

THEY WENT FORTH



Trials and Triumphs of a Pioneer SIM Missionary in Ethiopia

*A record of Alf Roke's experiences in Ethiopia and the Anglo-Egyptian
Sudan during the period 1929 to 1947*

EPILOGUE

By way of an epilogue I include the following article compiled by Don in recognition of our 70th. wedding anniversary:

70th. Wedding Anniversary of Alfred George [Alf] and Christina Minnie McLennan [Tina] Roke

Alf and Tina were married twice on the 3rd. March 1932 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia - once at the British Consulate, as required by the Foreign Marriages Act - 1892, and then again in the Sudan Interior Mission headquarters lounge with Rev. G. Rhoad, one of their fellow missionaries, officiating

Alf was born at Paparata on 11th. March 1904, the eldest child of Harry and Elizabeth Roke whose parents emigrated to New Zealand in 1865 on the ship Bombay and settled in the south Auckland area named after the ship. The family were keen supporters of the Salvation Army and ensured their children were similarly provided with a strong Christian upbringing. As Alf puts it "our parents used their gentle influence to incline us towards the Christian faith".

Soon after Alf's fifth birthday the family moved to Matakana where they established the Roke Brothers timber milling business where he learned many practical skills which were later put to good use on the mission field. Following primary schooling at Matakana, Alf worked at a number of milling and farming jobs in the district and later joined with an uncle operating a timber mill at Kaipara Flat.

During this time Alf enrolled in a correspondence course in electrical engineering, which he continued until he entered the N. Z. Bible Training Institute. To further his electrical career Alf took up an apprenticeship with an Auckland company which necessitated a move to the city. He attended a small mission type of church in Newmarket where his Bible class leader was J. Oswald Sanders, then a first year B. T. I. student.

Also attending the Newmarket Community Church were Alf's sister, Ruth and Tina McLennan, whom he had first met at Matakana on the day after his mother's death. Tina was born at Arch Hill on the 11th. August 1906 and was brought up in a family operating a horse-drawn cartage business with stables situated in Lorne Street. Her father, Donald McLennan, was a maritime engineer involved in the coastal shipping trade, mainly on the North Auckland coast. He was also the first life member of the Auckland Seamen's Union, having been in membership for 64 years.

Alf was baptised at a Ngaruawahia Easter camp at a time when preaching about the subject of the Lord's return was widespread, with particular emphasis in relation to missionary work. He says "I was so overwhelmed by the call of the mission field that I abandoned my electrical training and applied to the N. Z. Bible Training Institute for a course there". He graduated in 1926, receiving a prize as one of two students with the best year's work.

Following his graduation Alf undertook several outreach missions in company with fellow student Cliff Reay and later with Les Taylor and Gotley Nagel. The first was to the Great Barrier Island where they called on every inhabited location on the island. They followed this with a trip to familiar northern areas, travelling on foot and holding meetings along the way including Silverdale, Matakana, Warkworth and Kaipara Flats etc. Their next trip was made in an old ambulance enabling a more extensive coverage of the North, eventually ending in an accident near Kaeo.

By this time Alf and Tina had become engaged and she was enrolled in the B. T. I. Alf had been accepted by the S. I. M. in 1928 and, with their encouragement while waiting for an opportunity to go to his chosen field, he served a term as minister of the Gore Baptist Church. This also enabled him to get his outfit and passage money together.

On the 2nd. October 1929 Alf, along with Laurie Davison and two others, was farewelled by R. A. Laidlaw at a meeting in the Tabernacle and they set out by ship for Ethiopia via Australia, Aden and Djibouti and then by train up to Addis Ababa. Then came the long journey south down the Rift Valley by mule and by foot to his first station, Marako, where he moved in with C. H. Barton and applied himself to language study. Later he was transferred further south to Homacho in the Sidamo province.

Tina was farewelled by Rev. Kemp in October 1930 at a meeting, also at the Tabernacle, and arrived in Addis Ababa on 16th. December where Alf met her, having made a brief trip up from his station. He then returned and Tina remained the required time to concentrate on language study. The time eventually came to arrange the wedding. Much of the arranging had to be done by letter. The mail carrier took up to two to three weeks for a one way trip!

Immediately following the wedding Alf and Tina commenced a camping and horseback honeymoon trip down to their Homacho station. They visited three other stations on the way, giving Tina opportunity to meet some of their fellow workers. Alf says "Then the arrival at our station, what rejoicing. Never before had the local people have one of their missionaries bring a wife to live among them. The whole situation was changed and it was now for us to show what Christian life in ordinary circumstances meant."

Much could be said of their adventures, trials and experiences at

Homacho. These were happy and fruitful years, language study and scripture translation; medical work, gradually earning the confidence of the local people, establishing a small group of believers and participating in the formation of an indigenous church work. The first Homacho baptism on Christmas day, 1932 was an occasion of great rejoicing and significance.

Their time at Homacho was brought to an end in January 1936 by the Italian invasion when they returned to New Zealand to undertake extended deputation work. It was during this period that Alf published his book *An Indigenous Church in Action* which eventually led to a re-evaluation of Mission practice in Ethiopia.

The way eventually opened in 1938 for a return, this time to assist in the establishment of a new S. I. M. work in the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. The Rokes were initially based at Mission headquarters in Khartoum and later relocated up the White Nile to set up a new station at Banjang.

Following the liberation of Ethiopia they returned in 1944 to their service in that country, based in Addis Ababa, but undertaking frequent visits to assist in the re-establishment of the southern mission stations so familiar to them from their earlier work. They were witnesses to the now well documented miracle of the multiplication of the indigenous churches that had occurred in the absence of foreign missions work during the Italian occupancy.

Alf and Tina returned home to N. Z. with their family in 1947, travelling on the Wanganella when it ran aground on Barretts Reef. Having by then resigned from the Mission, Alf took the first formal pastorate of the Kumeu Baptist Church in 1948. They purchased a block of land in Henderson Valley, and built a home there, where they were able to run a small poultry farm to supplement their Church stipend and support the education of their four children.

While pastoring at Kumeu, Alf assisted the Auckland Baptist Association in an outreach to Henderson, where eventually a Baptist Church was formed in 1950, with Alf as its first pastor. From Henderson they moved to Hamilton in 1959, where Alf pastored the Fairfield Baptist Church for a number of years, followed by short periods as pastor of the St. Albans Baptist Church in Christchurch, then at Te Awamutu and lastly at Otorohanga.

Following his retirement Alf and Tina returned to their home in Henderson Valley where Alf still lives on his own. Tina suffered a progressive illness over her latter years which has necessitated her being cared for at West Harbour Gardens Rest Home where she now resides.

The House That McCahon Lived In

It's an unlikely setting for a national shrine. A 1940s bach on the wrong side of a ridge — a dark, damp, diminutive house in Auckland's Titirangi bush.

But artist Colin McCahon (1919-1987) lived there with wife Anne and their four young children, and because of that, the bach is going to be kept for posterity by a high-powered trust with the muscle of Waitakere City Council behind it. As well, a spanking new house and studio are being built alongside, to offer three-month artist-in-residence opportunities to New Zealand and overseas applicants.

McCahon bought the Oritori Bay Road house in 1953. As it turned out, he spent just seven years there compared to 27 at two different Grey Lynn addresses. But when the house was offered to the Waitakere City Council by Jacqueline Amoamo, who'd known McCahon and herself lived there for 41 years, mayor Bob Harvey seized the chance to nail down the Waitakere brand of arts promotion.

Support for artists was not always so staunch in Titirangi. McCahon's third youngest, Victoria Carr of Auckland, has mixed memories of her time there. "We learned Dad's term 'philistines' quickly — the attackers of good art, the unbelievers who destroy things." He meant the people who thought "there was this bohemian lifestyle, nudity and immorality because he was an artist. It was never like that, we did have people staying and visiting, there was open-door hospitality but we never had orgies!"

There were no luxuries save running water either and the toilet was a Casco can, emptied into the garden once a week. "My father loved gardening."

On winter nights the children would compete to be the one hanging off the mantelpiece over the little fireplace. The dining table was a door fixed to the wall and resting on kauri blocks. "Dad made that." Couches were doors covered with mattresses.

At first, the children slept in a tiny bedroom under the living room, in the space where the section slopes down into a gully. Access was by ladder and trapdoor. Later, McCahon built two beds in a bay open to the weather (for the girls), and two beds (for the boys) in the little roadside garage.

It was not all grim, though. McCahon's friend and collaborator, Christchurch poet John Caselberg, calls this period the "sun-dancing times when the McCahons lived and walked and Colin painted at French Bay".

Says Victoria: "We were given encouragement to draw, paint, do cut-outs, make puppets. We'd draw on any bit of the butcher paper that didn't have blood on it, or the blank sides of Weeties packets."

The children went to an interdenominational Sunday School. In the evenings they listened (with Dad) to *Life With Dexter* and *My Word* on the radio. There were bantams that roosted in the kauri trees and laid eggs in the doorless wardrobe of the sleeping bay. "We were given the two original bantams, Cocky Boy and Mabel, they had four offspring and had this ritual of walking as a family three times round the house every morning. But the neighbours complained about their veges being eaten. So the bantams went."

But the house stayed, for another 43 years, along with the kitchen plate rack with knitting needles as dividers, and the little trapezoid shaped garage barely big enough to hold a Morris Minor.

