ARC)
Local Area Plan/s	(LAP/S)
Policy and Strategy Committee	(the Committee)
Waitakere Ranges cross foothills walkway	(the Foothills Walkway)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to outline the findings of a study into the feasibility of establishing a Waitakere Ranges cross Foothills Walkway (the Foothills Walkway). The report also seeks the Policy and Strategy Committee's (the Committee's) endorsement of the concept and recommended route, as well as priority actions that are needed to ensure future opportunities to establish the walkway are not foreclosed upon.

The study has shown that a Foothills Walkway could readily be created over time from Titirangi Village in the south to the Swanson Railway Station in the north. The recommended route would provide a diverse walking trail of interesting, rural experiences rich in heritage and scenic values that is somewhat different to those offered by the tracks in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park.

Investigation and analysis has also shown that the Foothills Walkway would provide many benefits to residents and, importantly, delivers on several of the key objectives of Local Area Plans (LAP/s) developed for the foothills area.

The concept has been tested with the community through the development of LAPs with feedback being mixed. However, there has been a modest level of qualified support for the concept.

Construction of the full indicative 48 kilometres route of the Foothills Walkway, at the recommended standard, is estimated to be at least \$3.7 million. Although costly, the Foothills Walkway could be viewed as a long term objective and is able to be established progressively, in stages and over any period of time as resources and priorities allow. This would reflect the long term objectives that LAPs provide in relation to an area's amenity, character and environment.

There is currently no funding allocated by Council for the establishment of a walkway, apart from resources related to settling District Plan appeals and the development of LAPs. Construction costs related to the Foothills Walkway would have to be considered, amongst other priorities, by the new Auckland Council.

An immediate issue and priority is securing access over key pieces of private land to ensure that the opportunity to possibly establish the Foothills Walkway in the future is not lost. Adoption of the concept and inclusion of it in the Opanuku/Henderson Valley LAP, along with the progression of discussions with key landowners, will ensure that the Foothills Walkway opportunity is a legacy action passed on to the new Auckland Council to consider implementing in the future.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee resolve to:

1. **Receive** the Waitakere Ranges Foothills Walkway Feasibility Investigation Study report.
2. **Agree** that the Waitakere Ranges Foothills Walkway concept and recommended route be adopted and reflected in the draft Opanuku/Henderson Valley Local Area Plan and where possible be incorporated into the District Plan.
3. **Direct** the Chief Executive Officer to progress discussions with owners of strategic pieces of land related to the Waitakere Ranges Foothills Walkway, to identify where and how public access could be secured, with the results of these discussions to be reported back to the Policy and Strategy Committee by August 2010 with a view to making recommendations to the Auckland Council.
4. **Direct** the Chief Executive Officer to use the Ranges Neighbourhood Restoration Initiative to encourage landowners along the proposed Waitakere Ranges Foothills Walkway route to provide for enhanced public access.
5. **Direct** the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that any review of Council's Code of Practice for Footpath Standards reflects and maintains the rural nature of many of the City's roads.

BACKGROUND

1. The concept of a Foothills Walkway was outlined at the 5 November 2009 meeting of the Committee and endorsement was sought to further investigate the feasibility of establishing such a walkway. The concept presented to the Committee was for a walkway to run from Oratia in the south to the Swanson Railway Station area in the north.
2. It was identified that a Foothills Walkway is one initiative that may achieve a number of the objectives of LAPs related to the Waitakere Ranges foothills area and it could also deliver on a number of Council's strategic outcomes.
3. The objectives of a Foothills Walkway include:
 - connecting communities in the eastern foothills of the Waitakere Ranges;
 - providing safer walking (and possibly cycling) routes for local residents and visitors;
 - providing a significant walking track on the eastern side of the Waitakere Ranges, adding to the current network within the Waitakere Ranges and beyond. This would provide a different "pastoral countryside" experience compared to that enjoyed on trails in the more forested areas of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Parkland;
 - providing linkages to other walkways and cycleways originating in urban areas, such as the Twin Streams Walk and Cycleways;
 - providing increased opportunities for the wider public to access a significant walking track through the use of public transport and associated walking trail linkages;
 - encouraging increased physical activity and the associated benefits of this;
 - providing local landowners with potential new rural economic opportunities; and
 - assisting in spreading the increasing visitor load from the Waitakere Ranges Regional Parkland.
4. At the 5 November 2009 Policy and Strategy Committee meeting, it was resolved as follows:

"The Policy and Strategy Committee resolved to:

 1. **Receive** the Local Area Plan Development – Waitakere Ranges Foothills Walkway Feasibility Investigation Study report.
 2. **Direct** the Chief Executive to investigate the feasibility of establishing a walkway, over time, in the eastern foothills of the Waitakere Ranges from Oratia in the south to the Swanson Railway Station in the north and that this be reported back to the Policy and Strategy Committee in March 2010.
 3. **Agree** that further consultation on the Waitakere Ranges Foothills Walkway Feasibility Investigation Study be undertaken with key stakeholders and residents of the Waitakere ranges through the Local Area Plan development process."

1802/2009
 5. A comprehensive feasibility report has been produced that outlines the results of this investigation. A full copy has been circulated under separate cover with the agenda. The following narrative outlines the key points and conclusions of the feasibility investigation report, including preliminary community views.

DECISION MAKING

Feasibility investigation report

6. The investigation has considered the following matters:
- the possible route of the Foothills Walkway and whether it could practically be achieved;
 - the type of walkway possible and the quality of experience for the user;
 - the potential opportunities to leverage off current subdivision/development potential i.e. what is currently allowed under the Waitakere District Plan and Structure Plans, and to use unformed roads, esplanade reserves, other publicly owned land and access arrangements with landowners;
 - the level of preliminary community and landowner support;
 - costs;
 - benefits;
 - the opportunities to engage the community, iwi, businesses, Non Government Organisations and alternative funding entities;
 - possible links to regional and local open space, tracks and transport routes (including existing walk and cycleways); and
 - priorities and possible stages for implementation.

Proposed route

7. An indicative route for the foothills walkway has been developed from desktop and field investigations. This has been influenced by:
- public land that can be utilised including road reserves, unformed or “paper” roads, parks and other types of reserves;
 - private land that has sub-division potential and which may provide Council some opportunities to gain/negotiate public accessways through these properties in the future as they are subdivided;
 - what is currently included in the Swanson and Oratia Structure Plans (noting that the Swanson Structure Plan is currently under appeal to the Environment Court);
 - the topography of the different parts of the foothills and the influence this has on where a walkway can be built and what additional infrastructure is required e.g. the building of bridges, boardwalks, retaining walls and paths all have significant cost;
 - linkages to other walkways and public transport routes;
 - the use of existing paths/trails/tracks;
 - future plans of other public agencies such as the Auckland Regional Council (ARC);
 - the physical attributes of road verges in relation to actually being able to (cost effectively) form new trails/pathways on them;
 - the potential cost of various sections of the Foothills Walkway;
 - feedback received from the community and landowners, which has been a mixture of formal consultation (during the development of LAP’s, Structure Plans and other plans) and informal conversations;
 - where businesses are currently located that might benefit from or contribute value to those using the route; and
 - the quality of experience for the user.

A6-A8

8. The indicative route is outlined and attached at pages A6 to A8. Initial proposals were for the walkway to stretch from Oratia to Swanson. However, the Foothills Walkway route is able to stretch to Titirangi / Woodlands Park in the south as the ARC plans to link Exhibition Drive to the Arataki Visitor Centre on Scenic Drive with a new trail. There are eight sections to the Foothills Walkway route:
- Titirangi/Woodlands Park: Titirangi village through to the Arataki Visitor Centre on Scenic Drive via Exhibition Drive and a new linking track;
 - Upper Oratia: Arataki Visitor Centre to Parker Road and down to the Carter/West Coast Road corner;
 - Lower Oratia: This section follows the Oratia Stream to Parrs Cross Road where it links with the Twin Streams Walk and Cycleway; other arterial links lead west to Holden's Road and Forest Hill Road;
 - Forest Hill Road and the Henderson Valley pastoral area: The walkway follows Forest Hill Road up to trails that traverse what are currently large privately owned pastoral properties through to Henderson Valley Road and Grassmere Road;
 - Henderson Valley: The walkway route also travels north down Forest Hill Road from Holden's Road to Pine Ave and along Henderson Valley Road to Candia Road. It then travels past the school to the Opanuku Pipeline Track on Mountain Road;
 - Vineyard/Seibel/Coulter Road area: This section follows Vineyard and Seibel Roads to Seibel Reserve. From there it travels up Coulter Road to Perris Road, along this "paper" road to Candia Road;
 - Lower Swanson area: This section includes three different routes to the Swanson Rail Station – through Burton's Way, O'Neill's Road and the Penihana development; along Pooks Road and through Penihana; or along the proposed New Lynn to Swanson Rail Corridor Walk/Cycleway; and
 - Upper Swanson area: This links the bottom of Mountain Road in Henderson Valley to Tram Valley Road through the Opanuku and Swanson Pipeline Tracks). It also includes trails from the Coulter Road section linking through to Christian and Tram Valley Roads, then onto the Swanson Rail Station.
9. In total, the indicative Foothills Walkway (and associated linkages) is approximately 48 kilometres long. If a walker took the most direct route along the walkway from Titirangi to the Swanson Rail Station this would provide a 21 kilometres journey. At an average walking speed of 3.5 to 5 kilometres per hour, this equates to a four to six hour walk.

