

Submission on the Point England Development Enabling Bill

To the Local Government and Environment Committee

Hauraki Gulf Forum
Mayor John Tregidga (Chairman)

Executive summary

I am concerned the development proposed in the bill will cause habitat loss for endangered shorebirds that feed in the Tamaki Estuary. The estuary flows into the Hauraki Gulf and is part of the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park.

The Hauraki Gulf Forum (HGF) is a statutory body, which promotes and facilitates integrated management and the protection and enhancement of the Hauraki Gulf, under the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000. It is administered by Auckland Council.

Nesting habitat

The reserve is currently used by Northern New Zealand Dotterel as a nesting ground. The Hauraki Gulf is the stronghold for these endangered birds and numbers are growing because of the hard work of community groups. The birds are conservation dependent and important for the biodiversity and character of the Tamaki Estuary.

Roosting habitat

Unlike the Manukau and Waitemata Harbours, the Tamaki Estuary has very few high tide roosts for shorebirds. The carrying capacity of intertidal areas for shorebirds is linked to the proximity of good high tide roosts. The loss or degradation of roosts is likely to cause a decline in the numbers of shorebirds using the adjacent intertidal feeding areas. Point England is the primary roost site for the Tamaki Estuary.

Conclusion

It is recommended that the select committee considers seeking the following before it progresses this bill:

- 1) An independent environmental impact assessment
- 2) Review by the biodiversity team at Auckland council
- 3) Identification of appropriate mitigation to maintain or improve roosting and nesting habitat in the area.