Jacqueline Amoamo made almost no alterations to the house, mainly because it suited her and her husband to live in a simple bach in the bush, but also because she had a growing sense that McCahon was a remarkable painter whose life needed to be celebrated. "My

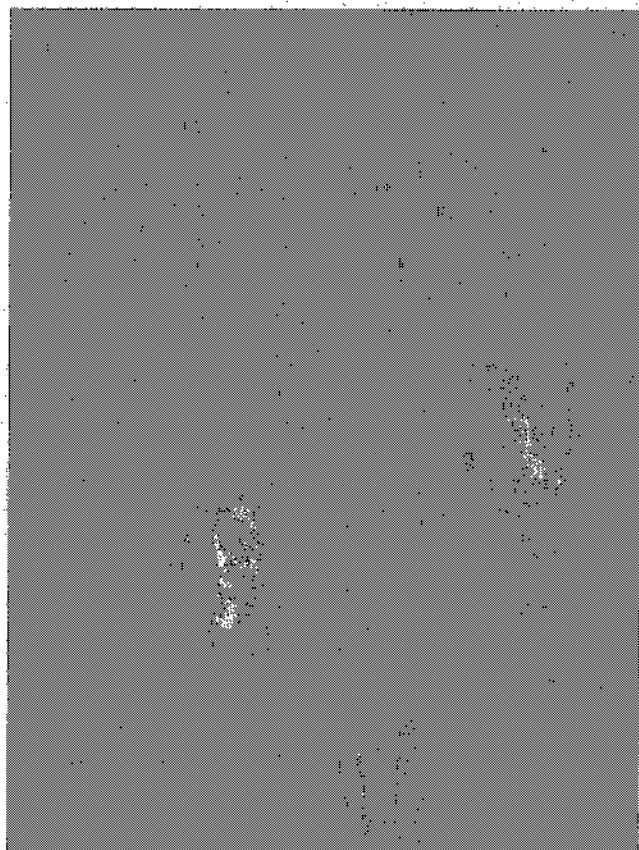
Four Corners

admiration for McCahon is that to have a job [he worked at the Auckland City Art Gallery], try and paint, try to refurbish the house and make it as habitable as he could — it's quite extraordinary."

The McCahon house project was launched last spring with completion targeted for early 2005. Financial backing for the estimated \$2.5 million project has come from Sky City, Auckland's Community Trust and the Portage Licensing Trust among others.

Auckland conservation architect Graeme Burgess is restoring the existing bach and garage; (Te Papa) architect Pete Bossley has designed the new house and studio. Both are mindful of the huge place McCahon occupies in the New Zealand art world.

Bossley claims this is the first building designed from scratch for a New Zealand artist-in-residence programme. His plans have been partly determined by "the incredible density of kauri trees" on the site, and the fact many of McCahon's French Bay paintings paid homage to the trees of Titirangi.



To reflect the artist's massive multi-panelled paintings of the 1950s, the new house and studio will be seen from the exterior as a series of panels hanging in the trees.

Burgess has a different focus. "One rule of conservation is you don't use your imagination," he says. "It's like a piece of forensics, you take evidence from the physical reality of the building, and from photographs."

"We'll be doing things very slowly, to make sure nothing that's essential is destroyed. The house tells a story; we hope not to obscure it, but rather to record that story. McCahon has got a life way beyond the life he led. He's had a tremendous influence in this country, and perhaps beyond. But the house also tells the story of how so many people lived in the 1950s."

Graeme Wilson ■

Piha Radio Community Trust

&

Piha Radio 88fm

Directors:

Mark Mitchinson

Justin Harwood

Peter Chapman

The Piha Radio Charter

- Piha Radio 88fm will be a community radio station focused on the encouragement and development of local issues and interests.
- The Piha community will be served and supported through radio and web access to promote the dissemination of all ideas and viewpoints and to enhance the inclusion of the community by offering a focal point and collective voice.
- Through the web streaming, the opportunities and uniqueness of the Piha area will be promoted around the world.
- Piha Radio 88fm will be a public service for the public good without obligation to individual or business interests.

Operating Model

Piha Radio operates as a Public Service Radio. Through community funding and patron contributions, the station will be able to offer an open platform for the community focused primarily on community issues and interests. The programming is designed to reflect the diversity of the community, while following a focused schedule to ensure familiarity and offer a regular timetable for destination listening. (Destination listening is tuning into a particular program of interest).

Funding

The funding for the Trust will be split between community funding, patron endowments and fundraising events. This liberates the station from a commercial imperative that can warp or limit the delivery of content due to specific interests of the commercial bodies. This does not count out the input of private business and individual interests, it only serves to ensure the interests of the bodies do not affect the delivery of aforementioned charter.

Programming

Programming is based on community input and the voluntary support of individuals. Announcers and program creators will be given access to the radio station and assigned a programming slot based on their content. In return they give up time and energy, which is the lifeblood of the station. If they are offering a similar program to an existing one, an attempt will be made to separate the programs to maintain variety for the listener. Piha Radio will accommodate all interests within the community within the limitations of time and availability of the schedule. The community will be encouraged to participate, and restrictions will be limited to an existing program or the quality of the program on technical grounds.

Local Iwi will be a very important aspect to the programming schedule and will become an essential part of the Piha Radio's representation.

Management

The station will be managed under a volunteer system with the three founding directors overseeing the operation. If and when financial resources become available, a paid manager will be employed by the Trust to run and manage the operation. This will enable the station to offer even more services and variety. It is expected a management model will be introduced upon the commencement of the Trust with the requirements of the trust and station in mind.

Presently the Trust is under the management of the directors, Mark Mitchinson, Justin Harwood and Pete Chapman.

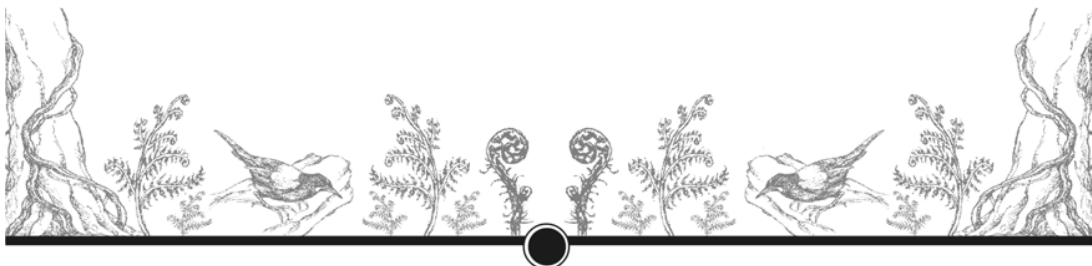
THE WAITAKERE RANGES PROJECT



PHASE ONE COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

SUMMARY AND WORKSHOP NOTES

FEBRUARY 2004



Foreword:

From members of the Political Liaison Group

The special nature and importance of the Waitakere Ranges has been well documented over many years of community discussion through the West Coast Plan, District Plan and Structure Plan processes. As you will be aware, the purpose of this project is to assess whether the Waitakere Ranges have adequate protection so that their unique ecological nature is maintained and they can be enjoyed by future generations.

Over September through to November last year around 1000 people took part in the community consultation for the Ranges project through workshops, completing comment forms and taking part in a telephone survey. That level of interest and commitment reflects how important this issue is to many people and we would like to thank all those who took the time to participate in these discussions. It was clear from the consultation that there was a high level of support for enhanced levels of protection for the Ranges, particularly over the long term.

This report summarises the results of the consultation and is a base for phase two of the consultation. In phase two we will be consulting the community on possible actions/responses to better protect the Ranges. These might include ways to work better with the community as well as changes to and/or development of new plans and legislation.

Again we thank you very much for your contribution and look forward to your continued involvement.

WAITAKERE RANGES PROJECT

PHASE ONE: COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

The Council is currently undertaking a project to determine whether medium to long-term protection of the Ranges area is adequate, and if not, what should be done. This has involved pulling together the research and information relating to the Ranges, looking at how the Ranges are currently managed, what gaps exist and how they might potentially be filled. The Council and its partners in this project are keen to undertake this work in close consultation with the community.

This report is a summary of the consultation undertaken in phase one (described below). It brings together the workshop discussions, comments forms and the results from the regional phone survey. The views contained within this report are the views culled from the consultation and are not necessarily the views of the Council or its partners.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Phase 1 consultation for the Waitakere Ranges project sought to stimulate discussion on the health of the Waitakere Ranges area, the issues threatening protection of the area, and the gaps in management. A number of participants also debated potential responses/solutions, although this was not the primary aim.

Phase 1 included a review of past relevant consultations, a regional telephone survey, Community Board displays, a series of fourteen geographically based workshop meetings plus a workshop with business interests and written comment forms (see section 3 and appendices for more detail).

There was acknowledgement of the amount of work and effort undertaken by all parties, particularly in the development of the West Coast Plan and District Plan and the extensive community/council dialogues and agreements that brought these documents into being. This exercise builds on this work.

Out of the consultation, the following conclusions and comments can be drawn:

Are the Ranges protected enough?

- From the information gathered in phase one of the community consultation, it is clear that most people believe that the Ranges are not currently protected enough now and for the future, and that something 'extra' is needed.