Type of walkway

10. The type of walkway that could realistically be established is influenced by a number of factors. These are outlined and discussed below.
11. **Suitability for users:** The Foothills Walkway route is made up of varying grades (17.5 kilometres of flat, 15.5 kilometres of gradual incline, 12.1 kilometres of moderate incline and 3.8 kilometres of steep incline. Most of the Foothills Walkway could be used by people of average mobility/fitness. It is estimated people with limited mobility could use approximately 9.2 kilometres of the Foothills Walkway (i.e. those flat areas with a concrete trail.)

12. **Ability to construct:** The topography and other physical aspects of the indicative Foothills Walkway route provide challenges in some places. The main issues are: the steepness and narrow width of some road verges; the eight watercourses that would need to be traversed; the wet Waitakere clay soil type which tracks/paths would have to be constructed on; vegetation that would need to be cleared for 4.4 kilometres of track construction; and cultural heritage sites that would need to be identified so they are not disturbed. These issues are not insurmountable but come at some cost.
13. **Compatibility for walkers, cyclists and horse riders:** The Foothills Walkway would utilise approximately 19 kilometres of existing gravel tracks/roads and concrete footpaths of which 5.3 kilometres is currently the recommended width of 3 metres or more for dual walk/cycle ways. The remaining 29 kilometres of the proposed walkway would only provide for a further 3.4 kilometres at this recommended 3 metres or more width.
14. It is difficult, and in most areas not appropriate, to construct a path of this width along the Foothills Walkway route. Many of the road verges are too narrow and have steep drop-offs. Such a wide path, especially if constructed in concrete, would not be appropriate in what is predominantly a rural setting. This would have a significant detrimental affect on the amenity values of such areas. However during construction of any part of the Foothills Walkway, any sections that could accommodate a wider path that allows for cyclists and pedestrians would be identified. It is important that this future opportunity is not lost. Constructing any sections of the Foothills Walkway would come at additional significant cost.
15. The standards for dual walk/cycleways and footpaths are related to the level of use and the safety issues posed by the speed at which cyclists travel. Interestingly, existing gravel and concrete footpaths, which are less than 3 metres in width, are already used by pedestrians and cyclists throughout the City. They are also used by horse riders on occasions. However, the use of paths less than 3 metres wide, by cyclists and horse riders, would not be encouraged.
16. The predominant 1.5 metres width of the Foothills Walkway trails would not realistically allow the use of these by people riding horses as well as pedestrians. There are some verges that could accommodate horse riding but these are limited and/or this is actively discouraged by adjoining landowners due to the perceived damage it does to "their" road frontage.
17. Therefore, the Foothills Walkway would essentially be a walking trail that could accommodate some use by cyclists in areas where a track of adequate width could be constructed.
18. **Context:** The most appropriate construction material has been identified for each section of the Foothills Walkway to ensure the rural ambience/nature of the areas it traverses was not compromised. It is recommended that the majority of the walkway should be a gravel track to reflect this.
19. **Personal safety:** The rural and secluded nature of sections of the walkway may be perceived by some members of the public as a potential personal safety issue. The risk provided by the Foothills Walkway would be no more than that of other trails found in the Waitakere Ranges. People would have a choice however, whether they use the trail or not. At LAP consultation meetings, a small number of people expressed the view that they would not like the public wandering past their backyard. Much of the Foothills Walkway however traverses current or potential future reserves through which public access is a right. Interestingly, such safety issues have not been realised in the establishment of the Twin Streams Walk and Cycleways.

20. **Current infrastructure:** About 40 percent of the Foothills Walkway would utilise existing tracks and footpaths. Most of these do not need to be retrofitted in any way as the majority would be adequate for walkway purposes. Some minor improvements would be required in some sections.
21. **Road safety:** Approximately 9.3 kilometres of the Foothills Walkway would traverse verges of busy or winding roads. Appropriate safety measures would need to be incorporated into the establishment of the new sections of path required on these roads (approximately 3kilometres). There are also 13 points where walkers would need to cross a road to continue their journey along the Foothills Walkway.

Connectivity

22. Important pedestrian linkages would be created by the Foothills Walkway:
 - between the distinct local areas and communities found in the foothills of the Waitakere Ranges. In particular, the lower Oratia area would have improved and safer pedestrian links to the lower Forest Hill Road area and the Henderson Valley area beyond;
 - between the rural areas of the foothills and urban areas via the Twin Streams Walk and Cycleways and other linking paths;
 - for some foothills areas to rail and bus interchanges (e.g. train services at Swanson and Henderson; bus services that run through the Titirangi, Woodlands Park, Oratia and Henderson Valley areas); and
 - to other notable trails (e.g. Te Araroa – the Long Trail at Swanson and Arataki; the Hillary Trail at Arataki and the proposed New Lynn/Swanson Rail Corridor walk/cycleway at Swanson).
23. These linkages help achieve a number of the objectives of the Oratia, Waiatarua and Opanuku/Henderson Valley LAPs.

Quality of experience

24. The Foothills Walkway would provide a diverse walking trail of interesting, rural experiences rich in heritage and scenic values that is somewhat different to those offered by the tracks in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. There are many points of interest along the way of what generally would be a relatively easy walk. These include a vast range of native and exotic vegetation types, a diverse variety of birdlife, farm animals, orchards, nurseries, vineyards and wine outlets, water courses, a Folk Museum, water treatment facilities, the Arataki Visitor Centre, markets, cafes and two small water supply service railways that the public can book rides on.
25. In particular, the Foothills Walkway would provide users with a range of scenic views of the eastern side of the Waitakere Ranges up to the ridgeline and out over the pastoral areas to the City and harbour beyond.

Benefits

26. The Foothills Walkway would provide a range of benefits to foothills residents, adjacent urban communities and local businesses.

27. It has the potential to provide a large catchment of people additional opportunities for exercise through walking or running i.e. the 7500 foothills residents and an estimated 42,000 people who live in urban areas with ready access to the Foothills Walkway via linking trails such as the Twin Streams Walk and Cycleways (i.e. those people living within 2 kilometres of these trails).
28. The linkages with public transport services also provide opportunities for a greater number of people to access rural walking opportunities without having to use a private motor vehicle. This includes the potential for the public to take a train from Britomart to a nearby western line station, walk the Foothills Walkway, or part of it, and then travel back to town by train.
29. Visitation to the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park is approximately 500,000 people visits per annum with a significant proportion (40 percent) being Waitakere residents. The Foothills Walkway has real potential to help spread some of this "loading" by providing a different type of walking experience to that available in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park.
30. Public safety benefits would be provided by the Foothills Walkway through the construction of roadside and other "cross-country" pathways in rural areas, decreasing the need for pedestrians to use hazardous carriageways.
31. Within the Waitakere Ranges eastern foothills, there are a number of established businesses that could potentially benefit from a Foothills Walkway trail. Increased exposure and patronage may result from an increase in walking activity by local residents and the large number of neighbouring urban people.
32. Some new economic activities may result from the establishment of a foothills walkway, especially if it had a point of difference to the trails found in the Waitakere Ranges and other parts of the region. For example establishing a walking "art" trail, in collaboration with Lopdell House, the Corban Arts Centre Estate, local artists and Te Kawerau a Maki, could provide some alternative economic opportunities for residents in the future by attracting visitors from outside the City e.g. homestay and other accommodation; hospitality; sale of artworks etc. Further work is needed to more accurately identify the economic benefits that could accrue from the establishment of a Foothills Walkway.

Preliminary costs

33. Preliminary costs for the indicative Foothills Walkway route have been estimated, both for a minimum recommended standard and also a recommended desired standard.
34. The minimum recommended standard is one which would facilitate walking access through an area at the least possible development and cost. However, this "low-level" approach may limit the number of people that would choose to use the walkway, that is, it may not be that desirable or attractive for many people. The desired standard is one that would provide an easy walk, on a good quality surface, to a wide range of people of differing ages and mobility. It would therefore be more attractive as it would be less challenging for walkers.
35. Construction of the full indicative route of the foothills walkway, at the minimum standard, would be at least \$2.2 million. Construction of the trail at the desired standard would be at least \$3.7 million. Detailed estimates can be found attached at page A9.

