

STRATEGY AND COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

MINUTES: of a meeting of the Strategy and Community Committee for the purpose of hearing submissions to the Draft Rural Strategy, which commenced at 2.00 p.m. in the Council Chamber, Centreway Road, Orewa on Wednesday, 28 July 2010. The meeting reconvened at 9.00 a.m. in the Council Chamber, Centreway Road, Orewa on Thursday, 29 July 2010 and again at 9.00 a.m. on Monday, 2 August 2010 in the Council Chamber, Centreway Road, Orewa.

PRESENT: Penny Webster, Mayor
Crs Zane Taylor (Chairperson)
Ross Craig
Pat Delich
Michael Goudie
John Kirikiri
Dave Parker, QSM
Grahame Powell
June Turner
Suzanne Weld

IN ATTENDANCE: Manager: District Planning (Peter Vari)
Consultant Planner (Kathryn Martin)
Democracy Services Officer (Elaine Stephenson)
(28 and 29 July)
Democracy Services Officer (Vivienne Martin)
(2 August)

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479/07/10 APOLOGIES

AGENDA ITEM NO. 1

Delich/Goudie

That the apologies from Crs Harding, G Walker and W Walker (for absence) and from the Mayor, Penny Webster, (for lateness) be received and sustained.

Carried

2.04 p.m. The Mayor, Penny Webster, present.

Note: A copy of the Draft Rural Strategy (with amended Figure 7 Map and including recommended changes as per the agenda report) and a Hearing Statement from Transpower New Zealand Ltd were tabled at the meeting (hard copies on file). Copies of the two late submissions have also been placed on file TP/9/70/1.

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**480/07/10 RODNEY DISTRICT COUNCIL RURAL STRATEGY: HEARING OF
SUBMISSIONS AND ASSOCIATED RECOMMENDATIONS****FILE REF TP/9/70/1****AGENDA ITEM NO. 2****Kirikiri/Turner**

That the late submissions from Malcolm Hancox and from Duncan Wallace and Isobel McMullin be accepted.

Carried**Powell/Turner**

That the tabled information (A copy of the Draft Rural Strategy with amended Figure 7 Map and including recommended changes as per the agenda report and a Hearing Statement from Transpower New Zealand Ltd) be received.

Carried

Consultant Planner, Kathryn Martin noted that there was a small error in the Figure 7 map in the Strategy and that an amended map was included in the copy of the Draft Strategy (including recommended changes July 2010) that had been tabled.

Submitter number 59 – Clyde and Helen Mitchell

Note: A copy of the written evidence was provided after the meeting which was distributed when the meeting reconvened on Monday 2 August (copy on file).

Mrs Mitchell summarised the submission made on behalf of herself and her husband. Her summary included:

- a 25 year plan was a waste of resources
- future planning needed to consider a wider area
- Kumeu had suffered from lack of planning
- problems with air quality in subdivisions
- only small, low impact businesses should be allowed in rural areas
- the possibility of property devaluation
- four hectare blocks needed to be able to be subdivided into two hectare blocks
- the changing of the Metropolitan Urban Limit (MUL).

Submitter number 14 – Ian Dutton

Mr Dutton expanded on points made in his original submission which was made on behalf of himself and his wife. Mr Dutton said that:

- he and his wife had lived in Access Road for 35 years
- they were concerned with planning in the district and hoped that planning would be better under the new Supercity council
- the Auckland Regional Council (ARC) were changing the MUL and that this would change planning in the whole area
- the area was at a watershed where it could be tipped into a disaster area, like Silverdale
- this would have a huge impact on the area in which they lived
- they questioned the relevance of the strategy for the next 25 years as the ARC had changed the whole ball game
- they envisaged Kumeu as a garden area
- one acre was a good size for a garden suburb
- they were opposed to ad hoc urban development

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- they rejected the ARC proposal for density increases as the ARC was also going out of existence
- elimination of title transfers for countryside living should not be required
- they were opposed to compulsory payment for a sewage system pipeline, they had six tanks so they didn't run out of water
- industrial and intensive development should be adequately catered for and consistent with air pollution risk factors
- Access Road suffered from fog in winter which settled and stayed until midday, a meteorological report was required
- there was a need for a realistic rating system, reducing farming rates
- Kumeu, Huapai and Waimauku were wine growing garden areas and we should preserve this Auckland heritage garden suburb.

In response to questions Mr Dutton said that they were looking at the Strategy from the point of view of someone who lived in a particular section of the community and that this was their personal view. He said that he did have concerns that it might affect the cattery which they ran on the property and that he was concerned that the Council's planning department kept producing an incorrect central area with an industrial area which was not signed off. The one that had been signed off was a very small area by the railway line. This made people think that the Council want to industrialise Kumeu, he said that there was no need for industrial development and that this was a golden opportunity to create a garden suburb as an alternative to what was planned there.

Submitter number 60 - Caroll du Chateau and Brian Jacobson

Ms du Chateau read from the written statement provided, which was distributed (copy on file). Ms du Chateau said she was a journalist and had lived in Kumeu for twelve years. Discussion followed which included:

- that the submitters felt that people wishing to subdivide should give some of their land for footways as the roads were dangerous and there was nowhere to walk
- ten acres was uneconomic as a rural productive site, unless perhaps for market gardening
- the Countryside Living zone was already in place and not bothering them too much.

2.30 – 2.50 p.m. Cr Goudie retired from the meeting.

Submitter number 56 – Campbell Mitchell

Mr Campbell read from the written statement provided, which was distributed (copy on file). Discussion followed which included:

- the inappropriate zoning of Perry Road
- he owned the largest block in the area, the next largest being 50 acres
- correct valuations would make it easier to make a living
- his land was only suitable for grass/sheep
- kiwi fruit and nashi pears were produced up until the late 90s, but were all gone now
- he would like to retire and stay there
- he had run a farmstay business in the past but this type of business had become very competitive and was no longer viable.

Submitter number 25 – Kate and Robin Baddock, represented by Lisa Capes

Ms Capes spoke to Mr and Mrs Baddock's original submission. She said that the Baddock's site has been a well-run mandarin orchard but they were finding reverse sensitivity issues coming to the fore, especially spraying. Elevated land values were encroaching on production, their site was small but did border lifestyle blocks.

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Ms Capes said the submitters supported the strategy, noting that it was at a high level. She said there were a number of existing compromised rural sites in Rodney and that these should be targeted to reduce pressure on larger farms which need to be protected. Ms Capes said that if the new Supercity was serious about retaining Rodney with rural character, the Strategy would need to be implemented without delay or would get lost in ad hoc consenting. Ms Capes noted that nothing would stand still and blocks like this needed outside income support. The submitters sought that this block be allowed to be subdivided for rural residential use, as it was already in a compromised location and it should be targeted for relief of development pressure facing Rodney.