Animal pests and weed issue

- There is an extremely high level of agreement that weeds and animal pests are a threat to the Ranges. More resources are needed for better community engagement programmes (information, advice, education, assistance and incentives for property owners and renters, and support for volunteers), and an increased operational budget for weed and animal pest control on public land. Better co-ordination among agencies and between agencies, garden centres and property owners would bring better results. Assistance from the community is vital to achieve successful weed removal and regeneration with more appropriate species in many areas.

Visitor issue

- While opinion on whether or not visitor numbers are a threat to the Ranges is more evenly divided, most participants agreed that visitors will continue to come to the area, and that the focus should be on good management of their impacts.

Development/subdivision issue

- Most people think that development, especially subdivision, is the major challenge facing the Ranges.
- The area experiencing most subdivision pressure, most potential for new subdivision under the District Plan, and where most community concern is focussed, is the eastern foothills.
- Coastal villages, especially Piha, are also under development pressure, and the rapidly changing nature of the built environment due to new development, especially 'sleepouts' and redevelopment of old baches, is an issue for many.

- Generally participants are satisfied that the District Plan policy and rules represent a reasonably balanced approach to land use management in the Ranges area, apart from the issues of subdivision in the foothills and protection of landscape.
- The key concerns arising in this area were:
 - Many participants believe that the Resource Management Act provisions do not provide enough certainty or permanence for areas with high natural values and significant development pressures – development continues to ‘eat away at the edges’. These concerns are:
 - Certainty: the Resource Management Act provisions, that can enable development beyond that envisaged by the standards in the current District Plan through non-complying activity applications, do not provide enough certainty as to the outcomes for the Ranges area. Decisions on these non-complying activity applications focus on ‘effects’ of the development, and many are of the opinion that the long term cumulative effects of a number of similar developments are hard to measure and are not adequately taken into account.
 - Permanence: In addition, the provisions in the RMA for changes to District Plans and Regional Policy Statements and Plans, and important components of these plans such as the Metropolitan Urban Limit, together with the ten yearly statutory review of these plans, mean policy and rules contained in the plans can be changed. It was considered by many that the standards around subdivision and development need to be more long-term than the life of the District Plan.
 - Many participants are concerned that the ‘effects’ focus of the RMA and District Plan are not providing enough defence against cumulative adverse effects (the many small actions and decisions that, taken together, add up to a major impact – this was encapsulated by the Parliamentary Commissioner for the Environment’s description of this as ‘death by a thousand cuts’).

Possible responses

- It is generally accepted that the outcome of the Waitakere Ranges Protection project is unlikely to be one single solution or response. Rather, a ‘package’ of actions is likely to emerge from the process.
- There was only a limited amount of discussion around responses, however, the conclusion most often discussed was that some form of legislation is required to provide ‘a line in the sand’ - better certainty about the current application of the standards and permanence of the standards into the future. Suggestions included a World Heritage Park status and/or some kind of ‘freezing’ of the subdivision/development provisions in the District Plan for the Ranges area.
- The arguments put forward against legislation of this nature were:
 - The District Plan and Resource Management Act provide adequate long term protection for the Ranges, the potential for development is now very limited and the trend (in Plan reviews and changes) is towards an increased level of protection
 - The right to appeal to the Environment Court is part of democracy, and future generations have the right to make their own decisions
 - There needs to be a greater level of trust that people in the future will look after the land.
 - Provision of public amenity should not be at the expense of private landowners, nor should they lose entitlements existing at the time the land was purchased
 - Further restrictions may penalise those who have not developed and who protected the environment, through loss of property value. It was felt that compensation issues may arise.

Other issues

- Other important issues raised through the consultation were:
 - The need to provide proper legal protection in perpetuity for the Waitakere Ranges parkland
 - The desire for a land purchase programme to add to public reserves
 - The need to better enforce existing rules,
 - The long-term importance of education, incentives and assistance

- Ways to better resource these programmes
- Concern about fire as a threat to the Ranges area
- The role of the foothills in protecting the Ranges and discussion on the boundary of the 'Ranges'.

3. SUMMARY OF RESULTS – WAITAKERE RANGES PROJECT PHASE ONE CONSULTATION

3.1. Introduction

This section sets the regional context from the results of telephone surveys, comments on the outcomes of past consultations in Waitakere City, and brings together the results of the Phase 1 consultation exercise for the Waitakere Ranges project conducted over the period September to November 2003, including the workshops, the Community Board displays and the comments forms.

3.2. Regional Perceptions

Regional surveys have found that residents of the region place considerable value on the natural environment of the region, with the beaches and the coast, the natural environment in general and good access to parks and open spaces considered to be a key contributors to quality of life. The Waitakere Ranges is a favourite place - 60% of Aucklanders visited the Waitakere Ranges at least once in the past year, with most visiting the beaches and foothills areas.

Changes for the better noticed in the Ranges include better roading, more bush walks and reserves, improved facilities and signage and better environmental preservation. Changes for the worse included over development/too much housing and increased traffic.

Most Aucklanders (around 80%) were either very concerned or concerned for the environment in the Auckland region, with residents of Waitakere showing particularly common concern for issues of urban sprawl and waste and rubbish disposal. Among the major concerns for the environment in the region were water and air pollution, waste, loss of native plant and animal species and forests and wetland habitats, destruction of heritage sites, weed and animal pests, coastal erosion and soil and land erosion.

3.3. Past Consultations in Waitakere City

Past consultation exercises have highlighted the high value placed on the natural environment – its natural features and unique character - by the people of Waitakere City. Local communities especially valued natural features in the locality and felt strongly about the need for protection, and there was widespread support for measures to protect the bush and wildlife, clean up streams, restore vegetation on stream banks and protect ridgelines from development. The differences of opinion lay with the extent to which key activities are compatible with this overall aim of environmental protection. The most contentious issues were land subdivision and development and controls on design and colour of buildings.

3.4. Results from Waitakere Ranges project phase I consultation (2003)

As indicated elsewhere in this report, the workshop discussions focused on four key issues - weeds and pests, visitors, development and the wider question of are the Ranges adequately protected now and for the future. The results of each of the fifteen workshop meetings are set out at Appendix 4.

The Community Board displays focused on the wider issue of protection, as described elsewhere in this report. In addition, 102 written comment forms were received.

The discussions are summarised under these four key issues, with a further heading for additional issues that were raised.

3.4.1. Animal Pests and Weeds

The consultation indicated that there is very strong agreement in the community that weeds and animal pests are a major threat to the Ranges.

3.4.1.1. Animal Pests

A wide variety of animal pests were identified through the consultation workshops including possums, mustelids (ferrets, weasels and stoats), rodents, feral pigs and goats, rabbits (especially in the duneland at Bethells/Te Henga), feral cats, domestic cats, dogs (kill birds such as penguins), cockatoos and exotic pest fish. The dumping of unwanted cats in the Ranges was acknowledged as a problem.

These animals can damage ecological values in the Ranges by eating native vegetation, competing with native species for food/habitat/nesting sites, predated the young of native species, for example eggs and chicks of native birds, and/or predated native adult species, for example birds, insects, fish, frogs, skinks. - "Why is the bush so silent?" (Swanson comment).

The success of the Auckland Regional Council's possum control programme in the Ranges area, "Operation Forest Save", was acknowledged by many of the workshops, as were the animal pest control and monitoring programmes being undertaken by the community, for example the La Trobe and Karekare Mainland Islands, (pest free areas) and Ark in the Park in the Cascade Kauri Park.

Management suggestions emerging from the discussions included:

- The need for a vision to capture the community imagination and interest, for example by using icons such as kereru and tui, and for good strategies, and for the community and public authorities to work together on the issue.
- The importance of education and face-to-face advice/demonstration to heighten public awareness of the threat posed by animal pests and achieve better ability to identify pests, and better knowledge of trapping and monitoring methods.
- Concern that more resourcing is necessary for improving control programmes by Councils, and providing better levels of education, advice and assistance to private landowners to manage animal pests on their own land, for example, provision of free or subsidised pest traps and bait.
- Some believe that there should be a programme to ban or discourage domestic ownership of cats and dogs in sensitive areas, or to neuter them.

3.4.1.2. Weeds

The enormity of the weed challenge in the Waitakere Ranges was acknowledged by many of the workshops with the Titirangi/Laingholm area, in particular, being identified as the 'biggest weed problem in the Ranges' (Laingholm workshop). Many participants observed that land that is 'locked up' will still not be protected because of the need to actively manage weeds on an ongoing basis. Infestations from neighbouring land are especially disheartening, with unoccupied land, road edges, rental properties and Waitakere City Council and Auckland Regional Council reserves being particularly identified as weed sources. The Waitakere Township workshop singled out the rail corridor as being a weed concern.

A number of participants felt that subdivision contributes to the spread of weeds while others commented on the difficulty, both physically and financially, of controlling weeds on larger lots. The dumping of garden weeds in the Ranges where they can spread and the role of garden centres in selling environmentally damaging plants that then 'escape' to become a pest were of concern, for example "need to talk the nurseries out of selling some plants" (Te Atatu Peninsula). The use of herbicides to control weeds and the 'pro versus anti spray debate' was raised "these may be the only feasible way of dealing with some weeds – need to find a balance".

The importance of replanting areas where weeds have been removed with more appropriate vegetation was acknowledged, and the scarcity of public funding for such restoration work recognised. For example, the Huia workshop noted the increase in wilding pine seedlings from large pines in the local Regional Park, and it was suggested that a programme of gradual clearing of the adult pines, weed clearance and replanting could only be done with community help.