36. The preliminary costs do not include the following which could be significant: land acquisition; construction contingency; professional services (engineering, surveying etc); resource consent applications and fees; building permits; major earthworks and construction of retaining walls; traffic management; signage (directional and interpretive); fencing; re-vegetation; consultation; promotion of the Foothills Walkway; and, ongoing maintenance.
37. Although costly, the foothills walkway could be established progressively, in stages and over any period of time as resources and priorities allow.
38. If the full indicative route of the foothills walkway was established to the desired standard there would be an additional 22.8 kilometres of gravel tracks established and up to 6.8 kilometres of new concrete pathway. The concrete pathways would require little future maintenance effort, but the gravel tracks would require ongoing maintenance to ensure their usability did not decline. This maintenance would require an ongoing budget requirement of up to \$215,000 per annum. Signage and structures would also need regular inspection and remedial work where necessary.

Possible funding sources

39. Sources for funding the construction, maintenance and land acquisition costs related to a Foothills Walkway have been investigated. Council budgets for land acquisition, new footpaths and delivery of the Transport Strategy are committed to a range of priority projects that have been assessed against specific criteria relating to these outcomes. The Foothills Walkway does not rank highly against the criteria that determine priorities for transport funding or the construction of new footpaths.
40. Funds derived from financial and development contributions for reserve acquisitions are committed forward to key priority areas where considerable growth in population and business is expected e.g. Northern Strategic Growth Area and New Lynn. It would be difficult to amend such acquisition priorities within the current governance parameters related to local government reform in Auckland. The new Auckland Council, however, is likely to review land acquisition priorities in the future which may provide some opportunities to source funds for land acquisition should the establishment of the Foothills Walkway proceed.
41. Investigation has shown that it is unlikely the foothills walkway would meet the criteria of either the New Zealand Walking Access Commission or the Ministry of Tourism's New Zealand Cycle Trail funding.
42. Securing sponsorship from the business sector for the development and/or maintenance of walking trails is possible, but history in the Auckland region has shown the amounts that have been secured by various agencies have been relatively small. If the walkway had its own point of difference this might help in attracting some sponsorship.
43. Council could only gain funding from other external charitable funding sources (e.g. the New Zealand Lotteries Commission, ASB Community Trust, The Licensing Trusts etc), if an Incorporated Society or Trust was formed to establish and/or support the Foothills Walkway. Finding committed people to be involved in a trust may be difficult as there appears to be an expectation from the community that the provision of such walking trails is an inherent part of what local authorities and government agencies do.

44. One opportunity might be to include the Foothills Walkway concept in any discussions relating to the future governance of the Twin Streams Walk and Cycleway initiative as it is possible this will extend into the foothills area.
45. There are also opportunities to leverage off the work being carried out with the foothills community through Council's Ranges Neighbourhood Restoration Initiative. These activities could be extended to get the community involved in helping to develop simple sections of the Foothills Walkway that are on roadsides or other public land and to provide access over private land.

Consideration of community views

46. The foothills walkway concept was workshopped with the Opanuku/Henderson Valley community in December 2009 as part of the LAP development process. Those who supported the concept of a walkway particularly liked the idea of better links between foothills areas and also with the urban area via the Twin Streams Trails. Others questioned the priority of the Foothills Walkway in relation to the potential cost. However, there was a common view that any new tracks/paths established should be in keeping with the rural ambience of the area. In summary, feedback from the workshop sessions was mixed and there was a modest level of qualified support for the Foothills Walkway concept.
47. Some discussions have taken place with owners of properties in the Oratia and Henderson Valley areas that could provide key linkages for a Foothills Walkway. Most of these landowners expressed some initial apprehension about a public walk and cycleway being located adjacent to or on their land. This related to perceptions that members of the public might have detrimental effects on their property and activities e.g. privacy, fire risk, vandalism, theft, stock and crops being disturbed etc.
48. Experience from the implementation of the Twin Streams Walk and Cycleways is that adjoining landowners and the local community were apprehensive before construction of the paths. However, since the completion of the trails these attitudes, in general, have become quite positive as their initial concerns have not been realised.
49. The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society have expressed that they would not like to see any Foothills Walkway encouraging any increase in the amount of unauthorised mountain biking that occurs in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. The Foothills Walkway would essentially be a walkway and would be promoted as such. Therefore, it is unlikely that this would result in any significant increase in the number of mountain bikers accessing the regional park through the Foothills Walkway trails.
50. Te Kawerau a Maki has expressed support for the concept of the Foothills Walkway. If the Foothills Walkway was to be established, they would like to be able to tell their stories about the cultural landscape of the foothills area, especially through interpretation initiatives along the Foothills Walkway. They would also like to be involved in any efforts related to identifying and protecting any culturally sensitive sites that may be present along the Foothills Walkway route.
51. Initial feedback from ARC officers has echoed the concerns of the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society but has also acknowledged the key links the Foothills Walkway would provide to other trails in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and the urban areas of west Auckland.

Issues

52. Investigation of a possible route has shown that the majority of the Foothills Walkway could readily be established over time as it traverses public land along road verges, unformed “paper” roads and through reserves. The main constraint would be funding and where implementation of such a project would lie within the Auckland Council’s prioritisation of resource use.
53. However, there are some sections of the Foothills Walkway trail route where access is needed through private land or areas where there is little opportunity to utilise road reserves or other publicly owned land. These include:
 - the lower Oratia area, that lies between West Coast Road, Kelly’s Road, Holden’s Road and Parr’s Cross Road;
 - the Henderson Valley pastoral area, between Forest Hill Road, Gum Road and the upper part of Henderson Valley Road;
 - the linking track between Burton’s Way and O’Neill’s Road;
 - the linkage between Tram Valley Road and Christian Road;
 - the path between Coulter Road and O’Neill’s Road; and
 - through the proposed Penihana development at Swanson.
54. Access through private land in the latter four areas listed above is provided for in the Swanson Structure Plan and can be achieved through the use of relevant District Plan provisions. The concept plan for the Penihana development provides for public access from O’Neill’s and Christian Roads through to the Swanson Rail Station.
55. There are opportunities for securing access through private land in the lower Oratia area by using provisions of the proposed District Plan Changes notified for the Oratia LAP area. These propose new assessment criteria in relation to subdivision applications and require consideration of the following matters:
 - the extent to which development provides or maintains opportunities for rural trails to Shaw Road and to the Oratia Stream; and
 - the extent to which subdivision, where pedestrian and cycle trails are identified, contributes to the provision of land to support the implementation of the trails.
56. Walking trails in the Oratia are outlined in the Oratia Reserves and Public Access Plan that went through an extensive public consultation process in 2003-2004. The indicative route of the Foothills Walkway reflects these trails.
57. If the establishment of the Foothills Walkway was pursued the most cost efficient and prudent strategy for Council would be to let development of the lower Oratia area run its course over time and then identify which pieces of land are needed to complete the walkway access. Acquisition of these remaining properties could then be proactively pursued in the future. A long term view to the creation of the foothills walkway would support this course of action.
58. Analysis has shown that approximately 1.9 hectares of land may need to be acquired in the future to realise this lower Oratia section of the Foothills Walkway and at current land values (without legal and process expenses) this is estimated to be worth \$988,000.

59. Within the Henderson Valley pastoral area, between Forest Hill and Henderson Valley Roads, there are several large pastoral properties that would also provide key linkages for the Foothills Walkway. Walkways through these properties would provide users a far superior experience compared to the alternative route that runs down Forest Hill Road, along Pine Ave and Henderson Valley Road. Some of these properties have subdivision potential whereas three do not.
60. The largest of the strategic properties in Henderson Valley has, as of right, the ability to create 24 lots in a subdivision. The owners have sought a greater number of lots via a District Plan appeal, which has yet to be settled.
61. Initial feedback from landowners with strategic pieces of land with subdivision potential suggests they believe there is a monetary value to them providing this public access. They have indicated that they would expect to realise this in the progression of their future development plans.
62. The current District Plan rules and resource consent assessment criteria, relating to the Henderson Valley area, do not specifically require the provision of walking access trails to be considered in subdivision applications. Therefore, as a priority, other options would need to be pursued to secure public access through this land to ensure opportunities are not foreclosed upon. These options include:
 - identifying District Plan changes, related to the Henderson Valley area, that are necessary to provide for the establishment of the foothills walkway overtime. This would provide consistency, for all foothills areas, to the matters that are to be considered in controlled, limited discretionary and discretionary subdivisions in relation to the implementation of identified pedestrian and cycle trails;
 - using the settlement process related to District Plan appeals on strategic sites to achieve public access goals; and
 - initiating direct negotiations with key landowners to secure public access through their land.
63. If the creation of the Foothills Walkway and its indicative route was included as an objective in the Opanuku/Henderson Valley LAP then any resulting District Plan changes could include appropriate amendments to help achieve this. Rule changes and subdivision consent assessment criteria similar to those included in the District Plan changes notified for the Oratia LAP area would suffice.
64. While it may not be possible for such District Plan changes for the Opanuku/Henderson Valley area to be achieved before the new Auckland Council begins operating on 1 November 2010, it is recommended that the Foothills Walkway route is included in the draft Opanuku/Henderson Valley LAP. If the Foothills Walkway concept and route was retained by Council in the final LAP, it will ensure that it is identified as a legacy action for the new Auckland Council to consider implementing in the future, including any District Plan Changes that would help achieve the Foothills Walkway.
65. It is also recommended that Council progress discussions with landowners of these strategic pieces of land to identify where and how public access for walkways could be secured and what the cost of this might be. This would include those properties with District Plan appeals that have yet to be resolved and those properties where direct acquisition of land may be necessary. This information could help inform the new Auckland Council in relation to prioritising use of land acquisition resources.