In response to a question Ms Capes said that reverse sensitivity covenants were worth looking at as a legal mechanism that the Council should consider when doing rural lifestyle subdivisions.

3.10 – 3.25 p.m. Afternoon tea adjournment.

Submitter number 88 – Dawn Kendall

Ms Kendall read from the written statement provided, which was distributed (copy on file) and raised points which included:

- she had started an art school and was told her signs were illegal by the Council, who had the signs removed and never returned
- she would like money spent on an investigation of possibilities for Huapai/Kumeu
- she was opposed to the 1,100 homes being proposed
- she felt the area was sufficiently supplied by tank water and septic tanks, which functioned without any damage to the environment, they didn't need water piping
- the Recycling Station area was not suitable
- the rates were prohibitive and punitive.

Submitter number 84 – The New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA), represented by Cedric Burn

Mr Burn summarised the written statement provided, which was distributed (copy on file). Mr Burn's comments included:

- the NZTA was pleased to see that the RDC was finding out where the community wanted to go
- the NZTA's submission was directed at where it saw its role in the spatial planning exercise and where it would like to see more detail in the Strategy
- a suggestion that the Rural Strategy needed to incorporate more focus on transportation planning for a fully integrated strategy for the district
- one element to be incorporated was the proposed Puhoi to Wellsford link which was absent from any reference in the Strategy, the NZTA would like it acknowledged in the Strategy as an important component for the greater Auckland area
- the other area it would like greater recognition for was efficient and sustainable infrastructure, one of its concerns was the need to ensure that a pattern of land use development enabled and facilitated alternative forms of transport
- the NZTA was concerned to see the notion of acknowledgement for more interspersed areas of settlement; it felt there should be more intensification of settlement rather than low density ones.

Discussion followed which included:

- that it was important to put the Puhoi/Wellsford link in, enabling them to connect
- that the RDC had no control over state highways
- densification – communities didn't want small blocks or high rise
- the Strategy aimed to keep a rural feel
- it was admirable to want public transport, in reality if we were going to keep a country look and feel, we were not going to get the required number of people that would allow trains to run
- how could we mix what the community wanted with the high ideals of smart growth planning?

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- people valued the opportunity to live in rural settings – that came at a cost of getting from one place to another
- that form of development relied heavily on cars, and people must understand if that was their preferred settlement, then they would pay the price in the cost of fuel and development contributions to provide for roading
- landowners disliked development contributions imposed on them, but one of biggest uses for those funds was to develop roading
- it was a matter of compromise.

3.52 – 4.02 p.m. The Mayor, Penny Webster, retired from the meeting.

Further discussion took place which included:

- the consultation on feedback was at the first stage and no decision had been made not to have Puhoi ramps
- access ramps did provide growth pressure, it was a balancing act
- a number of larger settlements existed where there was an opportunity to focus development around those
- the overarching approach of the NZTA was to encourage and facilitate alternative forms of transport
- the NZTA had been trying to make use of existing plans where it was stated that growth was to occur and be managed, it was not trying to lead.

Submitter number 46 – Graeme Woodside

Mr Woodside read from his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file).

4.10 – 4.25 p.m. The Mayor, Penny Webster, retired from the meeting.

Mr Woodside highlighted points in his submission which included:

- lifestyle properties were a cash cow for the Council
- a conflict existed for cleanfill activities in the middle of a lifestyle community, people had to face huge costs to fight them
- it had already cost his community \$150,000 to fight a cleanfill
- his rates were \$5,000 per year
- Blackbridge Road – a cleanfill shouldn't happen where the Council permitted lifestyle blocks to have major industrial activity on their boundaries.

In response to a question Mr Woodside said that he agreed with the mixed rural production zone and that it was about prohibiting activities in that zone. He said that cleanfills should be in rural areas, and asked whether they were going to be fronted with other activities in those areas that would be obnoxious to lifestyle blocks. His vision of rural countryside was that it blended from residential to countryside living, then to lifestyle blocks to rural. A quarry surrounded by million dollar homes didn't work.

Mr Woodside said that major farming was getting bigger and bigger, he owned 45 acres, the Council should not underestimate the productivity of lifestyle blocks as there was still a reasonable amount of production going on. He supported existing use rights but there was a need to protect people who had spent large amounts of money from new ones coming in.

In response to a question as to whether he would like the words *cautious* and *isolated* put back in Section 3.4 Utilities, Mr Woodside said that he would like stronger wording and that there had been a fairly strong utility lobby getting it softened. He said that people in Waitoki did want growth and that there had been a number of public meetings, the largest one had 83 attendees, there were approximately 1,200 in the community and the committee consisted of 10 to 15 people.

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3.26 p.m. Cr Parker retired from the meeting.

Submitter number 66 – Waitoki Village Community Group, represented by Warren Third and Philip Jones

Mr Third read from the written statement provided, which was distributed (copy on file) and highlighted that there were three main points:

- sustainable growth
- access to facilities currently available (the school, church, hall, two cafes and the service station), all of which were well used by the village
- Waitoki variation 152 to protect those amenities.

Mr Third said that if the community was not allowed to grow it would be an aging population and result in a decline in amenities over time; that continued growth was important. He said the growth should be based around consolidation, sticking to a village concept and directing growth in that area. The group was not supportive of hamlets, as that defeated two parts of Vision Waitoki. The community wanted growth outside of the village to be targeting already subdivided areas closer to the town, i.e. a countryside living area or a relaxing of rural rules to support planned growth. Mr Third said he would like to address the current transferable title size of four hectares, that very few would be attractive to developers and this should be reduced to one or two hectares.

Mr Third highlighted the state of wetlands and streams within the village, saying that most were unprotected. He proposed an easing of wetland rules to allow greater participation in protecting wetlands and stream sites, perhaps a trade off allowing smaller blocks to be subdivided.

Further discussion followed which included:

- the structure plan process was the correct process to influence development
- the Council hoped these processes would carry on and be recommended to the new Supercity council
- it was hoped that whilst RDC was still in existence, the Waitoki plan could go through to the next stages
- the key was community type planning
- the Council would like the community view to be involved in the planning process
- Key arterial routes were hampered by people wanting speed limits reduced when development occurred, this was happening to through-roads
- the group supported this document and what it was trying to achieve via a long term planning process but it was important to continue the structure plan process.