Many of the workshops drew attention to work being undertaken by both the community and the Councils to address these issues, for example, some ratepayers associations are developing packages for new residents that include information on weeds.

Volunteer groups, such as Laingholm Weedfree, focus on weed control, although burnout of volunteers working with weeds was mentioned as an issue. Waitakere City's 'free weed bins' the work of the Waitakere Weed Free Trust and the Green Network Incentives programme that assists people to remove weeds and replant, and were all acknowledged, although "demand is greatly exceeding the resource". Waitakere City staff were complimented on "the good job they are doing with publicity and talking to neighbours".

There were numerous suggestions arising from the consultation to achieve better management of weeds.

- The need for more resources to enable extension of operational programmes, monitoring and research, more education and better financing of assistance and incentive programmes. "There is an understanding of what needs to be done but the funding is not there to do it" (Huia workshop)
- The desire to see public authorities such as the Waitakere City Council and the Auckland Regional Council setting a good example in weed management on public land.
- Set up a Trust to actively attract funding to support weed and pest programmes
- The importance of more monitoring and research, "including alternatives to the 'spray and leave' approach" (Waiatarua workshop).
- Make use of available labour such as periodic detention workers.
- Better use of the authority/regulation that does exist
- More assistance to landowners. It was suggested that this may reduce the pressure to subdivide. Examples of useful assistance were more frequent provision of weed bins, and free or subsidised:
 - weedkiller and plants to replace weeds,
 - pest traps and bait,
 - mulch for areas cleared of weeds and replanted, and
 - well advertised collection/disposal of weedy material
- The importance of education to generate community awareness, improve knowledge about weeds and pests and their impacts and management, awareness of legal responsibilities and the assistance available, was stressed in many of the workshops. Specific suggestions (many from the Titirangi workshop) were information that encourages weed recognition, local lists of inappropriate plants and appropriate replacements, advice on control methods, making people aware of the impact of dumping weeds and telling people the 'good news' stories. Mechanisms discussed for distributing the messages included use of the Waitakere City News (although some do not receive it), real estate agents, new resident packages and 'more mixed media'. It was remarked that 'showing people is often more effective'.

3.4.2. Visitors

Opinion over all of the workshops was widely spread on the issue of whether visitor numbers are a major threat to the Ranges. Feeling that visitors can be a threat surfaced most strongly at the Coastal Villages of Bethells/Te Henga, Piha and Karekare, together with Waiatarua. In a number of the workshops, limited discussion occurred on visitors, since it was not considered one of the most pressing of the issues facing the Ranges area.

It was pointed out that visitor pressures in the Ranges area are nowhere near what they are in the UK, although there was some discussion of the increase in visitor pressure on the Ranges as the regional population expands. The Regional Council indicated that it currently has a policy of not promoting the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park.

There was a strong message from many that the Ranges are not just for the locals and that they play an important part in the recreational needs of the region "there is a need for Aucklanders to use their leisure more actively" (Swanson workshop). A Piha participant observed that "the needs of visitors for recreation must be balanced with the

needs of residents". Many are of the opinion that visitors can contribute positively to the environment.

Positive effects of visitors identified during the consultation focused on their contribution to the local economy, for example, "need to continue selling organic fruit in the foothills as an economic base" (Massey workshop) and "there are economic benefits brought by visitors" (Oratia workshop). Others doubted the economic benefits, for example, "visitors have little to spend their money on in the Ranges - tourism is not generally the answer to prosperity" (Laingholm workshop).

Discussion on commercial ventures in the Ranges brought some adverse comment, for example on the impacts of 'commercial visitors' that go off-track "twenty to thirty people abseiling down a waterfall week after week has an impact" (Waiatarua workshop). It was pointed out in a comments form that visitors are attracted to the Ranges as they are in their present condition, and any unsympathetic development would detract and discourage visitors - "encourage visitors and job creation in the tourism and film industries that harmonise with the natural environment of the Ranges and helps provide funding for their preservation".

Some participants pointed out that visitors can become an advocate for the area "young people need to come out here to be educated about the environment so they can take care of the environment in the future" (Huia workshop) and that the energy of visitors can be harnessed to help environmental protection projects such as trapping and baiting animal pests.

A significant number of adverse impacts that visitors can have were identified. These include:

- More traffic and bad driving/high speeds resulting in hazardous roads
- Weeds introduced by visitors "visitors come in and bring weeds on their feet" (Kelston /Henderson workshop)
- Wear on the tracks
- Overcrowding "we need visitor management or we won't have an uncrowded experience" (Laingholm workshop)
- Destruction of nature
- Property vandalism
- Over-harvesting of shellfish
- Badly controlled dogs fouling the beach and threatening people and wildlife
- Need for more facilities such as toilets, carparks and water supplies, their capital and maintenance costs, and the burden on ratepayers.
- The visual impact of signage and facilities for the benefit of visitors "Council toilets are on the skyline" (Karekare workshop)

There was also some level of concern about the safety of visitors and their property, for example, the lack of lifeguards at Whatipu and the security of cars in visitor carparks, and the misunderstanding by some visitors about the level of facility available at the beaches, for example, some don't know that there is no petrol available.

In general, there was an acceptance that visitors will continue to come, and the focus should be on managing their impacts and providing appropriate facilities that fit in with the natural environment.

Much of the workshop discussions focused on the need to balance visitors' rights and needs and their impact on the environment, and methods of managing these impacts. Suggestions included:

- A ranger to look after facilities, manage visitors and enforce the rules
- Lock beachfront areas at night
- Properly authorise and manage eco-tourism operators
- Keep the roads to Whatipu and Anawhata unsealed to self-limit visitor numbers
- Provide more urban parks to cater for regional visitors' needs closer to home
- Set a 'sensible range of traffic speeds on the roads – not 100 km/hour'
- Develop traffic calming areas
- Redesign Waitakere City Council rubbish bins at beaches and provide more regular rubbish collections
- Increase fines for littering/dumping
- Install video cameras at certain 'problem areas'
- Learn from good management examples elsewhere
- Develop good local visitor management strategies, and "provide for a varied range of activities such as horse riding, mountain biking"
- Co-ordinate better between agencies "people don't understand who does what" (Huia workshop)
- Need for agencies and communities to work jointly
- Develop mechanisms that would act as a deterrent as well as raising funding for preservation initiatives and/or visitor facilities and roads, such as:
 - a toll barrier on beach access roads (with free swipe cards or stickers for residents)
 - carparking charges

Note: one of the Titirangi groups voted by show of hands on whether mechanisms for charging visitors should be investigated, with a result of nine for and seventeen against.

- Limit carparking spaces
- Provide alternative means of transport to the private car
- Provide a weekend bus (two hour turnaround) as a cheaper alternative to more carparks. Provide a lay-by for buses
- Organise traffic reports at weekends about the beaches
- Develop more educational opportunities, materials and programmes. Suggestions included:
 - Signage near the beginning of the beach access roads to inform people what facilities are available
 - Education about respecting the environment "encourage people to come but teach them to respect the environment" (Oratia workshop)
 - Promote the character/history of the area

3.4.3. Development

3.4.3.1. *Is development considered a threat?*

The statement relating to development led to much discussion on the definition of development and the boundary of the Ranges, leading to a number of groups agreeing to change their 'H diagram' statements (see appendix 5).

Despite the variance in the statement, the general indication is that a strong majority of participants in the community workshops believe that development is an important issue that can threaten the Ranges. Although many participants in the Bethells/Te Henga workshop indicated that they think development is a major threat in the Ranges as a whole, a strong majority thought that development is not a threat to Bethells/Te Henga. The other workshop where a significant majority felt that development is not a major threat to the Ranges was Group 3 at Titirangi.

A number of workshops indicated by vote that, of the three key issues raised (weeds and pests, visitors and development), development considerations are the most important priority in protecting the Ranges. The following comment from the Oratia workshop illustrates this opinion “weeds/pests you can deal with but once you build, you can’t reverse it, its gone”.

3.4.3.2. *What is ‘development’?*

Some discussion focused on the meaning of ‘development’ in this context, and the differences between subdivision and development. “Subdivision is a threat, but adding a room is not” (Waitakere township). A number of participants at Waiatarua felt that only subdivision is a major threat, and development as allowed for under the District Plan is OK as long as the rules are consistently applied & enforced. “The controversy then arises between those who want new rights to subdivide and those saying that existing limitations should prevail at least” (Swanson Workshop).

3.4.3.3. *Pressure of Population Growth*

There was discussion at many of the workshops on the pressure that rapid regional population growth in the Auckland Region exerts for subdivision/development in the Ranges area, for example “biggest threat in future may be a space issue - trying to accommodate increases in population” (Oratia workshop) and “population expected to double, people living in tool sheds, 30-40 people living in a single family dwelling - can’t stop progress, development is an open word” (Waiatarua workshop) and “the long-term impact of this pressure on the internationally important Ranges has to be lined up against the need to find more places for people to live”. (Waiatarua workshop).

The pressures on landowners to subdivide and develop were recognised at some meetings, for example “people tend to put as many houses on their land as possible” (Laingholm workshop), “view in New Zealand that we subdivide and sell land and give to children as their inheritance. What happens when the plot gets too small to subdivide? – then we will need to think of other ways. Concerned that we will lose what we currently have to make a short term profit. – we have one chance to preserve what we have - once we lose it, its gone” (Titirangi workshop).

