



**Date:** Thursday 3 August 2017  
**Time:** 4.30pm  
**Meeting Room:** St Chads Church and Community Centre  
**Venue:** 38 St Johns Road  
Meadowbank

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## Ōrākei Local Board

# OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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ITEM	TABLE OF CONTENTS	PAGE
7.1	<b>Deputation: Remuera Residents Association</b>	
	A. Iain Valentine's speech notes regarding the future of community facilities in Remuera	3



Remuera Residents Association brings to Orakei Local Board Attention: 20 July 2017

## FRUSTRATION and DISAPPOINTMENT

Eleven months ago we featured an item at our AGM (30 Aug 2016) “**The Future of Community Facilities in Remuera**” We asked for someone from the Council to speak on the topic of No. 4 Victoria Avenue (currently in use by CAB & Plunket nurse). We received a presentation from Panuku.

Their presentation blindsided us – we learned of their intent to “optimise” this council owned non-performing asset and release latent value for “better performing opportunities... elsewhere”

This message did not go down well with the 50 or so residents present – including a number of the then Board. There was a strong view that improved community facilities were needed in Remuera, and that the asset value not be lost. An assurance was given that the Community Facilities section of the Council would establish what the community facility needs were in Remuera.

After much engagement by the RRA to pursue & offer assistance in this process, we could get no clear answers. We held another public meeting on the topic in November, inviting Community Facilities to use that opportunity to dialogue with Residents. This invitation was not taken up, but just hours before the meeting started we received notice that a survey would be undertaken shortly. This was the first indication of action.

We then learned they were engaging an external research firm to carry out a community needs survey. That survey occurred Jan/Feb of 2017 and the report submitted in March. We estimate up to \$50,000 was spent on the external consultants from Wellington, including the costs of meetings, travelling expenses and an extensive mail drop to resident letterboxes.

But curiously, the brief for the survey was expanded to include Meadowbank & Orakei residents, as well as Remuera. Perhaps to save money, or to tick the boxes for consultation with these communities. Thus there was a mail drop in all three suburbs promoting an online survey, and amongst others, we circulated all our members electronically. We were very disappointed to learn that the brief specifically *did not include testing the viability of a community centre in Remuera* surely the primary reason for asking us to rely on this survey

The online Survey proved to be unwieldy and hard to complete primarily because it attempted to cover all three suburbs in one survey. In the end only 218 people completed the online survey. We assess there are 6,400 households in Remuera alone, and this response was very poor. Through personal interviews the researchers did back up the survey’s findings.

On 31<sup>st</sup> March we asked for a copy of the report, but were told it needed amendment and would be targeted for a Board meeting in May. We understand Board members did review the report, and requested some re-writing. The latest re-writing of the consultants report occurred earlier this month. But still we were not taken into confidence.

Finally, on 14<sup>th</sup> July the report was found in the agenda of the OLB meeting for 20<sup>th</sup> July 2017 In our opinion, the officers report and the attached researchers report takes us nowhere.

We were very disappointed to learn that the brief specifically “*did not include testing the viability of a community centre in Remuera*” - surely the primary reason for undertaking the survey of community needs in response to our concerns about the proposed future of No.4 Victoria Avenue.

We are back to the status quo – the Panuku imperative to “optimise the asset” at No. 4 Victoria Avenue remains – and community needs remain unidentified and unsatisfied. Mention of the significant number of Church & School halls in Remuera as alternative venues does not address their current high level of utilisation, and hence general lack of availability.... and does not address the lack of a sense of community identity that arises with community owned assets.

The survey describes a clear desire for something better for Remuera.

We are dismayed at the lack of leadership of the Board on this matter – the lack of collaboration and partnership with residents organisations and the community. The whole process appears adversarial and can only be described as “ticking the boxes” for public consultation. The biggest fear we have is that a deal has already been done with the land trapped developer behind No 4 Victoria Avenue - the original fear felt 11 months ago.

The land & Buildings at No.4 have been valued at \$3.0m on today market. If the developer is to get it there should be a premium – say \$3.5m. Our contention is that whole of the money remains in Remuera for community facilities.

With further investigation and imaginative proposals a true community focus can be created – a park, play area, proper toilets, meeting rooms, art space, drop in area notice boards, etc. There are many possibilities that can be collaboratively designed and developed.

But the foresight of an earlier Council purchasing the property many years ago should not be squandered. We say the investment made belongs to the residents of Remuera, not to wider Auckland. Proportionally we pay a significant quantum of the Council’s rates income, but see almost nothing in return by way of capital enhancement to the very few council owned facilities in the suburb.

We need leadership, and not the window dressing that is the game that has been played over the last 11 months.

We ask that the imperative that Panuku is working under for “optimising” council owned assets be amended to exclude the sacrifice of community facilities, and invite the current Governing Body to re-visit the resolution it made in 2015.

We ask that the overarching imperatives of the Auckland Plan be observed: “*the Council will protect, enable, align, integrate and provide social and community infrastructure for present and future generations*” And that the Local Board understands that this is done by “*identifying social infrastructure needs and engaging local boards to prioritise community infrastructure requirements*”

Iain Valentine, Chairman  
Remuera Residents Association Inc



## Orakei Local Board feedback on the Auckland Plan 2018 refresh

### Growth/Development Strategy

The Board agrees that a strategy for growth is needed, but growth shouldn't all take place in Auckland. New Zealand could do more to incentivise growth throughout the country by encouraging immigration across the country and not predominately in Auckland.

The Board considers that the loss of arable land in Auckland due to sprawl is concerning, as in the medium term it will result in more food needing to be imported.

The Board considers that infrastructure should include green infrastructure. It is important that existing open reserve space is retained as well as additional open space will be required for Auckland's growing population.

### Skills and Jobs

The Board considers that Auckland needs people who can do a wide range of jobs with various skill levels, but notes that it is becoming difficult for the less skilled people and those with lower paying jobs cannot afford to live in Auckland. Auckland schools are having difficulty employing teachers with the right experience and skills due to the high cost of living and accommodation.

The Board supports mentoring by older people to upskill younger people and considers that Aucklanders should be open to learning and upskilling which will in turn assist them in being able to afford to live here.

The Board supports the removal of the "Our creativity and resourcefulness" section as the Board doesn't view this as core council business.

### Belonging

The Board considers that the "The importance of Maori and Maori values" section should be part of the Auckland Plan but it doesn't need to be a separate section as it's enshrined in the Treaty of Waitangi and the LGA 2002.

The Board considers that the "Equitable opportunities..." and "Inclusive, resilient..." section includes everyone.

### Home and Places

The Board supports the "Constructions costs and constraints" section as cutting costs means cutting corners and typically results in low quality design.

The Board supports housing being healthy, weathertight and enviro conscious (e.g. solar panels).

### Protect and Enhance

The Board supports heritage being defined in the Auckland Plan as the population grows and becomes more diverse.

The Board supports inclusion of a reference to the natural environment – biodiversity.

Access and Connectivity

The Board supports encouraging cycling and use of electric cars to reduce pollution.

The Board supports the “Working together, central and local government and the private sector” section as collaborative transport planning is essential.

The Board supports the future consideration of technology and transport modes.