Submitter number 62 – Warren and Louette Third, represented by Warren Third

Mr Third then spoke to his personal submission on behalf of himself and his wife, points he raised included:

- Rodney soil was poor quality with isolated pockets of fertile beds
- he believed that we were overrating the productive land in Rodney
- that lifestyle blocks were not a bad thing
- we should isolate and target good soil
- he supported mixed use areas and thought that utilities would fit in these areas
- legal landfill sites were quite few and of poor quality and that all of the west Auckland ones were closed
- he suggested that maybe we need smaller dumping charges with anything more than 200m³ on a block having to go through the full process
- the possibility of a rates reduction for productive land to offset the high value of land caused by subdivision
- countryside living should be wrapped around all village groups as a matter of course
- a countryside belt would offer protection
- hamlets did not suit the New Zealand countryside, 600m² sections belonged in the city

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- arterial roads need to be identified used for commerce
- speed limits on these roads should be at 100kph and stay that way
- mixed use areas were a good way of producing income
- title blocks should be made smaller
- subdivision rules should be made easier, rules were so restrictive in Rural 1 areas that the costs made it impossible
- we should make it less desirable for developers and easier for existing landholders
- wetland restrictions should be eased; this document proposed to make it harder and he believed it should be easier in mixed use areas.

5.05 – 5.08 p.m. Cr Goudie retired from the meeting.

Submitter number 67 – Wainui Environmental Protection Society Inc, represented by Gerard Zwier

Mr Zwier introduced a PowerPoint presentation and provided written evidence, which was distributed (copies of both on file). He noted that he was in agreement with the general direction of the Strategy and was a member of the working party

5.10 – 5.13 p.m. The Mayor, Penny Webster, retired from the meeting.

Discussion followed which included:

- the importance of the correct siting of cleanfills and landfills
- where a farm was no longer profitable then the owner should be able to subdivide, this would then mean a landfill would not be welcome next door
- landfills and quarries had to go somewhere but there was a need for balance
- the old Redvale site was ideal for landfill
- planning maps preclude the siting of landfills in lots of areas
- the mixed use production zone has a problem and should be called countryside living/rural.

The Mayor, Penny Webster noted the importance of the NZTA submission, and said that the motorway from Puhoi to Warkworth would open up a big area that could be used for quarries and landfills and that this should be explored by officers.

The meeting adjourned at 5.30 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 9.00 a.m. on Thursday, 29 July 2010.

Powell/Parker

That the apologies from Crs Harding, G Walker, and W Walker (for absence) be received and sustained.

Carried

9.00 a.m. Assistant Chief Executive (Warren MacLennan) and Communications Advisor (Allanah Jarman) in attendance.

Submitter number 74 – Kaukapakapa Residents' and Ratepayers' Association, represented by Neville Miller

Mr Miller read from his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Discussion followed which included:

- the association had concerns about pockets of high intensity living
- it felt the submission form was prescriptive
- Karra supported a mixed rural zone, as allowed for in the Kaukapakapa structure plan concept, for areas of high intensity living in the existing village, surrounded by countryside living as a buffer
- there was anecdotal evidence that people wanted to cut down lot size

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- one hectare was adequate to provide rural living
- the association had changed its views since its submission was put in and on reflection; it felt it could now support the broad principles of the Strategy.

Submitter number 53 – Warwick and Hueline Massey

Mr Massey spoke to his original submission which had been made jointly with his wife, noting that his submission did not deviate from the thrust of submission form and saying that he had no problem with nature of form as this was a high level document and did not go into other areas. Points raised included:

- they supported the thrust of the Strategy
- subdivision needed to be well managed
- it was important to have such a document
- a stick and carrot approach was required
- a high quality environment was a must
- rural lifestyle properties needed to be sustainable within their boundaries
- rural farming should be prioritised
- we should keep a rural character with viable farms
- landscape protection was a must
- they lived on a 1.8 hectare block in Perry Road and were supportive of the hamlet idea but in specific spots
- Perry Road was the style of environment (a valley feel without being a valley) that could be taken advantage of to form a more intensive zone, however, no site should be under 1.5 hectares for reasons of privacy and sustainability
- they were concerned by the number of people applying for subdivisions because their land was no longer viable, saying that they should read the article *Money Can Grow On Trees* in this week's Listener magazine as this could be answer for people to put their land to decent use.

Submitter number 31 – Caitlin Metz and Richard Kuluz, represented by Caitlin Metz

Ms Metz read from her written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Discussion followed and points raised by Ms Metz included:

- a mixed rural production zone would be a good idea
- those mixed rural production areas had been identified because of the smaller nature of the properties
- cleanfills did not add value, they did not produce anything productive
- lifestyle blocks did diversify, whilst not relying on those areas for any financial benefit, they were still productive in their own right
- their property was 70 acres
- cleanfills and any other potential activities in the same category as landfill were of no benefit to the Rodney district, roads were destroyed, it was a massive inconvenience with health and safety issues
- it was a question of the scale and the effects of the activity
- forestry was acceptable as a benefit to the area
- as a whole, there needed to be a more cohesive handling of infrastructure needs
- existing road access needed to be utilised for activities like landfills
- she had provided alternatives for placement of cleanfill in Rodney without affecting people.

In response to a question regarding the words *cautious* and *isolated* in Section 3.4 Utilities, Ms Metz said they were too loose and ill defined, and left the door wide open.

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Submitter number 50 – Sandra Thode

Ms Thode read from her written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). In response to questions Ms Thode said that areas designated for quarries should be stated for the future so that they didn't get over populated. She felt worried that the proposal said that it would leave the issue of hamlets to individual communities as the Resource Management Act (RMA) did not have enough effect. If a company was serious and had the finances it would fight it in the Environment Court. The Council needed to be clearer about what it wanted to do and have enough clout to say what it did not want.

Submitter number 9 – Phoebe Kirby

Ms Kirby read from her written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Discussion followed on state highway off ramps and the Waiwera Bottling Plant and it was noted that this was dealt with via a resource consent application processed in the normal way and was not to do with the Rural Strategy.

Submitter number 6 – The Poultry Association of New Zealand (PIANZ) and The Egg Producers Federation of New Zealand (EPFNZ) represented by Poul Israelson

Mr Israelson read from his written statement, which was distributed. He also provided an aerial map, which was copied and distributed (copies of both on file). Discussion followed on the area of land required to separate poultry sheds from other adjacent activities, which was currently 700 metres, although the industry was trying to reduce this to 300 metres. He said there were still a lot of big blocks in the area and felt that it was better to leave the zone as Rural 1, as uncompromised areas should remain fully rural.

It was noted that existing farming operations should be able to make potential neighbours understand what existed there but new poultry operations did need to be separated from living areas. This, in effect, locked out poultry farms and forced them to move out of the district.

The future of poultry farming was discussed and the fact that they would become more open air, requiring more area. Regulations would mean that farms would need to change layouts over time, reducing the number of birds per shed, which would be a costly exercise. Farmers would need to add more sheds or build higher. Mr Israelson said there was a need to look more closely where activities were occurring and at potential sites for the future.