3.4.3.4. *Impacts of Development*

Most meetings discussed impacts that development can have on the Waitakere Ranges area, and these are outlined below with a range of example comments from the various consultation exercises.

A number of workshop participants perceived positive impacts of development, particularly that water and streams have benefited from the vegetation growth that has occurred in the past 100 years, since the area was clear felled, and that development has facilitated this growth, for example “Ranges are regenerated through development” (Kelston/Henderson workshop), “development has aided bush improvement” (Waiatarua workshop), and “experience of past subdivisions in Titirangi, built parks, walkways, etc, trees grew up, has created a diverse area” (Oratia workshop). Others commented that that the clearances a hundred years ago should not be used as the benchmark for clearance “year zero is not 100 years ago - cleared areas/weeds not a reason to subdivide” (Laingholm workshop).

Adverse impacts of development that were discussed included ecological issues such as:

- Bush clearance and pruning, for example “poisoning trees in rectangles for views” (Waiatarua workshop), “Waitakere Ranges are unique but some people who come to live here want to clear, have lawns & exotics, but is not the right place for them” (Oratia workshop) and “Council should re-look at trees where a few branches are chopped off year by year” (Titirangi workshop).

- Loss of biodiversity, for example, “sensitive fauna and flora never survives intrusion” (Swanson workshop),
- The spread of weeds and the increase in windows (hazards for birds), for example “Ten times as many windows for wood pigeons to break their necks on’ and “many new lots increases the numbers of weeds and pests and windows” (Laingholm workshop)
- Impact on water quality, streams and downstream ecology of more impermeable surfaces and reduction in bush cover eg “Bush clearance has effects on downstream streams and ecology” (Titirangi workshop), “impermeable surfaces are a problem for streams” (Laingholm workshop) and “subdivision is more of a problem in foothills - stormwater runoff has more effect on areas like Massey, Henderson and the Upper Harbour” (Oratia workshop).

Adverse impacts on landscape were considered important “Council (in its role of regulator of development) should be focusing on keeping the visual/natural beauty” (Piha workshop). Landscape impacts noted were:

- Loss of visual amenity for example, “bad development that overwhelms the natural” (Piha workshop) “some developments change the face of the area” (Laingholm workshop)
- Building on scenic ridgelines “many large ugly houses on ridge tops” (Waiatarua workshop).
- The effects of the colour of buildings (or the amount of light reflected from that colour) on the visual quality of the Ranges was discussed at the Karekare workshop e.g. “can’t have bright red houses sticking out”, although some people believed this is a small issue and further debate is not wanted on it
- “Want controls over development sympathetic to environment/landscape. There are no controls on design of houses, ‘where a building is located on the property is important to how it looks”(Huia workshop)
- Concern was voiced about the impact of ‘sleepout’ development in Piha on the landscape values.

The potential adverse effects of on-site sewage disposal in rural and coastal communities were discussed “the future of Piha is at risk/sewage/on site” (Piha workshop), and “increased population putting pressure on septic systems” (Summerlands/Sturges).

Other impacts discussed were increased stormwater runoff and erosion, for example, “land use damaging soils and waterways” (Oratia workshop), the “effects on quality of life of those living there - e.g. noise, dogs, pollution, etc.” (Swanson workshop). One participant at Karekare noted that development can impact on what makes a place special – “sense of place; Karekare was wilderness once, but this has changed”.

3.4.3.5. Long-term protection from adverse impacts of development

Much of the discussion on development in the Ranges and means of long-term protection focused on regulation, especially issues relating to the ability of the New Zealand planning system (District Plan and Resource Management Act) to adequately protect outstanding natural areas. This debate is set out in the next section ‘Are the Waitakere Ranges Protected?’

Some of the other means of guarding against the adverse impacts of development and fostering a stewardship ethic in residents that were discussed in the workshops are related to District Plan administration policy, relating to public notification of applications and better/more consistent enforcement of regulations. Other suggested means were improved public education about the District Plan rules and to help achieve development that blends better with the natural environment, better monitoring of the effectiveness of District Plan rules, a better level of assistance to owners of land with high natural values, more promotion of covenants and a better programme of land acquisition for reserve

purposes. The wider planning issue of finding places elsewhere to provide adequate housing for Auckland's growing population was also raised. Comments included:

- “Lack of controls by Council over ‘naughty’ subdividers” (Swanson workshop)
- “Lack of consistency of interpretation of the rules and/or understanding of the rules” (Piha workshop)
- “Current experience of a lack of public notification/consultation (regarding new developments)” (Piha workshop)
- “When do things get notified? How do we find out? Limited discretionary activities are not notified. Discretionary can be notified but are not always. Careful not to make process more complex than it needs to be.” (Karekare workshop)
- “Current rules need to be monitored through and after the consent process (e.g. edge effects, root damage to Kauri) – current programme not good enough” (Titirangi workshop)
- “Education more important than rules as rules get broken all the time – new people often have no idea” (Oratia workshop)
- “Have all working to same goal. Have confidence that next generations will look after the ranges. We’re bringing them up and they are responsible” (Bethells/Te Henga workshop)
- “Incentive programmes are limited – demand greatly exceeds resources” (Swanson workshop)
- “Need to support large landowners staying on their land – subdividing or becoming a park would be a problem here” (Bethells/Te Henga workshop)
- “In bush/coastal areas living design guidelines could help achieve development that blends in better – financial incentives could help”(Huia workshop)
- “Education is needed – resource consents – local knowledge, local expectation, more inspections” (Piha workshop)
- “Covenants should be better promoted” (Swanson workshop)
- “Acquisition (of land for reserves) – where to get the money? Ability to respond to opportunities” (Piha workshop)

Given development pressures the need to find more places for people to live was also noted of importance in protecting the Ranges.

3.4.3.6. Vacant land – development Potential

Particular concern was voiced at Huia and Karekare about the number of blocks of private land in the Ranges area not yet developed with houses, and the impact of these being developed. In Waitakere Township, a participant suggested that “amalgamation of titles should be promoted”.

3.4.3.7. Development in the Foothills

The issue of appropriate levels of development in the foothills sparked some debate in the workshops. The development pressure on the foothills, being adjacent to the Metropolitan Urban Limit was acknowledged and the impact of subdivision and development discussed:

- “in the foothills subdivision pressure is enormous”
- “Auckland pressures will only increase (Oratia workshop)
- “Believe Structure Plans will change area so no longer want to live there, e.g. Swanson Structure Plan” (Oratia workshop)
- “drove through Swanson – “fungus” – horrified by sprawling development – rest of foothills will be covered in fungus like North Shore” (Waiatarua workshop)
- “there are more lots in the foothills through structure plans from the current Council than Go Waitakere”
- “Council permitted activities and non-complying activities – if someone is allowed 2 lots they go for 7. There are 50-60 appeals on the WRPS books at the moment – its got to stop”
- “WRPS has had a hell of a battle fighting District Plan provisions for 10 years – starting again in a few years” (Karekare workshop).

Other participants felt that subdivision and development in the foothills under structure plans is not a threat. Comments from the Oratia workshop:

- “through process Environment Court, Judge clear that would benefit land”,
- “think room for subdivision but only on land with no bush”
- “Happy with Structure Plan”

and from the Swanson workshop

- “History of District Plans is to become more restrictive”, and
- “Sensible or ‘controlled’ development can lead to enhancement or more stewardship of the Waitakere Ranges environment”

illustrate this view.

Discussion raised the issue of the role of the foothills area in the protection of the outstanding ecological and landscape values further up into the Ranges area. Comments included:

- “Why foothills important? – buffer for weeds. For visitors, area is gateway to escape the city” (Oratia workshop)
- “Prevent urban encroachment and incremental degradation, and consider the foothills area in this regard” (Comments form)
- “Centennial Park needs a buffer zone” (Piha workshop)
- “Foothills seen as an important buffer worthy of better protection” (Swanson workshop)
- “The parkland is protected but not the coastal villages or foothills” (Swanson workshop)

Discussion of what future actions should be taken in the foothills included:

- “Current specific land development such as structure plans should not be allowed” (Waiatarua workshop)
- “Remove/don’t use new Foothills Structure Plan lots” (Titirangi workshop)
- “Some of the Foothills area may be able to be subdivisible into half or one acre blocks (3 acres being too small anyway for farming)” (Comments form)
- “Leave as it is – 100% green (foothills) flood protection/runoff” (Te Atatu Peninsula workshop)
- “Foothills are also unique – threat is \$\$\$s from subdivision - need to define heritage area and give value, e.g. tourism and filming” (Oratia workshop)
- Create a buffer zone in the foothills area between urban area and the Ranges, by maintaining low density housing which keeps a balance between the two, while avoiding pressure on existing infrastructure (Comment form)
- “Good to stop now in foothills; problems arise in foothills (e.g. structure plans). Once plan settled, nothing more” (Massey workshop)
- “Since Council staff delineated concept and structure plan there has been a problem; need buffer zone” (Massey workshop)
- Avoid any problems that development might bring, such as storm-water runoff. (Comments form)
- A Management Plan for the foothills” (Karekare workshop)
- Foothills – why buffer zone?