Other stages of implementation

66. Should the Foothills Walkway concept be endorsed by the Committee and be pursued by the Council and Auckland Council, then there are a number of distinct priorities for a staged implementation.
67. The feasibility investigation study has shown that outside of the priority of securing access through key pieces of private land, the sections that would best be constructed first are primarily those:
- Which traverse public land along road verges, unformed (paper) roads and reserves;
 - That do not have any major engineering challenges, resulting in a moderate cost of construction;
 - Contribute to and are part of the direct 21 kilometres route from Titirangi Village through to the Swanson Road Rail Station (i.e. they are not “side” linkages); and
 - Where there is currently no formal public walkway linkage.
68. The sections or part sections of the foothills walkway route that meet these criteria are outlined at page A7.
69. Council currently operates the Ranges Neighbourhood Restoration Initiative which organises local community action in relation to weed clearance and the planting of native vegetation. This initiative could also be utilised immediately to encourage landowners in the foothills area to clear vegetation (subject to resource consent) from their road verges to allow better public access along them. This would target those areas that have been identified where a road verge track with markers could simply be established as an interim measure.
- A10 70. Longer term priorities for the next stages of construction are also outlined and attached at page A10.

Conclusions regarding feasibility

71. The study has shown that a quality Foothills Walkway is feasible and could readily be created over time from Titirangi Village in the south to the Swanson Railway Station in the north. There would be some challenges in constructing some parts of the trail but these are not insurmountable.
72. The Foothills Walkway would provide a range of benefits to foothills residents as well as people living in urban areas, especially the estimated 42,000 who reside in areas adjacent to the foothills area. Importantly, the benefits provided by the Foothills Walkway reflect and achieve a number of the key objectives in LAPs developed for the foothills area.
73. Feedback from the community during consultation has been varied. However, there has been a modest level of qualified support for the concept. Further consultation would be necessary before any stage of the Foothills Walkway was to be constructed.
74. Construction of the full indicative route of the Foothills Walkway at the recommended standard is relatively costly, at an estimated minimum of \$3.7 million. Current Council budgets and priorities cannot accommodate this expenditure and it is likely only limited funding could be secured from outside sources.

75. However, the Foothills Walkway should be viewed as a long term objective. The nature of the proposed walkway route is that it could be established progressively, in stages and over any period of time as resources and priorities allow. This would reflect the long term objectives that LAPs provide in relation to an area's amenity, character and environment. A staged roll-out would ensure that the benefits were accrued while project implementation remained affordable.
76. Most of the Foothills Walkway traverses public land, however, there are key areas where access over public land would be needed. An immediate issue and key priority is to secure access to these key linkage areas now to ensure future opportunities to create the Foothills Walkway are not foreclosed upon. There is an opportunity for the Council to address this issue by progressing discussions with key landowners and to formally adopt the Foothills Walkway concept and route in the Opanuku/Henderson Valley LAP. This will ensure that a legacy action is passed on to the new Auckland Council to consider implementing in the future.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

77. The Foothills Walkway is one initiative that would clearly achieve a number of the objectives, policies and actions of LAPs related to the Waitakere Ranges foothills area on the basis that the Foothills Walkway is sensitively designed, constructed and managed. These objectives, policies and actions include:
- Enhance opportunities for wilderness and recreation experiences close to metropolitan Auckland;
 - Map and establish heritage trails;
 - Negotiate and develop public access trail networks outside of the regional park in association with landowners; and
 - Develop cycling/walking loops (originating at Oratia Village connecting to Scenic Drive and Arataki.
78. The Foothills Walkway would also deliver on the following objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008:
- to protect, restore and enhance the area and its heritage features;
 - to recognise that people live and work in the area in distinct communities, and to enable those people to provide for their social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing;
 - to provide for future uses of rural land in order to retain rural character; and
 - to protect the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the people and communities of the Auckland region and New Zealand.
79. The establishment of a Foothills Walkway, over time, would deliver on a number of Council's key strategic outcomes. These include: improving pedestrian and cycling access under the Transport Strategy; identifying and facilitating appropriate rural activities under the Economic Wellbeing Strategy; and promoting quality, connected communities under the Growth Management Strategy.
80. The Foothills Walkway initiative also aligns to a key objective in Council's Open Space Strategic Plan which is to ensure there is equitable access and a diversity of recreational opportunities and experiences.

81. Should the Foothills Walkway concept be endorsed by the Committee and the initiative progress further work would be needed to ensure it delivers on Council's Active Recreation Strategic Plan and Waitakere Recreation Cycling Strategy.

CONSULTATION

82. Between 2001 and 2004 extensive public consultation was undertaken in the development of the Oratia Reserves and Access Plan. Some of these proposed pathways are included in the foothills walkway route.
83. Other more recent preliminary consultation on the Foothills Walkway is outlined earlier in this report.
84. Extensive internal consultation has occurred with staff from Transport, Parks, Project Twin Streams, Sustainable Development and the Ranges Restoration Initiatives teams.
85. Further consultation would be needed with various sections of Council, including Leisure Services should the project progress further. Further consultation with landowners and local communities would also be needed before public access over or physical construction of any sections of the foothills walkway commenced.

RESOURCES

86. There is staff resources and funding available within Council budgets relating to the settlement of District Plan appeals that could be used, in some cases, for securing public access through strategic pieces of private land.
87. There is currently no funding allocated for the physical construction of any section of the walkway, however if the concept is endorsed by the Committee and also included in the Opanuku/Henderson Valley LAP, this would provide a legacy of action for the new Auckland Council to consider allocating resources to.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

88. The only issues in implementing the recommendations are that of timing, especially in relation to the Opanuku/Henderson Valley LAP being finalised and progressing discussions with owners of strategic pieces of land related to the Foothills Walkway. The issue will be whether the LAP can be finalised and approved by Council before the local government elections and new Auckland Council become operative. Timeframes relating to the settlement of District Plan appeals and negotiations with landowners regarding possible acquisition of public access rights for the Foothills Walkway are hard to predict. Progression of these matters may go beyond the life of the Council.

AUCKLAND COUNCIL TRANSITION ISSUES

89. The decision making proposed in this report is not constrained by section 31 of the Local Government (Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009, as it does not directly or because of its consequences: significantly prejudice the reorganisation, significantly constrain the powers or capacity of the Auckland Council or any subsidiary of the Auckland Council following the reorganisation, or have a significant negative impact on the assets or liabilities that are transferred to the Auckland Council as a result of the reorganisation.

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8 GLEN EDEN URBAN DESIGN FRAMEWORK

GLOSSARY

Glen Eden Town Centre Urban Design Framework March 2010	(the Glen Eden UDF)
Returned Services Association	(RSA)
Business Investment District	(BID)
Historic Places Trust	(HPT)
Glen Eden Community Protection Society	(GECPS)
Waikumete Protection Society	(WPS)
Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019	(LTCCP)
Development and Investment Group	(DIG)
Friends of Waikumete	(FOW)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the report is to present and seek approval from the Policy and Strategy Committee to the Glen Eden Town Centre Urban Design Framework March 2010 (Glen Eden UDF) (to be tabled at the meeting). The Glen Eden UDF was developed to provide an agreed strategic vision for future growth of the Glen Eden Town Centre. The Glen Eden UDF also addresses how identified improvements can be implemented with a focus on improving how people move around the Glen Eden Town Centre.

The Glen Eden UDF proposes a 'placemaking' approach for Glen Eden made up of a four point strategy that delivers an incremental but also transformational vision to guide the future development of this town centre.

Since the document was adopted by Council as a draft for discussion in December 2009, Council officers have consulted with key stakeholders in Glen Eden Town Centre and invited comments from the community via a feedback form. To date, the responses have been mostly positive and have highlighted issues that need to be addressed in the implementation and planning that will follow this process.

This report seeks that the Policy and Strategy Committee adopts the Glen Eden UDF as a final document.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee resolve to:

1. **Receive** the Glen Eden Urban Design Framework 2010 report.
2. **Approve** the Glen Eden Urban Design Framework dated March 2010.
3. **Direct** the Chief Executive Officer to report back to the Policy and Strategy Committee by July 2010 with a further report outlining the Implementation Plan for the Glen Eden Urban Design Framework.