10.24 a.m. Communications Advisor (Allanah Jarman) retired from the meeting.

10.25 – 10.41 a.m. Morning tea adjournment

10.41 a.m. Manager: Sustainability and Natural Heritage (Max Smitheram) in attendance.

Submitter number 20 – Te Arai Beach Preservation Society, represented by Christine Wilde

Ms Wilde read from her written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Discussion followed which included:

- fairy tern numbers had declined because of human disturbance and an increase in pest species
- the idea of the Strategy was good but that no ecological assessments or analysis had been done
- what happened in a rural environment depended on what people did – this side was very weak
- data was available, for example the Department of Conservation Protection Strategy
- this was the first step but Ms Wilde felt that it was heavily weighted to protecting economic farming, whereas the Society felt the mandate was larger.

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Submitter number 17 – Marie Alpe

Ms Alpe pointed out that she felt that her original submission had not been adequately summarised to show all of her concerns. Ms Alpe read from her written statement, which was distributed (copy on file).

Ms Alpe said that her concerns about the blending of the Mangawhai-Pakiri coastal area with the East Coast Rural zone were not identified in her original submission but she would like her strong concerns recorded.

Submitter number 5 – Sandspit Residents' and Ratepayers' Association, represented by Michael Taplin and Rudi Van Der Zwaal

Mr Taplin introduced and distributed a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file). Mr Taplin wished to credit the work of Rudi Van Der Zwaal, a member of the Association's committee, for taking the aerial photographs on the presentation. He noted that these views of Sandspit had never before been available. Mr Taplin strongly challenged the fact that Sandspit was classified as being urban, as he felt the implications were serious for the living environment of Sandspit. He said the basis of classification was that lot sizes were lower than one hectare and therefore classified as urban, his presentation was to demonstrate this flawed classification for Sandspit.

Mr Taplin voiced his concerns about silo based planning; noting that he thought planning should be integrated. Further points he raised included:

- the ancient settlement at Sandspit and bush areas were important
- walking tracks were a major amenity for residents and visitors
- a lot of work had been undertaken by the Association, supported by some input from the RDC
- this had been a major effort, resulting in the regeneration of forests
- the Association was looking for RDC assistance to beef up the officer's recommendations and get the message through to bureaucrats who did not know what they were dealing with at Sandspit.

11.27 a.m. Communications Advisor (Allanah Jarman) in attendance.

In response to a question Mr Taplin said that all of the Kauri Developments subdivision was covenanted as residential landscape protection about 30 years ago, although the level of protection was dubious, citing a case where a breach of covenant was taken to the High Court and the resident ignored this decision. He said the RDC was a party to this covenant and had declined to enforce the decision, meaning their only recourse was to take it back to the High Court, but they were not doing so because of the cost.

Submitter number 49 – Whangateau HarbourCare Group (Inc), represented by Elizabeth Foster

Ms Foster introduced her fellow convenors, who were also members of the group and read from her written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Discussion followed which included:

- provision for quarries as existing activities in green zones had to be able to continue
- we did not know what will happen when the new Auckland Council takes over
- the message about the need for a green buffer zone needed to be signalled to the new Council
- this would not overtake vision Rodney and the District Plan
- the Strategy did not provide the protection required.

In response to a question Ms Foster said that Leigh was not at all suitable for the development of a hamlet.

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Submitter number 7 – Anita Hopcroft and late submitter Malcolm Hancox

Ms Hopcroft spoke to her original submission and said that she was happy with the rewording and amendments suggested in the officer's report, that she was in support of what had been put forward and felt comfortable that her concerns been addressed.

It was noted that Mr Hancox's submission had been accepted as a late submission and Mr Hancox said that his main concern was the development of large industry or commercial activities.

11.50 a.m. Cr Goudie retired from the meeting.

Discussion followed which included:

- the importance that good productive rural land was not lost in subdivision
- concern that too much subdivision had occurred, meaning sections were too small for lifestyle type businesses or to provide food for families
- concerns about reverse sensitivity.

11.53 a.m. Cr Parker retired from the meeting.

Submitter number 18 – Rainbows End and Rivers Environmental Group, represented by Annette Asher, Jim Fletcher and Coin Binsted

Ms Asher and Mr Fletcher read from their written statements (additional and supplementary comments), which were distributed (copies on file). Discussion followed which included:

- Rainbows End was a special environment of bush regenerated with buffers
- the reason coastal settlements were special was because a line was drawn and protected
- they felt the downgrading of landscape quality was for development reasons
- there was a need to say to the Auckland Spatial Plan that they wanted more of a line in the sand concept
- the issue was more about containment and protection and not assuming that because some were in, that they wanted to let more in
- the community cherished its isolation and appreciated what development had given but did not want to pass the tipping point and find themselves in an urban environment.

In response to a question Mr Binsted said that the destruction of kauri forests for economic reasons had occurred and what was left was land which was uneconomic so it must be cut up. He said the situation needed to be looked at from 100 years time. Mr Binsted suggested a moratorium on any rural subdivision for ten years to allow the land to be looked at as a regional asset.

Discussion followed which included:

- rates relief for farms
- a suggestion that we stop rural subdivision and intensify the use of existing residential land
- the need for a system to bring the value of farmland back to its real value
- Rodney's rating base was too small, the Supercity would have a bigger bucket of rates money enabling it to keep Auckland's playground green
- Rodney soils were not for pastoral farming
- the need for flexibility as in Matakana, what existed there now was a vibrant economy that was working
- it was not necessary to subdivide to grow grapes and olives
- the area was at a tipping point
- New Zealanders could no longer expect to have their traditional quarter acre section.

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Submitter number 16 Federated Farmers, represented by Richard Gardner and James Colville

Mr Gardner and Mr Colville spoke to the original submission. Points they summarised included:

- there were mixed feelings about the Strategy, although it was supported
- the Strategy was very high level and therefore it was hard to get its message across
- the Strategy did need to be done, being on the developing committee was a useful experience
- the lack of opportunity to challenge the landscape analysis, which was different from the ARC one
- the huge demand for properties in Rodney
- some provision for subdivision was necessary, but Federated Farmers did not have a position on this
- the acceptance that there was some slight benefit of overlays with a change of balance to a slightly more relaxed mixed use, although there was a need to be careful with overlays
- the need to ensure the dynamic aspect was not taken away by prescriptive rules
- compliance was a big issue for small farms
- Kaipara had problems with smells from dairy farms
- we were evolving and need to recognise that
- we should be looking at transferable titles as an incentive
- titles may be transferable in a much wider area when the transition to the Auckland Council occurs
- the maximum height in Auckland was four storeys and we may be able to benefit from this
- if we wanted a viable rural area we needed to treat it properly
- fears that rules and regulations would affect farming in a mixed zone
- rating relief would make a big difference
- farmers were not getting paid enough for production.