3.4.4. Are the Ranges Protected?

Eighteen of the workshops addressed the statement “the Ranges are adequately protected now and for the future”, including two workshop groups at Massey, three at Swanson and three at Titirangi. Participants were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement by placing a sticky dot somewhere on a line between ‘agree’ and ‘disagree’. Apart from the Waitakere Township workshop and Workgroup 1 at Massey, where most thought that the Ranges are adequately protected,

and the Te Atatu Peninsula workshop where opinion was evenly divided, there was significant agreement among workshop participants that the Ranges are not adequately protected now and for the future.

The exercise was also undertaken at the Massey Library by the Massey Community Board, and during this survey of 27 participants, nobody agreed, or partially agreed with the statement. In workshop Group 3 at Titirangi, participants considered the statement 'the Ranges (Titirangi) are protected now and for the future', with opinion evenly divided on this issue.

3.4.4.1. Why don't people think the Ranges are protected?

Some of the major issues raised relate to development, especially subdivision, and how well the method of regulating subdivision and development under the District Plan and the Resource Management Act is working for the Waitakere Ranges area. A description of the system of regulatory control of land use in New Zealand is set out below to assist understanding of the issues raised.

3.4.4.2. Comments on the District Plan

Although there were a few issues with the District Plan, notably subdivision provisions in the Foothills Environment and some concerns with the management of development in the coastal villages (especially Piha), the content of the District Plan was not, in general, an issue of controversy.

The consultation indicates that many participants are relatively satisfied with the District Plan, or at least most parts of it, and feel that after the considerable effort put into the development of the Plan, on the whole it represents a reasonably balanced approach to land use regulation, as the following comments demonstrate.

- "Happy with District Plan now" (Te Atatu Peninsula workshop)
- "Think that we have reached a good compromise in the District Plan" and "District plan is being managed positively; it has allowed interaction with community and council. Council consulting more. It has reduced number of subdivisions hugely, or potential. Feel like we're being heard. Which is great, but we're caught up in layers of bureaucracy and rules" (Bethells/Te Henga workshop)
- "Horrendous if Council considers changing the Oratia Structure Plan" (Oratia workshop)
- "WRPS is happy with the provisions of the District Plan at a high level, except it is not properly protecting landscape and believe subdivision that is non-complying should be prohibited" (Karekare workshop)
- "Find weak points in District Plan, don't change it all" (Massey workshop).

Most of the participants in the Phase 1 consultation who voiced disquiet about the current land use management system for the Ranges area, focused on issues relating to the Resource Management Act and the planning system and whether it can provide adequate long-term protection for the Ranges, rather than the contents of the District Plan itself.

3.4.4.3. What are the concerns?

Effectiveness of the Resource Management Act (RMA) and the District Plan

Some concerns related to the effectiveness of the Resource Management Act (RMA) and the District Plan in protecting valued areas from what is perceived to be inappropriate development. These were particularly the perceived shortcomings of the 'effects' basis for planning under the RMA, the seeming inability of the planning system to guard against cumulative effects (the many small decisions and actions that can add up to a major effect), and the 'enabling' nature of District Plans under the RMA.

- "The RMA does not work in this area. Lots of small applications each time, death by a thousand cuts" (Karekare workshop)

- “Need to review what’s happening, lots of little clearances, little buildings add up – cumulative effects” (Waiatarua workshop)
- “RMA is an enabling Act, and there were no grounds to refuse the ‘Little Muddy’ subdivision”
- “Lots of small applications each time. Death by a thousand cuts” (Karekare workshop)
- “The gradual picking away that can happen under the current District Plan/RMA. Need to do something” (Huia workshop)
- “Each piece of land development unchecked by RMA has a net cumulative effect” (Waiatarua workshop)

Lack of permanence/certainty under the Resource Management system

Many concerns focused on the lack of permanence/certainty under the Resource Management system, and the concern that non-complying activities, plan changes and plan reviews (including the review of the Metropolitan Urban Limit under the Regional Policy statement), over many years, will lead to degradation of the outstanding values of the Ranges.

The ability to apply for non-complying activity:

- “District Plan rules can be sidelined through non-complying consent applications” (Piha workshop)
- “Horrorified by RMA as allows anyone to do anything - managed through the courts, no structure. If you don’t draw lines now will have nothing left to protect” (Kelston workshop)
- “Biggest danger is Environmental Court and RMA” (Karekare workshop)
- “The District Plan is a line in the sand, but many consents are issued, especially non-complying consents. For people that want to go beyond the rules the process should be stricter” (Laingholm workshop)
- “We need certainty that the rules will be followed – no waivers on current District Plan” (Titirangi workshop)
- “District Plan is not hard and firm – defence in hands of volunteers” (Waiatarua workshop)
- “Not confident that preset rules are fixed, people basically greedy/don’t know if they’ll treasure the land” (Kelston/Henderson workshop)
- “District Plan is open to challenge/allows subdivisions” (Waitakere Township)
- “District Plan controls are not stopping inappropriate development” (Laingholm workshop)
- “Departures from District Plan are being allowed (under any Council elected)” (Waiatarua workshop)

The ability to change District Plans

- “The District Plan has possibly some balance, but it can be overturned at any time” (Kelston workshop)
- “There is no guarantee that the current (District Plan) regulations will not be lifted” (Piha workshop)
- “Not acceptable that Council plans can be overturned by the Environment Court” (Waitakere Township)

The ten yearly review requirement for the District Plan, and reviews of the Metropolitan Urban Limit (MUL)

- “Don’t have a degree of certainty with District Plan being reviewed” (Bethells/Te Henga workshop)
- “No certainty under any of the plans – 10 years review of the District Plan; Metropolitan Urban Limit every 5 years etc. What the Ranges need is some certainty” (Huia workshop)
- “The biggest issue in relation to permanence is the Environment Court and the RMA review process, because this allows people to chip away at the rules and allows for a

- 10 year review – some people don't want to re-litigate existing plans" (Karekare workshop)
- "The District Plan lasts ten years, we need to think about what might happen in the next plan" (Titirangi workshop)
- "The District Plan, Metropolitan Urban Limit, Regional Policy Statement can all be reviewed and changed" (Business workshop)
- "A ten-year District Plan is not enough security – need security for the long term". 'Need legislation to protect it" (Titirangi workshop)
- "MU Limit review each 5 years – like a fence – If it moves, it will keep on coming into the ranges', Waiatarua
- "The MUL will be moved through pressure" Karekare

Changes in Council philosophy

A further concern voiced was the potential for changes in Council philosophy relating to protection of the Ranges with the three yearly election cycle.

- "Permissive Councils are the greatest threat" (Massey workshop)
- Concern over the uncertainty of different councils providing different levels of protection (Oratia workshop)
- "Worry every time the Council changes - old rules change, need stability" (Swanson workshop)
- "Every time there is an election (i.e. every 3 years) can have major impact on city, turns things upside down" (Te Atatu Peninsula workshop)

3.4.4.4. Some form of Permanent Protection needed?

Though there was limited discussion on the way forward, out of the concerns noted arose a number of comments and suggestions, mainly focusing on some form of legislation to ensure permanent protection and the need to attract more funding specifically to increase education, community involvement and operational programmes. Sample comments are set out below. These arguments were countered by other concerns, also set out below.

Sample of Comments in favour of some form of Permanent Legislated Protection

- "Development eating at the edges, Ranges are of international standing – feels majority of voters were voting for protection of ranges/need to stop pussy footing around and protect it" (Waiatarua workshop)
- "Take advantage of present local and national support for landscape protection of Waitakere Ranges by ensuring certainty and performance of protection that cannot be influenced by vagaries of future politicians".(Piha workshop)
- "This is about certainty – if councillors change etc could change. If put in certainty won't matter what colour council. Whims of community. Will have made decision for future generation, they won't thank us for trashing their environment" (Kelston/Henderson workshop)
- "Weaknesses of the RMA – need legislation".(Laingholm workshop)
- "Waitakere Ranges are unique globally, is a heritage place - want to see a heritage park like have in England - share responsibility - only legislation would do this foothills included" (Oratia workshop)
- "We need to remove the perception that any subdivision will be allowed – remove the discretionary aspect" (Titirangi workshop)
- "A different level of protection is required for different areas" (Titirangi workshop)
- "Need specific legislation to protect the Ranges".(Laingholm workshop)
- "Unique - try to leave it as it is", "additional protection? Or freeze what we have?" "freeze parts of District Plan – bush clearance, subdivision" "protection is needed to keep Auckland alive" (Massey workshop)
- "[Heritage Park] brilliant idea ", "National Govt. should make a line in the sand" (Massey workshop)
- "Make the rules permanent; legislation, 4ha on Farm Road will stay 4 ha" (Massey workshop)

- “Are the Ranges protected? – No. – Can it be done? – need to decide what happens – that is, remove from the vagaries of [successive councils]”, “can development be halted through stronger legislation?” “a separate Act is needed” and “Central Government could stabilise what we have” (Karekare workshop)
- “Why is the District Plan not fixed in concrete, forever, instead of going to court and everyone battling? Stop having to go through this process all the time.’ (Karekare workshop)
- “Solutions need to be more long-term than the District Plan/District Plan not permanent enough” (Swanson workshop)

Sample of Comments not in favour of some form of Permanent Legislated Protection

Protection measures advocated by some as described above, such as World Heritage Park status or a “freeze on development”, were resisted by others who believe the District Plan and Resource Management Act provide adequate long term protection for the Ranges, and that people of the future have the right to make their own decisions about development – particularly given the trend towards increased protection that has been experienced over recent years.