BACKGROUND

1. Glen Eden is an important Town Centre providing a range of retail, service and community facilities for the wider community and catchment. Glen Eden is well served by public transport and current levels of service will continue to increase in frequency in the immediate future. Recent investment in the western rail line has seen significant increases in rail and public transport patronage. Glen Eden railway station is now ranked number 10 of all the stations in the Auckland network with approximately 1500 boardings and alightments each day.
2. The role of Glen Eden in accommodating business and residential growth has been recognised for some time (1990 City Growth Strategy, 1999 Auckland Regional Growth Strategy). This has been confirmed by the Council's Growth Management Study (2009) which acknowledges Glen Eden's role as a town centre and anticipates that Glen Eden will see population increases of up to 75% or 2,200 people (existing population 6,690) and an additional 1,200 jobs (existing jobs 3,000) over the next decade.
3. The Glen Eden Town Centre has strong anchor points for the community through the provision of social infrastructure and small scale retail. It has services and amenities which support residents and workers, providing elements of a good urban structure and placemaking. However, there are a number of characteristics of the Glen Eden Town Centre, notably the role of West Coast Road as a through road and the at-grade rail crossing at Glenview Road, which affect the function of the Glen Eden Town Centre and its amenity for pedestrians.
4. Despite having a strong basic structure to support residential intensification with a critical mass of retail, services and community infrastructure associated with public transport, there has been slow uptake of residential intensification opportunities. An overarching future vision for Glen Eden is required to further promote development opportunities and ensure that development can occur in an integrated manner along with the continued maintenance and improvement of public infrastructure.

Glen Eden Urban Design Framework 2010

5. In June 2008, Common Ground Urban Design Consultants were engaged to establish a strategic vision and associated Glen Eden UDF. The consultants were asked to provide urban design solutions for a number of specific areas identified within Glen Eden Town Centre to give shape and direction for a strong and sustainable urban revitalisation strategy. It is intended that the Glen Eden UDF be used by Council and the future Auckland Council to develop an integrated and long term programme for the investment of resources and wise planning of the Glen Eden Town Centre.

6. Key to the Glen Eden UDF was the need to address the upgrade to the railway interchange with options developed and evaluated from the perspective of the contributions to safety, connectivity, support for multi-modal transport and offering choices of walking, cycling or connections to bus services. The urban form impacts of future grade separation of the railway line and the Glenview Road crossing was considered. Though not currently identified as a project by Council, it was important to begin considering this issue given the potential significant impact on the Glen Eden Town Centre and how it operates now and in the future.
7. This assessment of the interchange options informed the strategic vision for a number of precincts identified. Each precinct has its own particular role to play in delivering the vision for Glen Eden by addressing elements of the local character (such as heritage features), the quality of the built form and public realm, identifying elements to be maintained and those to be improved or redeveloped in future planning and design assessments.
8. The Glen Eden UDF establishes strategic goals and proposals for Glen Eden:
 - Enhance pedestrian amenity;
 - Reduce the impact of the car on the Glen Eden Town Centre environment;
 - Increase lifestyle choice;
 - Enhance identity and appearance;
 - Increase visitor spending;
 - Enhance retail and commercial diversity;
 - Promote the Glen Eden railway station as the gateway to the Glen Eden Town Centre; and
 - Enhance the role of Glen Eden as a mixed use market town that services the needs of locals and visitors and maximises its role as a gateway to the West Coast.
9. The UDF was completed in October 2009 and then presented to the Policy and Strategy Committee in December 2009 as a draft document for discussion. At the 3 December 2009 Policy and Strategy Committee meeting, it was resolved as follows:

“The Policy and Strategy Committee resolved to:

1. **Receive** the Glen Eden Town Centre Urban Design Framework report.
2. **Approve** the Glen Eden Town Centre Urban Design Framework as a draft document for discussion and consultation with the community.
3. **Direct** the Chief Executive Officer to engage with landowners in the Western Precinct with regards to future development opportunities and report back to the Policy and Strategy Committee on the outcome early in 2010.”

2008/2009

DECISION MAKING

Placemaking Strategy

10. The Glen Eden UDF proposes a 'place-making' approach for Glen Eden and suggests a four point strategy where Council can drive urban interventions that will help improve amenity in Glen Eden and transform the image of the Glen Eden Town Centre. These strategic moves are capable of delivering a transformational vision to guide the future development of this town centre. Table 1 summarises these moves.

Strategic Move 1	Development of the Main Street- West Coast Road	Opportunity to develop West Coast Road as the 'shop front' of Glen Eden by developing a double-sided main street with active frontages, widening footpaths and retaining on-street car parking. In addition, upgrading the status of the Transit Precinct as the gateway to the Glen Eden Town Centre.
Strategic Move 2	Better connections between Glenmall and West Coast Road.	Opportunity to open up a new pedestrian lane connecting West Coast Road through to Glenmall. Activating frontages to the lane to ensure safety and vitality. Create a landmark building on the existing Council property at 39 Glen Mall Place to draw people into Glenmall.
Strategic Move 3	Upgrade Glenmall	Opportunity to resolve the pedestrian and vehicular conflicts in Glenmall by enhancing pedestrian amenity and connections with speed tables and replacing existing planted barrier with a planted median pathway.
Strategic Move 4	Consolidate the cultural and Entertainment Precinct.	Opportunity to consolidate the cultural and entertainment precinct by addressing the activities in the Western Precinct to complement existing land uses and ensure connectivity is maximised between the precinct and the wider Glen Eden Town Centre.

Table 1: Strategic Moves

11. The UDF then applies the placemaking vision and strategy to eight key areas or precincts of change in Glen Eden:
1. Transit Interchange Precinct;
 2. Town Centre Precinct;
 3. Western Precinct;
 4. Eastern Precinct;
 5. Work Precinct;
 6. Open Space Network;
 7. Residential Area North; and
 8. Residential Area South.

12. Within each precinct, goals and actions have been developed to realise the vision and placemaking strategy for the Glen Eden Town Centre.

Transit Interchange Precinct

13. Central Government investment in the Glen Eden railway station, and increases in the frequency of passenger services, provide the opportunity to integrate the rail and bus services into a safe and efficient transit centre connected to the Glen Eden Town Centre. A need to remedy the existing conflicting environment for pedestrians within the transit precinct has been addressed through a recommended reconfiguration of this precinct with a greater emphasis being placed on pedestrian safety and amenity, better links to the Glen Eden Town Centre from the interchange and to capitalise on the historic landmark of the station building as the 'front door' or gateway of the Glen Eden Town Centre.
14. Identifying and establishing safe pedestrian and cycle routes that connect the Transit Interchange Precinct to the surrounding residential, retail and employment areas will encourage increased patronage of public transport but also assist in repositioning the Glen Eden Town Centre as a liveable and walkable urban village.
15. The role of park and ride has been identified as a key success to Glen Eden's ongoing development as a transit oriented Town Centre. The Glen Eden UDF highlights the need to ensure that the development of park and ride at safe and accessible locations in the Glen Eden Town Centre is a key consideration for future planning. Park and ride locations need to be well connected to the Transit Interchange Precinct and have good access to the surrounding road network. It is proposed that there be more than one location for park and ride and that opportunities for shared facilities be examined in detail as a future discrete piece of work.

Town Centre Precinct

16. The Glen Eden Town Centre provides the core retail and commercial amenity for the area and should be protected and enhanced. It is imperative that Glen Eden be designed to incorporate the spirit of the main street along West Coast Road. This road, through the core of the Glen Eden Town Centre, must be identified as the primary corridor through its concentration of retail activities and streetscape treatment and should stand out as a richly designed component of the Glen Eden Town Centre system. Enhancing the physical form of the Glen Eden Town Centre by developing both sides of the main street, good articulation of facades, and a focus on corner and gateway buildings would contribute to Glen Eden being seen as an identifiable town centre. This will provide a sense of containment and in turn provide a balance to the existing traffic function of this street. The application of the Council's Citywide urban design rules in Glen Eden is recommended to ensure future development meets requirements to positively address the main street.

17. Enhancing economic activity in the Glen Eden Town Centre first through the development of a retail strategy to enhance the mix of retail and services and build a night time economy would aid in strengthening the commercial identity of the Glen Eden Town Centre and reinforce the link between economic vitality and community well being. Glen Eden is at an advantage to most other town centres in the City as it has already established a Business Investment District (BID). The BID will enable Council to work alongside the business association to enhance the physical environment, promote business creation and development, and increase employment and local business investment in this town centre. The BID is also likely to be an important forum for Council to enter into discussions with landowners about future planning for the town centre. Some of the economic revitalisation aspects of the UDF will be able to be implemented by the BID including an economic regeneration strategy, marketing approaches and improving the mix and quality of retailers in the Glen Eden Town Centre.