Submitter number 89 – Te Uri o Hau, represented by Mikaera Miru

Mr Miru provided a written copy of his statement in Te Reo Maori, which was distributed and an English translation was later provided (copies on file).

The Chairperson thanked Mr Miru for presenting Te Uri o Hau's submission and noted that the Council's Poutakawaenga (Iwi Liaison, Richard Nahi) was unavailable to translate the presentation at the meeting. Discussion followed which included:

- the importance of showing Maori land in the Strategy
- that Maori land should be treated differently to any other land as its only jurisdiction was the Maori Land Court
- Te Uri o Hau were the guardians of that land, they could not sell it and wanted to retain it for future generations
- the land was a spiritual asset, not a financial one and it was important that it be recognised
- liaison with council officers had taken place and a further meeting would take place towards making changes to the Strategy.

It was confirmed that further maps to add information on Maori land would be provided in time for deliberations.

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Submitter number 11 – Richard Wintle

Mr Wintle read from his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). It was noted that Mr Wintle had a role on the strategy reference group, he confirmed that the Strategy did reflect what was discussed by the group and that it had been a worthwhile experience. Discussion followed which included earthworks volumes and landscape degradation.

1.05 – 1.40 p.m. Lunch adjournment.

Submitter number 86 – Bruce Carter

Mr Carter read from his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Discussion followed which included:

- Mr Carter faced a rates bill of \$12,000 per year, which he could not pay
- he was also representing neighbours in Dysart lane, none of whom wanted big blocks as they had become a burden
- Kumeu needs smaller lots (one hectare) as this would reduce rates.

In response to a question about the possibility of bringing in a rule so that lots could reamalgamate allowing people to keep house lots, but meaning that a farm could still be run, Mr Carter said that perhaps this could work for big blocks, but would be difficult for smaller ones as they would need someone to run the farm

Submitter numbers 34 – Waitoki Orchards, 35 – Malory Corporation, 36 Barry Hart, 37 – Miles Merton, 38 – Roy Richardson and 39 – Darran Price, represented by Shane Hartley

Mr Hartley introduced a PowerPoint presentation (copy on file) and summarised the original submissions, which included the following points:

- a partnership approach to planning was necessary
- there was a danger of the RDC having overly prescriptive rules
- it was hard for farmers to add on facilities such as farm shops
- he was not convinced that Rodney needed the suburbanising of rural areas
- more flexible use of rural land was required
- mixed use zones as outlined in the Strategy were in the right direction
- cottage scale industry should be encouraged, such as architects or boat builders as it was currently difficult for them to get consent
- the focus should be on policy
- if hamlets were developed along bus routes, then buses could be worthwhile
- consultation on hamlets was not needed as applications would be tested against existing assessment criteria
- building on top of ridge lines was not always a bad thing.

Further discussion on hamlets took place including:

- the risk of hamlets close to settlements caused a pressure to infill
- hamlets set back a distance from settlements were entirely appropriate and would help support local schools, shops etc
- there was a range of views on hamlets
- the NZTA needed to be careful when locating things with regard to the roading network
- hamlets would not develop rapidly as they were expensive, but would divert people from as hoc residential living provided for by other rules
- hamlets would be self sustainable, a well designed hamlet would tick off most boxes
- with regard to fragmentation of the Rural zone, this would not necessarily be the case, there was more likelihood of the balance of areas being farmed as a whole, utilising the sharing of mowers etc.
- farm parks were not a good look and removal of the farm park provision a good idea

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- the discretionary side came down to how well policies were written, so there was no doubt in the consent planner's mind as to type of consent required.

2.25 – 2.28 p.m. Cr Turner retired from the meeting.

Submitter number 1 - Colin Plowman

Mr Plowman spoke to his original submission, saying that he was orchardist at Waitoki, that he agreed with what Mr Hartley had said and that he supported the Rural Strategy and its use of clear, plain language. Discussion followed which included:

- good soils in Rodney were patchy and scattered, compared to south Auckland, which had versatile soils
- he owned an 18 hectare site with about half of it containing good soil, the other half was common clay soil and did not have a productive value
- he was the only grower in the Waitoki area, all the others were gone
- he had lost money considerably over the years and the future was not good, he would not make money out of it
- export fruit production was most suited to areas with infrastructure
- orcharding was seen as an amenity by people, but they did not want spraying or helicopter control of frost, therefore it was not compatible with neighbours
- houses with quality gardens was the long term future for Rodney in this day and age
- the RDC needed to be careful it did not develop a central direction style inappropriate in a democracy
- the RDC should support rural production, but as the future was not assured for any grower, it should support residential settlement
- the amount of dairy farming in Rodney had gone down, while it had gone up in the rest of country
- if production was not viable then there was a danger of trying to achieve something unrealistic
- producers would go where it was easier to make money and there was not such a risk
- lots of rural activities were not productive but could be viable if they could fit into co-location with restaurants etc.

Submitter number 26 – Cato Bolam, represented by Myles Goodwin

Mr Goodwin summarised his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Points that he highlighted included:

- the maps that he had provided gave information on corridors forming, this was happening more and more, linking covenanted areas
- he brought councillors' attention to the attached New Zealand Herald article that he had provided
- he was a supporter of consents in good wetland areas
- water quality was important over the whole district.

Submitter number 83 – Vision Waimauku Association Inc, represented by Ian Farrant

Mr Farrant read from his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Points he raised included:

- the Association supported the objectives of the Strategy
- ratepayer groups had not been adequately represented, there had not been adequate consultation
- the Strategy had been completed in haste
- concern that the integrity of the Waimauku Structure Plan would be undermined by the Strategy
- the Structure Plan must be taken into consideration, things in the Structure Plan were in conflict with the Strategy
- mixed use zones were important

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- the Strategy had the potential to deliver the wrong outcome
- the current variation 134 did not take into account all of the land that could potentially grow.

Further discussion followed which included:

- the rating of second dwellings went up way in excess of inflation, which had a major impact on good rural productive land
- hamlets would encourage speculation of getting high value sections, affecting surrounding land values
- the Strategy did not undermine any structure or district plans, it was a high level document
- the new Council may wish to use the Strategy as input into its spatial plan
- the Association could have assisted the Council to produce a better submission form
- this was not right time to produce the Strategy; it should be done by the Auckland Council.

