

## **KAWAU ISLAND VISION**

Residents, ratepayers, other interested parties, local and regional council representatives, discussed and developed the elements of a Vision for Kawau Island at a 2008 workshop in conjunction with the Rodney District Council, the Auckland Regional Council, and the Department of Conservation. The Rodney District Council then drafted the Vision and consulted with those with an interest in Kawau Island before finalising the Vision.

This Vision Statement is followed by further information focused around its eight key points.

### **The Kawau Island Vision Statement**

Kawau Island is a unique island environment within Rodney District and the Hauraki Gulf. It is a 2,000 hectare island in the Hauraki Gulf, physically close to Sandspit to the west, and Auckland to the south, but with a feeling of being far removed from them. The east coast is steep with high cliffs and generally uninhabited. The west coast is a mix of steep and gentle slopes, a predominantly rocky foreshore (except for Vivian Bay) and with inlets/harbours at North Cove, Bon Accord Harbour, South Cove and Bostaquet Bay.

Factors that Kawau Island landowners, residents and interested persons/bodies have agreed as important to this are identified in this Vision Statement. Planning processes will take the values of this Vision Statement into account when considering proposals for Kawau Island. Where conflict arises the maintenance of the Kawau Island Vision will be considered.

1. To maintain the uniqueness of Kawau Island each site will be considered individually and have regard to these policies as well as relevant planning rules.
2. The low-key, low-density nature of development should be retained. Any other use should be sympathetic to this, and the largely vehicle free environment should be protected.
3. Houses and homes and other facilities are close or closely connected to the sea. Building locations should respond to topography and avoid major excavations or modifications to existing landforms.
4. Sea access is an essential component of living on Kawau Island. Reliance on wharves and moorings is recognised. Policies for their management must respond to each need and location.
5. The natural environment of Kawau Island has been modified and compromised by human intervention. Issues that arise as a result must be resolved having regard to historical, ecological and environmental factors.
6. The rich history of Kawau Island must be protected and enhanced.
7. Kawau Island has a strong and responsible sense of community and individuality.
8. The Kawau Island community is able to contribute to the island governance through the Kawau Island Advisory Committee in addition to individual rights.

The Key Points of the Vision Statement are expanded below:

#### **1. Uniqueness of Kawau Island.**

- a) Human settlement on Kawau Island is shaped by its climate, topography and the availability of sea access.

- b) Kawau Island's landscapes are influenced by its maritime location, human settlement, large areas of kanuka/manuka and regenerating forest, coastal forest remnants, planted and wilding pines, and its general green, blue and rural feel.
- c) Kawau Island's ecology is significant with a mix of native and exotic vegetation and animal species, and is a key and safe habitat for a number of threatened species.

## **2. Low key nature of development**

- a) Development should be low key, low density, and in the general character established by existing developments.
- b) The safety and environmental quality of the Kawau Island land and water environment must be protected.
- c) Low key commercial activity must be compatible with its surroundings and be sensitive to the environment.
- d) The generally vehicle free environment is valued as a unique quality of Kawau Island and should be protected.

## **3. Building locations**

- a) Kawau Island is a marine-based community – boats, wharves, maritime structures, moorings form an integral and necessary part of the community and provide access points to houses and other facilities.
- b) Structures necessary in the coastal environment must be sympathetic to the environment and low-key, respecting the marine–land interface.
- c) The siting of buildings on ridges where they impact on the profile of the island should be avoided.
- d) Large excavations or land form modifications should be avoided.
- e) New building sites should be considered in the context of traditional Kawau house siting and building forms. New building sites should be located to minimise visual or physical impact on steep, water edge sites and bush.

## **4. Access to the sea**

- a) Kawau Island's dependence on sea access gives it a special significance. The key means of transport to and around Kawau Island is by boat, both private and commercially operated.
- b) A mix of public, shared and private wharves and moorings is necessary to provide access to Kawau Island. These form an integral and necessary means of access to houses and other facilities.
- c) Water access is supported by facilities available at key points on the "mainland", including roads leading to the wharf, the wharf itself and associated suitable parking, recycling, rubbish collection and fuelling facilities at Sandspit and/or elsewhere.
- d) There are few roads, and the island remains generally vehicle free.
- e) There are public tracks in the Kawau Island Historic Reserve. Other walking tracks that cross private land can only be used at the discretion and goodwill of landowners, and in compliance with their rules and restrictions.
- f) The threat of the introduction of unwanted pests by visitors through access points should be addressed.
- g) There is a need for safe anchorage areas to be maintained for casual use in addition to permanent moorings.

## **5. The natural environment**

- a) There is an active community lead initiative to rehabilitate the native flora and fauna of Kawau Island.

- b) There are regenerating native bush and freshwater habitats in good health and increasing numbers of wildlife, including birds and reptiles. The re-establishment and protection from predatory pests of native bush, freshwater habitats and native wildlife including birds and reptiles is strongly supported.
- c) People, including boaties, both resident and visiting, must take their own rubbish or recycling with them.
- d) It is important to recognise the potential impact of domestic animals on Kawau Island's wildlife, and control domestic pets where they could endanger native fauna and flora.
- e) Building or developing work must be respectful of neighbours, avoid ecological damage, and enhance the natural environment.
- f) The control/elimination of noxious plants, rats, wallabies and possums where they threaten the re-establishment of native fauna and flora is strongly supported.

## **6. History**

- a) The surviving evidence of early human settlement and intervention, regardless of its qualities, is considered to be a valuable and unique part of the Kawau Island environment. It should be retained and where possible protected.
- b) Tourist visits focus on the Kawau Island Historic Reserve which includes Mansion House and the old copper mine. There are also examples of unique land forms and exotic planting. These should be retained and enhanced.
- c) Tourist activities are predominantly water based and focus on the Reserve, its public walkways, and areas with appropriate access.

## **7. The community**

- a) The Kawau Island community is geographically disparate and separated by limited access and linkages. The predominance of non-permanent residents makes widely inclusive community events problematic. Nevertheless, it shares a common concern for the protection of the historical, ecological and environmental features that distinguish the island from others in the area.
- b) The Kawau Island Advisory Committee co-ordinates and expresses to local and national Government the views of Kawau Island residents and property owners. It acts as a link to residents and ratepayers independently and in conjunction with the Kawau Island Residents and Ratepayers Association. This structure is strongly supported, but does not remove individual rights in respect to local, regional and national governance.
- c) Members of the Kawau Island community have a strong sense of self-reliance.

## **8. Governance and management**

- a) While recognizing the role of local government this Vision Statement is an essential reference document to enable decisions to be made with regard for the unique qualities of Kawau Island.
- b) The ability to contribute to governance policy through Kawau Island Advisory Committee and public forums is important.