Western Precinct

18. The Western Precinct features a mix of community facilities, cultural attractions and character buildings. This provides an opportunity to encourage the future development of this precinct with an entertainment and community services focus that is vibrant, complementary, safe and well connected to the rest of the Glen Eden Town Centre. There is an existing critical mass of similar activities within this precinct that coupled with Council's landholding provides a unique opportunity to develop it further with a focus on community culture.
19. The recent announcement of the consolidation of the Glen Eden Returned Services Association (RSA) and the Glen Eden Bowling Club into one community sports and entertainment facility will contribute to the development of this precinct. There is also the ability for the Council to play a key role in the development of the Western Precinct by integrating this effectively into the wider vision for the Glen Eden Town Centre. This project is still at an explorative stage but provides an immediate opportunity to drive change in this area of the Glen Eden Town Centre.
20. Following the Policy and Strategy Committee meeting in December 2009, a cross – disciplinary Council project control group was established to implement the Glen Eden UDF. Work underway includes the engagement with landowners in the Western Precinct in regards to future development opportunities. This dialogue will be ongoing as the Glen Eden UDF is implemented.

Eastern Precinct

21. The Eastern Precinct is an existing commercially zoned area on the fringe of the Glen Eden Town Centre. This area has the potential to extend its commercial/retail activity to be integrated with residential mixed-use development. There is a need to ensure that the potential of this precinct with its large landholdings does not over extend itself thereby undermining the core of the town centre. Critical in the redevelopment of this precinct is to ensure active frontages to West Coast Road to support the main street and the creation of a strong gateway through the development of corner buildings that improve pedestrian amenity and contribute positively to the physical form of the Glen Eden Town Centre. Medium to high-density development that exploits this area's elevated position in the Glen Eden Town Centre would have a dramatic impact on the intensity of this town centre and its development as a mixed-use centre.

Working Precinct

22. The Working Precinct on the edge of the Glen Eden Town Centre is considered to be essential in achieving the Council's employment targets. However, this area has been under threat from ad-hoc car-based retail development. A Business Development Strategy needs to be developed to encourage new and existing businesses to become more sustainable and provide local jobs. In addition, a review of current District Plan rules is recommended to preserve this industrial land for services and businesses which contribute to the local economy in Glen Eden.

Open Space Network

23. Glen Eden's public realm and open space network requires considerable enhancement to support the growth of the Glen Eden Town Centre and improve amenity and sense of place. There is a good supply of open space in the Glen Eden Town Centre however the identity, legibility and visual connections to these spaces needs to be addressed. It is recommended that the Waikumete Cemetery is celebrated once again as a natural and historic feature of the Glen Eden Town Centre by ensuring sight lines between the Waikumete Cemetery and the Glen Eden Town Centre notably the transport interchange are identified and protected to ensure that the close proximity and historical relationship are maximised upon.
24. In addition, opportunities to enhance and create new linkages to other open spaces including the gully systems and nearby streams need to be examined with a focus on preservation and the unique benefits these have in contributing to sense of place as a town centre grows and intensifies. The promotion of a network of open spaces in Glen Eden that is linked into the wider movement network adds to the attractiveness of Glen Eden as a place to live, work, and play.

Residential Areas North and South

25. Glen Eden has been identified as an ideal location for residential intensification because of its strategic location and ability to integrate land use and transport. It is recognised that while this will change the community over time, this needs to be balanced with the positive outcome of locating more residents within close proximity to the Glen Eden Town Centre and transport interchange. It is recommended that Council encourage and provide for future residential growth in Glen Eden by ensuring that the surrounding residential areas are well connected to the Glen Eden Town Centre and transport precinct, and through the development of guidelines which outline the expectations including quality standards for future residential development. The introduction of controls in the District Plan to ensure that future development is appropriate for its context and meets design guidelines for apartments and medium-density development is crucial to ensure good quality intensification takes place. It is also recommended that a review of the existing building stock is undertaken to identify building typologies and character features that are to be protected.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

26. The Glen Eden UDF contributes to achieving the following community outcomes:
 - a) **Green Network – He tuituitanga kariki** – creation and improvement of the **green network** from the town centre to surrounding open space including the Waikumete Cemetery; retention and enhancement of the natural environment within the area subject to **town centre growth management planning; and iwi engagement and consultation;**

- b) **Strong Communities – He iwi kaha** – creation of more attractive and active streets in the Glen Eden Town Centre improving connections between essential community infrastructure and opportunities for social engagement and overall wellbeing of the community. Progressing **Glen Eden recreation facilities development**;
 - c) **Strong Economy – He Tupuranga Kaha Ihi wana** – stimulation of business growth and job creation through **employment area planning and transport planning and advocacy**;
 - d) **Sustainable integrated transport – Kauneke tauwhiro taiao** – integration of a transport and land-use initiatives and promotion of a walkable Glen Eden Town Centre with pedestrian crossing and general public realm improvement projects;
 - e) **Sustainable Environment – Kuaneke Tauwhiro Taiao** – promotion of sustainable urban development with efficient use of land, environmental building practices, walkable neighbourhoods and the use of local produce and services; and
 - f) **Urban and Rural Villages – Nga Kainga Taone Tuawhenua** – framework for future urban development that is sufficiently dense and close to the public transport interchange and amenities and services to create a self sustaining and vibrant Glen Eden Town Centre.
27. The Glen Eden UDF contributes to achieving the following Council strategies:
- a) **Social – creating a great living place.** The Glen Eden UDF will guide the delivery of a built environment that is accessible, sustainable and promotes the health and wellbeing of all people and the development of affordable, sustainable and healthy housing;
 - b) **Economic Wellbeing – provision of a sustainable supply of business land and enabling infrastructure.** The Glen Eden UDF ensures that economic objectives are included in urban development planning and promotes associated infrastructure investment;
 - c) **Environment – green network.** The Glen Eden UDF promotes the maintenance, protection and enhancement of Glen Eden's natural environment, specifically the Waikumete Cemetery;
 - d) **Cultural wellbeing – vibrant celebrating community; vibrant sustainable environment of arts and cultural activity; and heritage is identified, protected and promoted.** The Glen Eden UDF promotes the provision of artistic, cultural, leisure and learning activities and infrastructure (venues and sites) in the Western Precinct of Glen Eden; and
 - e) **Governance – people from all walks of life are well represented and are actively participating in the decision making process of the City.** Community consultation on the Glen Eden UDF will present opportunities for all residents of Glen Eden to engage with Council. Council will use the Glen Eden UDF as a means of displaying visionary leadership.
 - f) **Growth Management:**
 - **coordinate urban expansion and intensification with growth needs.** The Glen Eden UDF is the vehicle for integrated Glen Eden Town Centre planning with local communities, landowners and stakeholders and will ensure development is aligned to the Waitakere District Plan;
 - **promote quality compact and connected communities and urban environments.** The Glen Eden UDF establishes design guidelines and may lead to a Waitakere District Plan change that encourages high quality building;

- **protect, restore and enhance highly valued and sensitive natural areas and landscapes.** The Glen Eden UDF seeks to maintain, protect and enhance the green network;
 - **Foster economic development of the right type, at the right place and at the right time.** The Glen Eden UDF identifies opportunities for employment area growth; and
 - **Plan with key infrastructure providers and stakeholders to provide local access to core services.** The Glen Eden UDF identifies opportunities for further social infrastructure provision in Glen Eden required as a consequence of growth plans.
- g) **Transport:**
- **Integrated land-use/transport planning and increased local employment.** The Glen Eden UDF focuses future growth on Glen Eden Town Centre, integrating people, business and transport;
 - **Better passenger transport infrastructure and services.** The Glen Eden UDF promotes further investment in Glen Eden's rail/bus interchange and its park and rise facility; and
 - **Improve access for pedestrians and cyclists.** The Glen Eden UDF increases Glen Eden's walking and cycling network and improves conditions through traffic management, urban design, safety and maintenance.

CONSULTATION

28. Ongoing consultation has taken place with Council officers, including a facilitated internal workshop in August 2008. This has ensured that the Glen Eden UDF captured the Glen Eden Town Centre issues across all technical areas including transport, infrastructure, social infrastructure, parks, crime prevention through environmental design, and urban design. Consultation with key staff will continue through the implementation of the Glen Eden UDF.

Community and Stakeholder Feedback

29. Since the adoption of the UDF as a draft for consultation, workshops and meetings have been held with key community groups including the Glen Eden Community Protection Society (GECPS), Friends of Waikumete (FOW), Glen Eden BID, Glen Eden Primary School, Glen Eden Bowling Club and the RSA. Historic Places Trust (HPT) were also consulted with. In addition to stakeholder consultation community feedback was received via a feedback form following a month long exhibition at the Glen Eden Library and display materials within some Glen Eden Town Centre businesses. The feedback to the UDF is summarised in Table 2.