The importance of protecting landowner rights was also noted. It was observed that it would be unfair to existing landowners to face more restrictions than existed at time of purchase, and may furthermore penalise those who have not developed and who protected the environment, through loss of property value. It was felt that compensation issues may arise.

In the Bethells/Te Henga workshop, much of the discussion focussed on methods that might be used to combat development, while meeting the desire of many to avoid another layer of ‘bureaucracy’ on top of what is perceived as quite an onerous existing consent process.

Examples of these comments are set out below.

- “Developing the subdivision rules in the District Plan has been a long process and potential for development under the status quo management regime is now very limited - new district plan provisions have seen subdivision and development halved (in the Bush Living and Waitakere Ranges Environment). Landowners have the right to develop in accordance with the District Plan, and if people want more protection, it should be paid for. If future generations want to change the provisions then its up to them”. (Titirangi workshop)
- “Under current District Plan development not a threat” (Waiatarua workshop)
- “Leave it to democracy – people of the time” (Te Atatu Peninsula workshop)
- “This process is about Council wanting to take control over private land”(Titirangi workshop)
- “Consider private landowners. Provision of public amenity should not be at the expense of private landowners, nor should they lose rights existing at the time the land was purchased” (Comments form)
- “Adhere to good (District Plan) policies, do not set aside” and “there are ‘enough rules” (Piha workshop)
- “District Plan process – 5 years, opportunity for all then. Why change now? and “democratic decisions – WCC, Environment Court – right to apply to Environment Court” (Te Atatu Peninsula workshop)
- “Believe future generations will care for Ranges and future plan reviews will result in more restrictions” and “protected by rules, District Plan and court decisions - reviews of District Plans in the past have always resulted in less development rights - can only see threat in long-term if run out of space for people” (Oratia workshop)
- “Is the District Plan process sufficient for protection? – Yes” and “District Plan process is hard, not cheap” (Massey workshop)
- “We are greenies, but horrified by the idea of permanently restricting people from development” (Karekare workshop)
- “People have the wrong idea of landowners, they are conservationists, look after land. Should now have right to subdivide” (Kelston workshop).

- “It is up to structure plans to determine how much subdivision. Not up to us to put further restrictions on this, future generations have to make that choice.’(Kelston workshop)
- “The District Plan is working fine” (Business workshop)
- “We shouldn’t be locking things in place – future communities should have the ability to make their own decisions” (Bethells/Te Henga workshop)

Sample of comments relating to increasing resourcing

- 'Need to support large landowners staying on their land – subdividing or becoming a park would be a problem here'
- 'As numbers increase – more resourcing required'
- 'Resourcing Biodiversity Fund – promote'
- 'Is there funds available for people not able to look after their land?'
- 'A fund that interest could be used to assist [landowners]'
- 'Let people of Auckland pay \$5 on rates to protect Waitakere Ranges'
- 'Relocation of resources from fighting consents into sorting weeds and pest problems'
- 'Covenanting – paying environmental monitoring charge. Why pay if don't get benefit?'
- 'Could be an outcome of a 'special area', with increased resource for monitoring.'

Sample of comments stressing importance of increased education and community engagement programmes

- "Education more important than rules as rules get broken all the time - new people often have no idea - new rated properties/change of ownership should get new to Ranges pack of information"
- "Landowners need education; live sustainably - approach to land needs to change" and "Council should educate the people"(Massey workshop)
- 'Weed and pest eradication – rebate for landowners'
- 'Policing of rules is not sufficient - education is needed. Central Government should fund'
- Education for new residents is needed, e.g. plant identification; this is a rural not urban environment.
- Pamphlet – education give to new people in area
- 'Need more people to assist in preservation
- "Education more important than rules as rules get broken all the time – new people often have no idea"
- "Educate new residents – e.g. Titirangi booklet, hand-out booklet of advice, liaise with Real Estate agents re education on zonings/rights/restrictions that apply to properties" (Titirangi workshop)

3.4.5. Other Issues Raised

Other issues raised during the consultation that are relevant to the protection of the Ranges are

- The need to provide proper legal protection in perpetuity for the Waitakere Ranges parkland areas, and the desire for a land purchase programme (for reserves)
- The need to better enforce existing rules
- Concern about fire as an issue in the Ranges surfaced at many of the meetings. Participants at several workshop spoke of their concern about the danger fire poses to life, property and ecological/landscape values in the Ranges. Particular anxiety was expressed over the practice of spraying roadside gorse in the summer. Roadsides are the most prone to fire, and dead gorse is especially flammable.
- Discussion relating to the boundary of the 'Ranges' occurred in some of the workshops. The Laingholm workshop debated whether Laingholm is part of the Ranges. One person felt that Titirangi/Laingholm is geographically part of the foothills, rather than the Ranges proper. Another pointed out that Laingholm is within the Metropolitan Urban Limit, but 'not therefore automatically in small urban sites'.

It was commented that the MUL is the outer limit of where the city is allowed to grow, and this does not exclude Laingholm from being in the Ranges. A show of hands indicated that 19 workshop participants believe Titirangi/Laingholm to be part of the Ranges, and 7 do not. In workshop 3 at Titirangi, on a show of hands, eighteen people in the group believed that Titirangi is part of the Waitakere Ranges, and 14 considered that it is not part of the Ranges. Other discussions of the study area boundaries noted that some of Rodney District is within the Ranges, that the Waitakere Ecological District includes part of, but not all of the foothills, and that the Waitakere geological area extends down into parts of New Lynn and Glen Eden. It was noted that the line is still being discussed by Council. A question was asked at Karekare as to whether the west coast marine area is being included.

Comments include:

- “Need to ensure proper legal protection in perpetuity of the parkland areas” and “Land purchase programmes” (Titirangi workshop)
- “Council should enforce its rules and/or create stricter criteria” (Laingholm workshop)
- “Educate new residents – e.g. Titirangi booklet, hand-out booklet of advice, liaise with Real Estate agents re education on zonings/rights/restrictions that apply to properties” (Titirangi workshop)
- “Education more important than rules as rules get broken all the time - new people often have no idea - new rated properties/change of ownership should get new to Ranges pack of information” (Oratia workshop)
- “Landowners need education; live sustainably - approach to land needs to change” and “Council should educate the people”(Massey workshop)
- “More understanding of the District Plan by residents” (Piha workshop)
- “Need sustainable behaviour change” (a web reference was given for a Canadian environmental psychologist) (Piha workshop)
- “Compensation/rates incentives/cost-sharing with Council for clearing weeds” (Titirangi workshop)
- “Assist owners of the orchards in Oratia to maintain them (subsidies/rates relief)” (Titirangi workshop)
- “Need to monitor the Ranges in terms of baseline species in order to make informed decisions” (Titirangi workshop)
- “Get famous people to [sponsor areas]”, “Trust that receives bequests can be made important” and “Could get help from a Trust – a trust to provide incentives to landowners” (Summerlands/Sturges)
- “Weed-free Trust are using people from WINZ”, “International tourists could be used – already happens eg ARC in (assisting) Karekare group” and “many businesses keen to do good” (Summerlands/Sturges)
- Spraying roadsides in summer, leaving gorse (Laingholm workshop)
- Fire danger needs to be addressed including prevention/spread of fires, fire-prone species and water supply improvements.(Titirangi workshop)

4. PROJECT BACKGROUND

4.1. Project Process

There are four key components to this project:

PARTNERS

Recognition that other groups and organizations have responsibilities and jurisdiction over parts of the Waitakere Ranges area led to the formation of two groups to achieve better integration of decision making:

1. The *Political Liaison Group*, consisting of iwi representatives, elected members of the Auckland Regional Council and Waitakere City Council and local Members of Parliament David Cunliffe and Lynne Pillay. Rodney District Council is keeping a watching brief on the project.
2. The Officer Advisory Group, consisting of iwi representatives, and staff of the Ministry for the Environment, the Department of Conservation, the Auckland Regional Council, Waitakere City Council, Rodney District Council and Watercare Services Ltd.

Tangata Whenua

The tangata whenua of Waitakere City – Te Kawerau a Maki and Ngati Whatua, have been partners in the Waitakere Ranges Protection project from its inception. Both iwi are members of the Political Liaison Group and the Officer Advisory Group. In addition, iwi have had the opportunity for detailed input to the project through Waitakere City's mechanism of regular meetings with the iwi representatives.

RESEARCH AND INFORMATION GATHERING

Work has been underway since April 2003 pulling together the various pieces of research and information on the Ranges, held by different agencies, on the state of health of the Ranges area, pressures, current management and likely gaps. It has been found through this exercise that research and monitoring is often site or project specific and fragmented, so that gaining a holistic picture of the health of the Ranges has been difficult. Signals indicate that pressures do exist, with the key ones being subdivision and development, animal pests, weeds, and visitor impacts.

The project assumes that adequate information on why the Waitakere Ranges area is valued by people, has already been gathered from previous consultation exercises. A discussion document (September 2003) has been produced and widely distributed as part of the community consultation. A more detailed background paper dated December 2003 is also available.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

A three-phase community consultation process has been developed to support the process.