Submitter number 15 – Kumeu Huapai Residents' and Ratepayers' Association, represented by Peter Sinton

Mr Sinton said that he had worked as a planner and surveyor and completed design work for major developments, he said that another member of committee was present to verify that what he said represented the views of the Association. He read from his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file). Points he highlighted included:

- strong opposition to the Strategy
- Kumeu was closer to a sleeping giant, under pressure from urban areas attached by the Northwest motorway
- it would not accept the Strategy as it had not been consulted on it
- the Strategy had to be done by the new Auckland Council.

Discussion followed in which it was pointed out that the date for the completion of the new Council's Spatial plan was not included in legislation and that if we wanted to influence the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP), which had to be prepared by 1 July 2012, an interim spatial plan needed to be developed over the next year, with a fuller one developed over the next few years.

Mr Sinton reiterated that the Strategy should be done by the new Auckland council and not the RDC and said that he had been told to agree to nothing.

Submitter number 81 – Taupaki Residents' and Ratepayers' Association, represented by Ian Shaw

It was noted that Mr Shaw had been a member of the Rural Strategy working party as an individual. Mr Shaw said that the working party had good representation from throughout Rodney. Mr Shaw spoke to the Association's original submission and points he highlighted included:

- concerns with the detail of the Strategy and three different versions of maps
- If Rodney couldn't put something together for the new Auckland Council to consider, there was a chance it would be worse off
- the area for countryside living in Kumeu/Huapai was some of the best productive soil in the area, which tended to make him think the detail was not done properly
- the problem with a green buffer was the way people take terms, tending to understand a corridor of green, it was an essential requirement to stop suburbs
- there was expensive land all along the green buffer zone; it contributed to the rural community even if it was not viable.

It was clarified that the first map was for the working party, the second was as a result of the working party and the changes in this document were as a direct result of submission of his committee. Mr Shaw said that it started to move in the direction of the submissions made, the concept of moving into mixed zoning was important, but that it still left an area of Kumeu and Waimauku that would be better zoned as mixed rural rather than general rural.

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3.59 p.m. Cr Kirikiri retired from the meeting.

4.00 - 4.15 p.m. Afternoon tea adjournment.

Webster/Goudie

That Standing Order 3.3.7 pursuant to the duration of meetings and time limits be suspended in order to allow the business of the day to be concluded.

CarriedSubmitter number – 70 John Sumner

Mr Sumner spoke to his original submission, points he highlighted included:

- Mr Sumner's name appeared on the Kumeu Executive Plan
- that process started with the Auckland Regional Growth strategy and talked of transport fuels
- they were asked to produce some sort of plan for Kumeu and planned for a future urban zone in 1998, but this was now a wasteland
- there was an anticipation to colouring things on a map; people thought they could chop them up
- what was the rush and what was the gift?
- what were planners thinking?
- was countryside living compatible with public transport?
- people who went out to Kumeu at weekends were not consulted
- all the people of Auckland should be consulted.

4.10 p.m. Manager: District Planning (Peter Vari) retired from the meeting
Manager: Sustainability and Natural Heritage (Max Smitheram) in attendance.

Mr Sumner thanked the councillors for doing the work they did and asked that they find a way to include the community, saying that a lot of people would like to speak to the Strategy and had not even heard of it. He said a regional and community based rural strategy document could be catalyst and the greatest gift we could give to Auckland.

4.20 - 4.28 p.m. The Mayor, Penny Webster, retired from the meeting.

Submitter number 85 – Western Corridor Focus Group, represented by Ian Shaw

Mr Shaw read from his written statement, which was distributed (copy on file) and highlighted points which included:

- the hurried nature of the Strategy
- the lack of consultation
- a hope that the new Auckland council would consult
- the RDC should ensure that words and maps were consistent
- any rural productive areas should be maintained
- the RDC did not have a significant commercial rating base
- this may not be an issue in the new Council, which had a huge rating base, so the new approach needed to be complimentary and not competitive
- conflict with structure plans - it was the Rural Strategy that was wrong, not the structure plans
- maps were important, people made decisions based on what they were told was going to happen, changes affected lives
- its *no confidence* comment had been moderated over the last few weeks, it would rather say that communities wanted to work with whoever was in a position to develop a rural strategy
- if this document went forward, it had to have the support of all groups or it would be meaningless.

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Mr Shaw said that Karen Body had not been able to attend today's hearing to speak to the submission but that she had told him that she was not buying into the Strategy until an acceptable Riverhead solution had been found.

4.35 p.m. Manager: District Planning (Peter Vari) in attendance.

Submitter number 2 – Peter Kammler

Mr Kammler spoke to his original submission and provided a photograph which was copied and distributed (on file). Mr Kammler said that he lived between Matakana and Warkworth, that he had no financial or professional interest and that he had not subdivided and would not. He said that he was an ordinary person who liked peace and quiet. Mr Kammler said that his issues included:

- it was a laudable aim to preserve and protect rural landscapes and that a lot of damage could have been avoided
- farming was not the environmental nirvana portrayed in the Strategy
- this area should be opened to lifestyle living
- having different zones was backward looking and how they used to plan years ago
- businesses were not so dirty now, farmers were opting for less energy input operations and adopting quasi-green practices
- that we should allow more development in rural areas to take pressure off the areas currently designated for countryside living
- he supported hamlets, as environmental features could be designed into them
- farm parks were the same, except for that buildings were dispersed over the area, he could not see the disadvantage
- he could not see the reason for the three kilometre belt, as people would use their cars
- carpooling was a good idea
- it all depended on detailed rules which should be strict and enforced
- driveways should be tinted to avoid glare
- underground power lines were a must
- transferable titles was a moneymaking scheme and should be stopped or modified
- public transport was related to population density.

The meeting was adjourned at 4.50 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 9.00 a.m. on Monday 2 August 2010.

Note: Vivienne Martin acted as Committee Secretary for the remainder of the meeting.

Powell/Craig

That the apologies from Crs Harding, G Walker and W Walker (for absence) be received and sustained.

Carried

Note: Copies of all written statements are on file TP/9/70/1.

Submitter number 75 – Karen Pegrume

Ms Pegrume circulated and read a written statement in support of her submission. In addition to comments on wetlands, ecological linkages, TTRs, hamlets and land use issues, Ms Pegrume presented four coloured slides illustrating the effects of wetland restoration at Ararimu Valley Road and Taketu Road.

In answer to questions Ms Pegrume said that the wetland at Taketu Road had had a drain on either side, which had been blocked to allow the water to collect, and that the area had been sprayed with glysohate to kill kikuyu. She noted that the wetland at Ararimu Valley Road now contained tall

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mounds of sphagnum moss and ran across multiple properties. She suggested that small wetlands did have a benefit.

9.35 a.m. Assistant Chief Executive (Warren MacLennan) retired from the meeting.