Issue	Explanation	Response
Mix of businesses	<p>Comments were received regarding the current mix of retail businesses in Glen Eden including the proliferation of \$2 shops and not enough local employment opportunities.</p> <p>Comments also supported the approach outlined in the Glen Eden UDF stating the need for Council to lead in creating more local employment and more services.</p>	<p>The Glen Eden UDF highlights the need for an Economic Regeneration Strategy to provide the required guidance to re-invent the Glen Eden Town Centre. There is a need to promote a sustainable economic system in Glen Eden whereby retail, local employment, services and small businesses are able to support the needs and desires of the community. This is a next step identified in the Glen Eden UDF.</p>

<p>Pedestrian Safety in Glen Eden- Vehicle Speeds</p>	<p>Comments related to the unsafe crossing points in the Glen Eden Town Centre especially for children the elderly and less able bodied persons.</p> <p>Also vehicle speeds were raised as contributing to an unsafe environment on West Coast Road and accessing the public transport interchange.</p> <p>Pedestrian Safety in Glenmall was highlighted as an issue requiring immediate attention.</p>	<p>A budget was allocated in the Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019 (LTCCP) for pedestrian improvements to the Glen Eden Town Centre in the year 2010/2011.</p> <p>The Glen Eden UDF recommends several interventions that would decrease vehicle speeds through the Glen Eden Town Centre and improve pedestrian amenity within the Glen Eden Town Centre.</p>
<p>Car Parking</p>	<p>Comments were received regarding the need for more park and ride facilities and the detrimental effect that park and ride was having on car parks available for shoppers.</p> <p>Support for the approach in the Glen Eden UDF for park and ride was received noting that it needs to be in a safe well lit and accessible location preferably with Closed Circuit Television Surveillance.</p> <p>The time allocated for parking spaces was raised as not being conducive to the types of commercial uses in the Glen Eden Town Centre (eg Hair Dressers and Dentists)</p> <p>Strong opposition to paid parking was raised as it would provide malls with an unfair advantage of town centre strip shops.</p>	<p>The Glen Eden UDF identifies the need for two park and ride facilities in Glen Eden. There is budget in the LTCCP in 2012/2013 financial year to deliver two park and ride facilities. This does not include budget required for land purchases.</p> <p>Survey work is underway with regards to the current on street and off street parking in Glen Eden. In the 2010/2011 financial year this work will be used to inform the Glen Eden Town Centre Parking Plan and this will hopefully address this issue. This parking plan will also discuss the option of paid parking in Glen Eden.</p>
<p>Maori World View</p>	<p>Feedback was received based on a Whanau Ora Health Impact Assessment held by that the Glen Eden UDF does not adequately address the māori world view of Glen Eden.</p> <p>Need to recognise cultural diversity of Glen Eden community.</p>	<p>There is a need to have further engagement with Hapai Te Hauora Tapui Ltd with regards to how their assessment could be incorporated in advancing the next phase of planning.</p> <p>This also highlights that there is a need for wider cultural mapping in Glen Eden and ongoing consultation with other ethnic groups.</p>

<p>Heritage and Character</p>	<p>The need for a comprehensive Glen Eden Town Centre Heritage assessment was raised with a recommendation that this work be undertaken as the next immediate phase to follow the Glen Eden UDF.</p> <p>Support was received for the review of the District Plan Heritage controls and consideration of including view shafts and additional character buildings and features.</p> <p>The Waikumete Cemetery was highlighted as an important cultural, historical and place making asset in the Glen Eden Town Centre. Support was received for a greater emphasis on encouraging the relationship between the Waikumete Cemetery and the Glen Eden Town Centre including connections, ongoing management and opening up the Waikumete Road entrance to encourage this linkage.</p>	<p>The need for a stocktake and review of the existing heritage features is raised as an outcome in the Glen Eden UDF.</p> <p>The UDF highlights the importance of the Waikumete Cemetery as a key open space and historical asset of the Glen Eden Town Centre. It is recommended that the ongoing relationship between the Waikumete Cemetery and Glen Eden Town Centre is enhanced through a change to the District Plan, upgrading existing connections between West Coast Road and the Transit Precinct and the Cemetery, and specifically investigating the role of the Chapel and Sextons house in enhancing the western area of Waikumete Cemetery.</p>
<p>Town Centre Physical Form</p>	<p>Feedback received supported the laneway connection between Glenmall and West Coast Road and vital to encourage greater visibility and the future development of Glenmall. It is considered to be an intervention that would create a stronger relationship between the main street and Glenmall.</p> <p>General comments were received regarding the general amenities and maintenance of the Glen Eden Town Centre as requiring immediate attention.</p> <p>Support was received for the improvement of the West Coast Road streetscape provided that on street parking to support the retailers was maintained.</p> <p>Support was received for the concept of enhancing the gateways of the Glen Eden Town Centre. Comments were received regarding the need to also slow traffic down when entering and driving through the Glen Eden Town Centre.</p>	<p>The proposals within the Glen Eden UDF which address the issues raised in the feedback will require capital expenditure, the investment of the private sector and District Plan Changes.</p> <p>These interventions will be identified within the implementation plan to accompany the Glen Eden UDF but to be prepared separately.</p>

<p>Open Space</p>	<p>Feedback received highlighted the role of open space in Glen Eden and need for more local sports facilities.</p>	<p>The Glen Eden UDF identified that Glen Eden Town Centre public realm needs considerable enhancement. It also identified the opportunity for the cemetery to provide significant recreation and walkway opportunities.</p> <p>The streams, gully and waterways also provide open space opportunities and need to be explored further.</p>
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Table 2: Summary of Consultation Feedback.

30. The feedback received has generally supported the principles and proposed placemaking strategy outlined in the Glen Eden UDF. The issues and comments raised are related predominantly to the next steps and implementation programme required to deliver the vision for the Glen Eden Town Centre. In response to the community and stakeholder consultation there have been no changes to the Glen Eden UDF.

RESOURCES

31. A budget of \$609,000.00 over the next two financial years was allocated in the LTCCP for pedestrian improvements to the Glen Eden Town Centre. Contained within the Glen Eden UDF are several proposals that could be implemented with this budget. A recommendation will be made following the adoption of the Glen Eden UDF as a final document. The proposed pedestrian safety improvements will need to be taken back to Council's Infrastructure and Works Committee for approval at the start of the 2010/2011 financial year.
32. Budget of \$106,000 for 2011/2012 and \$2,168,000 in 2012/2013 has been allocated in the LTCCP for a Glen Eden park and ride.
33. Budget is also provided for in the LTCCP for the new leisure centre for Glen Eden/ New Lynn catchment. The planning and options analysis for this work will begin in 2011/12, with the new building due to be completed in 2014/2015.
34. There are no further implications for the LTCCP at this time. Council funds will be required to deliver the implementation strategy once prepared.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

Next Steps

35. The success of the Glen Eden UDF is dependant upon the willingness and capacity of all stakeholder groups to implement the vision. The community and Council's vision for Glen Eden Town Centre cannot be achieved through public investment alone. The implementation of the Glen Eden UDF will only occur through the commitment of the Council, local businesses, community groups and key property owners. The Council can influence change in Glen Eden in the following key ways:

- 1) Allocating funds through the LTCCP;
 - 2) Ongoing work with the Glen Eden BID to implement their business plan and guide their strategic thinking;
 - 3) Providing guidance and strategic advice on the Economic Regeneration of Glen Eden Town Centre;
 - 4) Redeveloping Council owned strategic landholdings (e.g. 39 Glenmall Place);
 - 5) Implementing approved capital works (e.g. road, streetscape and pedestrian improvements);
 - 6) Acquiring property in strategic locations (e.g. to deliver park and ride, the new laneway connection to Glenmall);
 - 7) Amending the District Plan to require adherence to urban design controls and improved heritage controls; and
 - 8) Working with local businesses, community groups and key property owners (e.g. working with HPT, FOW, GECPS, RSA, Bowling Club, and Playhouse Theatre Trust).
36. An implementation plan will be developed that will outline the actions and projects that will help achieve the goals of the Glen Eden UDF. This will be reported back to the Policy and Strategy Committee in July 2010.
37. The actions and projects will be broken down into a series of short term (0-5 years), medium term (6-10 years) and long term (10+years) timeframes. Based on consultation and those steps recommended in the UDF the short term steps will include actions such as a District Plan Change to introduce urban design rules and smaller scale projects that have already been identified in the 2009-2019 LTCCP including pedestrian safety improvements, park and ride, and the public transport precinct upgrades. Medium and long term projects are those that require more significant capital investments including land purchases. The overall implementation process will take the cooperation of multiple sectors, both public and private, over a long term timeframe. These will need to be prioritised by the new Auckland Council.
38. The Glen Eden UDF is intended to be a strong document that will guide the planning for the next phase of Glen Eden Town Centre. The adoption of the Glen Eden UDF as a final document will enable an agreed and robust plan for the future implementation of key projects and to be ready for handover to the Auckland Council.

AUCKLAND COUNCIL TRANSITION ISSUES

39. The decision making proposed in this report is not constrained by section 31 of the Local Government (Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009, as it does not directly or because of its consequences: significantly prejudice the reorganisation, significantly constrain the powers or capacity of the Auckland Council or any subsidiary of the Auckland Council following the reorganisation, or have a significant negative impact on the assets or liabilities that are transferred to the Auckland Council as a result of the reorganisation.

Report prepared by: Caisey Marter: Strategic Advisor: Urban Planning and Design.