Phase one:

Purpose: To share with the community the information gathered, discuss issues and commence the preliminary discussion around possible responses. This stage included presentations to a number of organisations and groups, a series of community workshop meetings, a telephone survey and an invitation to send in written responses. The results are described later in this report. The considerable work undertaken by the community to produce the West Coast Plan was acknowledged, with this project building on that Plan, and appreciation of the good work being done by voluntary groups was expressed.

Phase Two:

Purpose: To work through with the community the possible actions from this project, and discuss potential responses in more detail. There will be three strands to this phase; a hui, randomly selected focus groups and a self selected community forum. Key pieces of work feeding into this phase are the consultation report from phase one and policy work identifying and analysing potential responses.

Phase Three:

At this stage, it is uncertain whether the partners will decide to hold further discussions with the community or use Phase three to communicate the decision on the way forward.

RESPONSE DEVELOPMENT

Policy work is being undertaken to support phase two of the community consultation process, and the decision making of the Council and its partners in this project. A report will be produced that describes the potential responses to provide better medium and long-term protection of the Waitakere Ranges area, and their advantages and disadvantages.

This work will be the basis of the Phase Two consultation, and will feed into the decision-making processes of the councils and partners. An implementation Plan will be developed from the work.

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

It is not anticipated that there will be a single solution that will provide adequate protection for the Waitakere Ranges area into the future, but rather that the likely outcome is a package of responses. A number of Action Plans will be developed and brought together into an Implementation Plan for the protection of the Waitakere Ranges area.

4.2. Project Boundaries

For the purposes of the public consultation, the partners in this project decided to take an inclusive approach to the Ranges area. District Plan 'Human Environments' (zonings) were used to delineate the area on a map, as shown at Appendix 1. This map was used at the consultation workshops to identify for participants the area that is under discussion. The Human Environments included are:

- Waitakere Ranges Environment
- Bush Living Environment
- Coastal Villages Environment
- Foothills Environment
- Rural Villages Environment (Waitakere Township)
- Community Environment (Titirangi and Piha)
- Balefill and Quarry Special Areas
- Open Space Environment (as far as the eastern and northern boundaries of the Foothills Human Environment)

There were a number of comments during the Phase 1 consultation about the boundaries of the Waitakere Ranges area, and this will be further explored in phase II.

4.3. Previous Consultation

Over the last 10 years the Waitakere City Council has undertaken consultation with its communities over a number of issues – many of which have relevance to the Waitakere Ranges project. The Auckland Regional Council has also undertaken a relevant survey. These consultations and surveys include:

- District plan and Environmental policy consultation (1993 – 1994)
- West Coast Plan (1995-2001)
- Structure Plans (including Oratia, Swanson, Birdwood, Titirangi/Laingholm)
- Creative conversation on the protection of the Waitakere Ranges area (20th September 2002)
- Creative Conversation with owners of large properties in the Waitakere Ranges area (24th Oct 2002)
- Annual Household Surveys, Annual and Strategic Plan submissions
- West Coast Visitor draft strategy consultation
- Auckland Regional Council Environmental Awareness Survey (2001)

A strong theme through these consultations is the importance of the natural environment and the high value placed on the Waitakere Ranges.

A summary of three key consultations – the Waitakere City District Plan and Environmental Policy consultation prior to District Plan notification in 1995, the West Coast Plan consultation and the Auckland Regional Council's Environmental Awareness Survey – is set out in [Appendix 2](#).

4.4. Phase 1 consultation- who was consulted?

4.4.1. Meetings of Organisations and Groups

Council staff attended the regular meetings of:

- Te Taumata Runanga
- Te Whanau O Waipareira monthly meeting
- Te Roopu Puawai O Waitakere
- Waitakere City Secondary Schools Youth Council
- Pacific Island Advisory Board

The purpose was to provide information and answer questions on the Waitakere Ranges project. Generally interest was expressed in the project. It was requested that a hui be organised to discuss the issues and to ensure that consultation material developed was appropriate for the different communities.

4.4.2. Consultation Workshops

4.4.2.1. Introduction

Fifteen consultation workshops were held throughout the city over the period September to November 2003. These were widely advertised through flyer drops, newspaper articles and advertising (including community newsletters) and community groups assisting in the distribution of information. Massey and New Lynn Community Boards also took out displays to community places such as shopping malls to further inform the public of the project.

Below is a list of the workshops. Note that the attendee numbers are based on those who registered their names at the meeting; thus in some cases the numbers are under-represented:

Workshop	Date (2003)	Venue	Number registered
Henderson/Kelston	29 September	Kelston Community Centre	17
Massey	2 October	Massey Community Centre	12
Swanson	13 October	St Marks Anglican Church	58(*60)
Summerlands/Sturges	14 October	Summerland Primary School	5
Karekare	18 October	Karekare Surf Club	19
Business Workshop	20 October	Enterprise Waitakere	14
Waitakere Township	21 October	Waitakere Community Hall	22
Te Atatu Peninsula	23 October	Te Atatu Peninsula Community Centre	9
Waiatarua	30 October	Waiatarua Community Hall	29
Piha	1 November	Piha Surf Club	36
Laingholm	6 November	Laingholm Hall	19
Huia/Cornwallis/Parau	8 November	Huia Hall	36
Bethells/Te Henga	10 November	Bethells Beach Life Saving Club	37
Titirangi	11 November	Titirangi War Memorial Hall	93(*120)
Oratia	13 November	Play Centre Hall	46

**Head count*

Attendance figures were analysed to determine the percentage of residents at each workshop and the degree of repeat attendance throughout the 15 workshops. Some 22 people were recorded as attending more than one workshop. These 22 attended from between two and nine workshops each.

4.4.2.2. Structure of workshops

Advice was sought from community members as to how each of the workshops could be run appropriately for that community, and a number of workshops involved community members as chairs and facilitators. The general structure followed for each workshop was:

- Welcome and introductions
- Presentation by Council staff
- Questions on presentation and process
- Discussion using the H model format around key issues

The presentation given by staff is attached at [Appendix 3](#).

The H model is a technique used to generate discussion around key issues identified in the discussion document. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with a statement, by placing a sticky dot on a continuum between the two poles (agree/disagree). Discussion then focused on why people placed their dots where they did, and what it might take to move their dots further along the line. Four H model statements were used in this way during the course of the meetings. Below is a list of the statements used.

- 'The Ranges are protected now and for the future'
- 'Pests and weeds are a major threat to the Ranges'
- 'Visitor numbers are a major threat to the Ranges'
- 'Development is a major threat to the Ranges'. Given community feedback this last statement was changed in latter workshops to read:
- 'Development as allowed for under the District Plan is a major threat to the Ranges'

Each workshop was run slightly differently depending on how the community wished it to be run and how the meeting went on the night. For example the H model was generally run at the beginning of the discussion, but sometimes at the end. Some meetings broke into smaller workgroups, others stayed in one large group. Not all of the H model statements were used at each meeting.

Details of how each meeting was run are given in the workshop summaries attached at [Appendix 4](#).

4.4.2.3. Workshop Summaries

Each workshop was analysed and summarised with comments from each workshop broken down into the following categories:

- Animal pests and weeds
- Development
- Visitor numbers
- Are the Ranges Protected?

The workshop summaries and the notes taken at each workshop were sent to two or three participants in each workshop for comment as to whether they are a fair representation of the workshop discussions. They are attached at [Appendix 4](#).

4.4.3. Community Board Display

Two Community Boards held displays on the Waitakere Ranges project for the public. The New Lynn Community Board members put up a display at Lynn Mall on Saturday 25th October 2003, and Massey Ward Community Board members held one at the Massey Library on Saturday 1st November 2003. The H Model method was undertaken at the Massey Library, with just one statement being used "The Ranges are protected now and for the future", and people being asked how much they agree or disagree with this statement. Of the 27 people who marked their positions on the H diagram, 20 people strongly disagreed with the statement and 7 people chose a number between 2 and 5 (showing that they also disagreed with the statement but less markedly). No one agreed, or partially agreed with the statement.

4.4.4. Comment Forms

During the consultation process, people were invited to send in their comments. A form was provided for those that wanted to use it. These were available attached to the summary document, on the Council's website or from the Council.

Total comment forms (faxed/emailed/post) received numbered 102 (as at 24th December 2003). The summary of results is set out at [Appendix 6](#).

4.4.5. Regional Phone Survey

A phone survey of the Auckland region was conducted during August 2003. 405 interviews were conducted in all.

Waitakere City	161
North shore City	103
Auckland / Manukau	101
<u>Rodney District</u>	<u>40</u>
TOTAL	405

The Waitakere sample contained 55 respondents living in the Waitakere Ranges area including Titirangi, Oratia, Cormwallis, Huia, Laingholm, Parau, Piha, and Swanson.

The key information sought included:

- How residents use the ranges (including visual amenity)
- What changes have been noticed over time? (last year, last 5 years, last 10 years)
- For each change noted, evaluation as beneficial or injurious
- Which types of changes, if any, residents would like to see
- What measures residents are aware of are taken by Waitakere City Council and Auckland Regional Council both to preserve the Ranges and to allow for access
- Satisfaction with current provisions for preservation, and what should be done for the future, with reasons for their opinions.

A summary of the results of the telephone survey is attached at Appendix 7. A report setting out the detailed tabulations and results is available from Waitakere City Council.