In answer to further questions Ms Pegrume made the following comments:

- the problem with land use zones was that they were not actually zones. Land use controls were more appropriate
- cleanfill activities in the Mixed Rural Activity zone should be prohibited activities only after a certain threshold and when they were within a certain distance of dwellings
- hamlets centred around existing villages were ideal; otherwise there would be ad hoc development
- developments such as Goodlands and Okura Country Park had resulted from Countryside Living cluster development. They had originally been hamlets but had developed into high quality, very expensive developments detached from their environments and were unaffordable for many.

Submitter number 58 – Bill Tiffin

Mr Tiffin circulated two maps identifying the area around his property and made a verbal statement in support of his submission.

Mr Tiffin said that he was a Waimauku resident and reported that a lot of locals commuted to work elsewhere because they could not make a living from their land. He asked why land which was not productive was not zoned Countryside Living and said that he couldn't make sense of the situation and wanted answers.

Mr Tiffin agreed with the previous submitter's comments on zoning, in that it appeared to equate to demarcation of land, rather than rules about what could happen on the land. He noted that this had got some people's backs up and suggested that some areas of the Strategy needed to be seriously looked at.

Mr Tiffin also suggested that when the new motorway to Brigham Creek Road was developed the community village of Waimauku would become active and there would be an increase in commuters.

Finally Mr Tiffin said that he disagreed with hamlets, as they fractured development. Any hamlet would need to be in alignment with existing villages.

In answer to a question Mr Tiffin agreed that countryside living should be located around villages like Waimauku, not in 'no man's land', where it was hard to follow the logic for it. He said that countryside living was good where it was appropriate, but that planting (on such sites) was essential. Mr Tiffin said he owned a landscaping business and had undertaken huge wetland plantings. Connective native plantings were also necessary.

In answer to a further question relating to the extent of change that should happen near Waimauku, Mr Tiffin said that there would be no more access from State Highway 16, as Transit New Zealand would not allow it. He noted that most lots beyond his area were much bigger. He also mentioned the visual catchment extending from 'Bees on Line', which he considered should not be spoiled. Finally Mr Tiffin suggested that the draft Strategy should be changed to reflect what was there (on the ground).

In answer to a question relating to development of the area near Mr Tiffin's property, Manager: District Planning (Peter Vari) said that the area had been looked at as part of the Waimauku Structure Plan and it had been decided not to develop there.

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Submitter number 57 Dennis Shepherd

Mr Shepherd made a verbal statement in support of his submission. He suggested that the proposed Mixed Use Rural zone simply added another layer to the Production zone and that the Council's approach was like 'jam jar' planning.

Mr Shepherd noted that his property at Parakai, which was in the Kaipara Coast Production Area, had not been a dairy farm for 40 years. He said that there had previously been 14 dairy farms in the area, but now there were three, none of which was economic. He questioned the reasons for the boundaries that were being created.

Mr Shepherd also made the following points:

- the Tupare wetland had previously been a 'rich man's playground', in that it had originally been dammed to form a duck shooting pond
- planning was becoming too prescriptive and it was hard to make sense of it. For example, when Mr Shepherd had proposed erecting a building on his Parakai property he couldn't believe how high the floor level would need to be. He used a tape measure to demonstrate to the Committee the required height and noted that there had been no flooding on his property for 40 years. The area formed by flood plains had sand, cockle shells and blue mud under the top layer, which had gathered over thousands of years. It had the biggest drain in the country, emptied by every tide
- the Council was not taking into account what had happened in the past and ten years was too short a time span for the proposed Strategy. He cited examples of long term landscape changes which took place, such as a recently discovered canoe at Muriwai which had been visible 90 years previously and had gradually become covered over. At North Piha the beach access had built up over the years to form sand dunes
- as a result of the Council's unwillingness to bend the rules the Helensville airfield had disappeared, because no subdivision had been allowed. The aero club members had become financially exhausted and had been unable to complete the airfield.

10.07 a.m. Assistant Chief Executive (Warren Maclennan) in attendance.

Submitter number 80 – The Auckland Regional Council, represented by John Carter

Mr Carter, Senior Policy Planner with the ARC, circulated and read his written statement in support of the ARC's submission. Mr Carter stated that the ARC supported the strategic aims of the Strategy, but not the identification of specific areas that might be suitable for certain types of development.

Mr Carter suggested that the draft Strategy should be handed on to the new Auckland Council for consideration and decision, since some of the issues were of significant to the region and should be addressed as part of the new Spatial Plan. He also commented on the Strategy's relationship to the Regional Policy Statement, on countryside living areas, a proposed bush living policy area and on hamlet opportunities.

In answer to questions John Carter made the following comments:

- demand for countryside living outperformed other types of residential growth. If countryside living was more restricted, properties with high quality soils on them still would not be able to compete with residential development, because of the higher financial incentive for the latter
- there were approximately 30,000 vacant small titles in the District. A lot of these had been established as horticulture lots, but the horticulture hadn't happened. (This was a situation where) TTRs could be used to establish hamlets in more appropriate locations. The ARC preferred to see small sections in urban areas, for example Kumeu and Huapai
- the ARC agreed that greater protection should be given to versatile soils. Poor soils could be taken into account, along with location and infrastructure capacity, when considering where further subdivision should happen

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- (relating to the pristine soils at Omaha and Point Wells and the reduction of the number of growers there from fourteen to three) – It was a question of economic viability and horticulture could never compete with residential use on that basis. The only way to address the problem would be to restrict residential use.

Submitter number 29 – Mighty River Power, represented by Trevor Nash, Wind Development Manager, Mighty River Power; Hemi Rau, Chair – Otakanini Topu Trust and Poul Israelson, Principal Planner, Harrison Grierson Consultants

Trevor Nash gave a PowerPoint presentation outlining the potential for wind as a renewable energy resource in the Auckland Region. He also described Might River Power's relationship with Otakanini Topu Trust, which has a renewable wind resource on its land at Otakanini on the South Kaipara Peninsula.

Mr Nash expressed concern about the Strategy's emphasis on protecting natural landscapes in rural areas at the expense of providing for other appropriate uses and development. He suggested that the two should be balanced and that recognition should be given to the location of renewable energy resources in the Kaipara Coast Production Area.

10.35 a.m. The Mayor, Penny Webster, retired from the meeting.

Mr Rau gave a brief verbal statement, stating that the Trust members wanted to live in the Otakanini area and wanted to have the potential to develop a wind farm, which they had been checking out for six years. The economics (of such a project) still needed to be considered, but Otakanini was the only suitable place for a wind farm in the area.

Mr Israelson circulated and read his written statement in support of the submission and noted that Mighty River Power supported the management of rural resources; support of a sustainable rural economy; effective management of utility functions, including limitations on lifestyle activities adjacent to utility sites and acknowledgement of wind as a natural resource.