9 HOUSING RETROFIT UPDATE APRIL 2010

GLOSSARY

Beacon Pathway Limited	(Beacon)
Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority	(EECA)
Housing Retrofit Project	(the Project)
Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019	(LTCCP)
Auckland Transition Agency	(ATA)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update the Policy and Strategy Committee on the progress to date and next steps to deliver the proposed work programme for the Housing Retrofit Project (the Project). The work programme also outlines the proposed steps and engagement with the Auckland Transition Agency (ATA) to ensure the Project can be handed over to the Auckland Council for their ongoing implementation.

There are some ongoing tasks that will continue over the next few months and it is proposed to officially commence the Project after 1 July 2010. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA) is seeking to partner with the Council in establishing the first Auckland based WarmUp New Zealand insulation and efficient home heating programme and wants to ensure that the Project is a first step towards an Auckland-wide programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee resolve to:

1. **Receive** the Housing Retrofit Update April 2010 report.
2. **Agree**, subject to resolution 3 below, that the Council enter into a partner agreement with the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority to deliver the Housing Retrofit Project and the WarmUp New Zealand programme.
3. **Agree** that resolution 2 above be subject to confirmation by the Auckland Transition Agency.
4. **Note** that implementation of any future Auckland Housing Retrofit will be a future consideration of the Auckland Council post – June 2011.

BACKGROUND

1. At the 2 April 2009 Policy and Strategy Committee meeting, it was resolved as follows:

“The Policy and Strategy Committee resolved to:

***Direct** the Chief Executive Officer to report back to the Policy and Strategy Committee by June 2009 with a detailed Business Plan for the Housing Retrofit Project”.*

523/2009

2. At the 6 August 2009 Policy and Strategy Committee meeting, it was resolved as follows:

“The Policy and Strategy Committee resolved to:

1. **Approve** the Housing Retrofit Work Programme and the launch of the Housing Retrofit Project from 1 July 2010.
2. **Agree** that in the interim progress be made towards collating an inventory of the housing retrofits carried out to date in Waitakere and facilitate uptake of the Government’s retrofit package by offering top-up loans to be paid back through targeted rates.”

1355/2009

3. EECA submitted to the Long Term Council Community Plan 2009-2019 (LTCCP) in support of the Council’s concept for housing retrofits and also encouraged the Council to consider a targeted rate as a means of offering loans to homeowners in Waitakere. Council officers have continued to work with EECA and other councils who are delivering various forms of retrofit programmes relating to insulation, home heating and solar water heating systems and to share in the learnings, financial options (such as loans, grants and subsidies), templates and programme delivery options.
4. The Government announced its home insulation package WarmUp New Zealand in the May 2009 Budget, offering subsidies for home insulation and heating delivered through EECA. These subsidies for insulation and heat pumps are not means-tested and are available to all home owners. The Government is also encouraging banks, power retailers and local authorities to consider providing top-up loans to assist home owners. EECA are supportive of the Project and are keen to support an Auckland location for the WarmUp New Zealand programme.

DECISION MAKING

Issues

5. A draft business plan was developed in discussion with Beacon Pathway Limited (Beacon) and EECA in 2009. The current work programme, based on the business plan, establishes a number of key tasks to enable a launch of the Project from 1 July 2010. Council officers have been meeting with EECA and other participant councils across New Zealand to acquire insight into other retrofit-type programmes and to share in the processes, documentation and learnings from the participating councils’ processes.
6. To implement the Project, Council officers have had to consider a number of processes to develop and deliver the Project. Processes will be required to be developed to:
- i) Manage the relationship with EECA;
 - ii) Engage with the relevant suppliers of the key components of the Project;
 - iii) Implement the Project home assessment processes and identification of retrofit elements per home;
 - iv) Implement the project management and resourcing of the Project; and
 - v) Implement the financial procedures and process to enable the loan facilities to be put in place.
7. While in itself each process can be readily defined and implemented it is the interrelationship and alignment of the processes that require management and co-ordination.

Documentation

8. In addition to these essential processes, Council officers need to develop a number of key documents to support each of the processes identified above. The Council is fortunate that EECA has been able to support this task and the Council has obtained a number of key documents which are currently being reviewed and adapted for the Council's use.

Learnings

9. As a shareholder of Beacon, the Council has also benefited from the research learnings developed by Beacon over the last five years. Beacon has developed a home assessment process and documentation which will be key to the Project's implementation. For the Project to be successful the identification of the retrofit options is fundamental and the Beacon approach is tested and robust and will provide a strong researched base for the Project.

Auckland Transition Agency

10. While the Council has identified and budgeted the funding to develop and implement the home loans per household, the Council has not to date presented the Project to the ATA. EECA has presented information to the ATA informing them about the WarmUp New Zealand programme. EECA have further confirmed that they would be available to meet with the ATA to support any engagement with the ATA to get the Project underway. EECA will also enter into an agreement with the Council and would anticipate the Project gaining the future support of the Auckland Council.
11. Council officers have also been engaging with officers from other Auckland councils. Both Manukau City and Auckland City Councils will be receiving updates and information from the Project as it gets underway with the intention to make more formal presentations to these councils over the next few months.

Next Steps

12. Negotiation of an agreement between Council and the EECA will proceed. Confirmation by the ATA of the Council's decision on the Project proceeding will also be necessary and will be sought with the support of EECA. The best approach in presenting the Project to the Auckland Council will be to illustrate and present a Project that is up and running. Consideration of the best approach to do this will be part of the next steps.
13. Funding is only currently available for one financial year and is proposed to be carried forward from the Annual Plan 2009/2010 to the 2010/2011 financial year. Successful uptake and delivery of the Project will be key to any future funding allocations by the Auckland Council.

Consideration of Community Views

14. The Project and rates postponement proposal were consulted on during the LTCCP in 2009. No further consultation has been undertaken as the Council's decision to proceed with the Project has been the accepted mandate for the work to date.

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

15. The relevant Community Outcomes for the Project include:
 - a) Strong Economy – through providing local jobs and training opportunities;
 - b) Sustainable Environment – through being a leader in sustainable housing and building practices; and
 - c) Healthy lifestyles – by improving household energy efficiency and indoor environmental quality.
16. The Project would facilitate the Government's WarmUp New Zealand programme delivered in partnership with EECA by raising householder awareness of the benefit of home retrofits and offering loans to undertake any work.
17. The Project and any future regional retrofit programme would contribute to the Auckland Sustainability Framework goal for a unique outstanding environment by addressing the region's ecological footprint and building a carbon neutral future through improved energy and water efficiency and reducing waste.
18. The Project would contribute to the strategic priority of Sustainable Development, by providing 'green jobs,' training and employment opportunities, and improved economic certainty for businesses that support the programme.
19. Retrofitting the Waitakere housing stock contributes towards meeting the targets for greenhouse gas emissions, water use and waste in the Environment Strategy 2008.
20. The goals of the Waitakere Action Plan on Climate Change and Energy are to reduce the City's greenhouse gas emissions, compared to 2001 levels, by 15% per person by 2010; and by 40% per person by 2021. Beacon research shows that an environmentally sustainable housing retrofit programme would be an effective action towards these goals.

CONSULTATION

21. Consultation with staff of Ecowater, Community Wellbeing and Strategic Planning assists in the co-ordination of existing Council projects that contribute to the Project outcomes and will assist in the development of the next steps.
22. Consultation has continued with Beacon and EECA, to develop all the relevant parts of the Project to ensure its successful launch.

RESOURCES

23. The development of the Project to date is funded from existing Strategic Planning budgets for the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 financial years. The \$1 million funding required to provide the loan facility, is to be carried forward from the Annual Plan 2009/2010 to the 2010/2011 financial year. The loan funding approach continues to be planned on a cost neutral basis.
24. One of the key resources that will be required prior to the Project launch will be the appointment of a dedicated Project Manager. Current funding is available to seek approval for that position from existing budgets.

IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES

25. A number of key implementation issues need to be progressed to achieve the 1 July 2010 launch. In particular, confirmation of all the necessary processes and documentation matters need to be finalised

AUCKLAND COUNCIL TRANSITION ISSUES

26. The Local Government (Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009 imposes restrictions on Waitakere City Council's decision making capabilities in respect of the Project and the Council's decision is subject to:
- 4 (i) to enter into any contract (other than an employment agreement)-
- (i) that imposes, or will continue to impose, any obligation on the existing local authority after 30 June 2011; and
 - (ii) the consideration for which is, or is equivalent to, \$20,000 or more.
27. Confirmation of Council approval will be required from the ATA in terms of 4(i)(i) even though any individual loan will not trigger 4(i)(ii) above. The fact that the Auckland Council will continue to have obligations from individual land owners for any loans is considered to trigger the relevant provisions of the local Government (Tamaki Makaurau Reorganisation) Act 2009.

Report prepared by: Lesley Jenkins, Deputy Director, Strategic Planning and Carol Bergquist, Manager Environment Strategy.



10 PROPOSED LOCAL AREA PLANS - UPDATES

