

## Ecological Survey of Proposed Marine Reserves on Waiheke Island

File No.: CP2017/20351

### Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to receive the Ecological Survey that the Waiheke Local Board requested in May 2016, to assess the suitability of five locations proposed as potential “no-take” Marine Reserves as the final step in a programme of work undertaken by the Board to investigate the establishment of Marine Reserves around Waiheke Island.

### Executive summary

2. In May 2016, the Waiheke Local Board resolved as follows:

#### 18 Allocation Report - Marine Protected Area Assessment

Resolution number WHK/2016/107

MOVED by Chairperson PA Walden, seconded by Deputy Chairperson R Ballard: \_

**That the Waiheke Local Board:**

- a) **approve the allocation of LDI opex budget – Marine research and education ECAP (Empowered Communities Approach), for the marine project to be delivered by the Environmental Services department in 2015/2016 as detailed below:**
    - i) **Marine protected area assessment - \$24,000**
  - b) **note that Phase One of the marine project, will be delivered in the 2015/2016 financial year and Phase Two will be delivered in the 2016/2017 financial year.**
  - c) **request that any significant changes to project delivery be brought back to the Waiheke Local Board Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson for consideration.**
  - d) **draw this project to the attention of Councillor Lee who is on the Seachange Project Steering Group.**
3. In June 2016, Auckland Council signed a Services Agreement with Hauraki Gulf Conservation Trust to provide a “Marine Reserves Assessment on Waiheke” which was to include a final report and a brochure to present the results to the Waiheke Community.
  4. The five locations were selected by the board based on marine bio-productivity and proximity to coastal conservation or reserve esplanades.
  5. Dr Tim Haggitt of eCoast was contracted to undertake the survey.
  6. The Survey was proposed in two phases with a gateway review between them.
  7. Phase One involved the assessment of each proposed area, a desktop analysis of available studies, the analysis of available catchment data, investigation on ways to involve the community in monitoring or surveys and an assess and review stage of the Phase One report.
  8. A gateway review was undertaken of the Phase One report by staff of Infrastructure and Environmental Services and approval was given on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 2016 to proceed to Phase Two.
  9. Phase Two included detailed inshore side-scan tracks along the shore line, offshore side-scanning, suspended remote videos, habitat mapping, the production of a final report and brochure.

10. The total cost of the contract was \$24,000. The Hauraki Gulf Conservation Trust is still holding the sum of \$2,900 (plus GST) for the production of the brochure. The production of the brochure is pending instructions from the board as to the final requirements for the document.

## Recommendations

That the Waiheke Local Board:

- a) agree to release and promote the reports from community consideration.
- b) note that it does not consider it is the local board's role to lead on any marine reserve applications(s) and encourages interested community groups to do so.
- c) note its view that the material gathered to date provides a good and robust basis for pursuing a marine reserve(s).
- d) agree to consider any requests for support and assistance from applicants in due course.
- e) recommend that the Auckland Council Environment and Community Committee and the SeaChange – Tai Timu Tai Pari Hauraki Gulf Political Reference Group investigate incorporating the proposed Waiheke marine reserves areas into the Auckland Council Sea Change Tai Timu Tai Pari implementation programme.
- f) approve the production of a colour brochure by the Hauraki Gulf Conservation Trust and delegate a board member to approve the scope.

## Considerations

### Local Board Views and Implications

11. In the 2014 Local Board Plan, one of the key achievements was to:  
  
*“Improve protection and conservation of our coastal environment (including the marine area)”*
12. The Ecological Survey provides a valuable resource document for supporting future initiatives for establishing Marine Reserves around Waiheke Island.

### Implementation

13. There are a number of options for implementation of “no-take” Marine Reserves including:
  - a) Development of MPAs under the proposed Marine Protected Areas Act. The act is still under development and dependent on the shape of the future government. This is unlikely to provide a viable route in the short to medium term.
  - b) Implementation as part of Auckland Council's Seachange Implementation process. Under Theme 5 of this draft Work Programme “Restoring Healthy Functioning Ecosystems” the establishment of MPAs is given priority 2.2 with the accompanying comment “MPA establishment is best left to central government”. The draft programme of works was approved by the Environment and Community Committee at its meeting on September 12th, 2017.
  - c) The board strongly supports the establishment of “no-take Marine Reserves” around Waiheke and its islands and recommends that the Auckland Council Environment and Community Committee and the SeaChange – Tai Timu Tai Pari Hauraki Gulf Political

Reference Group investigate incorporating the proposed Waiheke marine reserves areas into the Auckland Council Sea Change Tai Timu Tai Pari draft Work Programme.

- d) Development of “no-take” Marine Reserves under the current Marine Reserves Act 1971. Local Boards have no authority to undertake legislative processes directly, a marine conservation organisation may wish to make an application for Marine Reserves under current legislation. The Marine Assessment could be made available to such organisations.

### Maori Impact Statement

13. The development of marine reserves on Waiheke is an issue of importance to Mana Whenua and Mataawaka, therefore the Waiheke Local Board supports appropriate engagement over any future initiatives developing Marine Reserves on Waiheke.

### Attachments

No.	Title	Page
A 	Ecological Survey <i>(Under Separate Cover)</i>	
B 	Feasibility Study and Gap Analysis <i>(Under Separate Cover)</i>	
C 	Map of Proposed Locations <i>(Under Separate Cover)</i>	

### Signatories

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