Mr Israelson expressed concern about the emphasis in the Strategy on protecting natural landscapes at the expense of providing for other necessary development. He made detailed comments on the need to balance rural landscape protection with development opportunities for renewable energy generation. He also commented on several aspects of the Kaipara Coast Production Area/West Coast District Amenity Landscape overlay which were of concern to Mighty River Power.

When asked whether Mighty River Power was satisfied with the extent of the schematic utility sites identified in Figure 9 (page 19) of the Strategy, Mr Israelson said that thought should be given to the establishment of utilities such as electricity generation, and possibly forestry.

In answer to a further question, Mr Israelson said that because wind was generally high in elevation, wind towers on the Otakanini site could be along ridgelines.

10.58 – 11.15 a.m. Morning tea adjournment.

Submitter number 64 – Korimako Habitats Ltd, represented by Palle Olsen

Mr Olsen circulated and read a written statement in support of his submission and expressed his support for the idea of a rural strategy review, the use of good soils and topography for agriculture/horticulture and not lifestyle blocks, and transferable title rights.

Mr Olsen said that he was concerned about mixed use rural areas and commented that Waiwera Valley residents were being threatened by the possibility of a large factory in their pristine valley. He said his main concern was the lack of focus in the Strategy on addressing the environmental problems existing in the waterways of the District, such as sediment, mud and mangroves. He suggested that all land in the District that was unsuitable for pasture should be tagged and that options be created to encourage land owners to revegetate such land. He said that at present revegetation for a title was not viable in some areas, such as Puhoi, because of the cost, and put forward the option of less dense planting, but over a wider area, which could still give canopy closure within four to five years.

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Mr Olsen recommended that Puhoi Valley be revegetated and used as a lifestyle area, noting that most of it was very steep with dubious soils and was not suitable for farmland. In answer to questions Mr Olsen made the following comments:

- to change the level of silt in the Puhoi River quickly would require the mud to be dredged out. If the silt remained at no more than the natural levels, the sea would then do the work and a really clean river would be possible within 50 years
- a lot of the terrain in the Puhoi Valley was unsuitable for building on and this would dictate the number of possible building sites
- (in regard to his evidence for recommending the widening of planting) – Mr Olsen's own observations had shown that if an area was left alone it would revegetate itself. For example, if one manuka was planted its seedlings would spread out and revegetate an area
- (relating to the amount of pastoral production that would be lost if the Council said "no more" in Puhoi) - Environmental concerns should override production. There was plenty of quality farmland all over New Zealand and Puhoi should not be 'messed with'
- other valleys similar to Puhoi included Ahuroa, parts of Waiwera Valley and the Mahurangi headwaters
- gorse was an excellent temporary revegetation crop
- Mr Olsen's expertise included a horticultural background. He was a land use change consultant, who also owned a plant nursery.

Submitter number 27 - Waiwera Valley Association Committee, represented by Sheryl Titford and Submitter number 40 – Brian Titford

Mrs Titford circulated and read a written statement in support of Waiwera Valley Association's submission. Mrs Titford stated that the Association was a strong group of land owners who wanted to maintain the rural identity of the valley. She expressed support for the Strategy; for the rural production zoning of the valley; for transferable title rights and properly managed bush living. Mrs Titford said that the Association supported hamlets, but observed that larger blocks of land would be targeted for these, at too great a cost to the productive sector.

Mrs Titford expressed concern about the state of roads in the valley and the pressure that had been put on them by 'ad-lib' (sic) development. Finally she said that the Association was cautious about allowing small scale non agricultural rural businesses, as there would have to be major restrictions on their development once they were allowed into an area.

In answer to a question relating to revegetation and pasture retirement, Mrs Titford said that her farm had a very steep ridgeline which was grazed and she wanted to protect the property for the future. Revegetation was good, but some of it was not working and this would be one of the issues for the future.

In answer to a further question Mrs Titford said that her property consisted of 450 acres, with 250 acres in farm and the rest in native bush. Her father had bought the property to stop the cutting of bush. The remainder of the farm had previously been cleared. She noted that the bush was good in droughts and helped them to get over that period.

Mr Titford commented that if one was making money there was no need to overstock (if they were not rated off the property). He also suggested that the land needed to be farmed by those who knew how to and said that his daughter was studying to be a veterinarian, in order to work with farm animals.

Mr Titford then made a verbal statement in support of his submission. (Further written comments were later distributed to the Committee.)

Mr Titford reported that many Bohemians had left the area because there were better soil types elsewhere in New Zealand. These people had learned to farm on hard soil. His was the fifth generation on their land and he wanted to see another five generations to come. He did not want to be chased out, as he was working the land and making a living from it. He suggested that those who had settled in Kumeu wanting a lifestyle now wanted to kill the opportunity for others. Just because they had failed (to make a go of the land) did not mean that others would. Once the land was cut it would be gone forever.

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Mr Titford stated that the market for produce was dominated by supermarkets. His family had started the Silverdale flea market 35 years ago, to provide an alternative outlet. It had attracted Bendon and other outlet shops to Silverdale and other farmers' markets had followed. Small (production) blocks were needed, but to make them work outlets other than supermarkets were necessary.

Mr Titford agreed with the previous submitter's remarks about the value of gorse. However he added that gorse was a nitrogen fixant and that clay soil could not hold nitrogen. He said that pine trees were being grown in Rotorua in an effort to get rid of gorse, but that they caused three times the runoff of a dairy farm. Mr Titford observed that when he was a child he could count the number of mangroves in the Waiwera River and that cattle helped keep them under control by eating them.

Finally, Mr Titford suggested that fencing around a piece of land would not grow manuka, as grass prevented it from growing. It was necessary to lower the Ph level in the soil and keep the cattle on it. He noted that his ancestors used to slash and burn the land every five years and said that this allowed the manuka seed to spread.

Ms Titford commented that their family had worked the farm since it had been bought. With 432 sheep and 298 cattle, they were contributing to the New Zealand economy. Other blocks, such as the Penny farm (in the Waiwera Valley) were doing well and should be encouraged to stay.

In answer to a question Brian Titford said that he had originally supported the Strategy's provision for hamlets, because he hadn't understood the concept. However, he believed that buying up a farm and putting houses on it was wrong and he did not support that.

When asked how to prevent people being blamed for the previous cutting of bush, Mr Titford said that it was important to keep communicating. He had joined a committee ten years previously on another issue and had had a voice that way. His family also opened up the farm to visitors for fun days and this helped to bridge the gap between town and country people.

The Chairperson thanked the submitters for their attendance.

The meeting closed at 12.05 p.m.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD THIS 19TH DAY OF AUGUST 2010

MAYOR

* * * * *

DATE
