Date: Friday 19 October 2018  
Time: 12.15pm  
Meeting Room: Māngere-Otāhuhu Local Board Office  
Venue: Shop 17  
         93 Bader Drive  
         Māngere Town Centre

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Manukau Harbour Forum  
OPEN MINUTE ITEM ATTACHMENTS

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Note: The attachments contained within this document are for consideration and should not be construed as Council policy unless and until adopted. Should Councillors require further information relating to any reports, please contact the relevant manager, Chairperson or Deputy Chairperson.
Tāmaki Estuary Environment Forum
Submission on the Māungakiekie – Tāmaki DRAFT Open Space Plan
October 2018

Kia ora koutou. Forum Members wish to thank the Maungakiekie – Tāmaki Local
Board for this opportunity to submit on the DRAFT Open Space Plan.

1.0 Executive Summary

The Members of the Tāmaki Estuary Environmental Forum have received the Draft
Parks and Open Space Plan for the Maungakiekie – Tāmaki area and respectfully
request the Local Board seek the Plan be revised on the following grounds.

Our concerns are that the draft plan in its current form proposes:

- Significant loss of space available for residents’ active and passive recreation.
  This is especially important in consideration of projected and current
  increases in population numbers and housing density. The Plan does not
  provide an accurate assessment of open space and sports field use in the
  context of proposed population density. The current draft Plan proposes a
  loss of open quiet space and peaceful vistas for residents, despite this being
  identified by residents as an important requirement for their local open space
  and parks.

- The widespread loss of natural habitat for indigenous fauna and flora – which
  will result in significant reductions in biodiversity. The plan dramatically
  reduces native bird roosting and feeding areas which will result in significant
  reductions in numbers of birds present in the Tāmaki Estuary. This will
  happen due to proposed reduced open space, building intensification,
  floodlighting, and paving (and resurfacing) large areas of existing natural
  grass land.

- The loss of substantial areas of permeable surface with a resulting negative
  impact on water quality and water management that will have adverse impact
  and be expensive and difficult to remediate.

- The draft Plan fails to consider or incorporate any impact of climate change,
  such as habitat destruction, shoreline degradation or increased flooding.
2.0 Background

The Tāmaki Estuary Environment Forum (TEEF) is a community driven, environmentally focussed group which is open to organizations, concerned individuals and elected members of Auckland Council.

The vision of the Tāmaki Estuary Environment Forum is -

“To see the Te Wai o Taiki (the Tāmaki Estuary) as a thriving dynamic and healthy ecosystem that is loved and used by the community and which positively enhances and connects with the Manukau Harbour, Waitemata Harbour and Hauraki Gulf.”

May 2017

The Forum is supported by the Maungakiekie–Tāmaki, Orākei, Ōtara–Papatoetoe, Māngere-Ōtāhuhu and Howick Local Boards whose boundaries include the Tāmaki Estuary. The Forum was established in 1988 and members meet regularly to engage in practical projects, advocacy, and community education.

This submission is that this Draft Park and Open Space Network Plan falls short of providing the green space necessary for ensuring the wellbeing of Maungakiekie – Tāmaki tāmāriki and the wider community, provides inadequate protection of existing natural habitat for flora and fauna and in its current form is likely to threaten the health and biodiversity of the Tāmaki Estuary ecosystem.

TEEF Forum members respectfully request a Local Board resolution that this Draft Park and Open Space Plan be rewritten to take into account these concerns.

Fig one: Informal park use that will become less likely because of reduced space, higher demand for space and the implied future requirement to formally book parks.

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3.0 Significant losses of active and passive recreation space

This Plan indicates, without comment or mitigation, that there will be a significant reduction in available sports fields and open space for Maungakiekie – Tāmaki residents.

Existing sports fields and open space areas are reduced in size and there are no increases in local park land to account for rapidly increasing population, housing density, and more commercial activity in the Glen Innes town centre. Comment on page 20 mentions further open space is subject to Treaty Settlement.

A Draft Plan illustration on page 33 misleadingly suggests less intensive use of open space than documented from current events in the area.

Fig two: Illustration in Draft Plan (page 33) contrasted against actual use.

Actual use: Point England event 2017 – note this is a larger space than is indicated as available for the use on the Plan

~ 3 ~
The Draft Park and Open Space Plan includes very little space for the quiet or peacefulness that residents say they need and want – space and quiet...

The reduced space is proposed despite a significant number of residents reporting they visit their local park simply for taking time out and relax, which shows a strong demand for non-activated green space.

The preservation of open space for passive recreation is crucial to the physical and mental wellbeing of communities and is an important and often overlooked aspect of public health.

**Fig three: Open space vista that will disappear under the Draft Open Space Plan**

The Plan includes no protection of peaceful vista (or viewshafts) which are unique within Auckland. Dunkirk Reserve is cited as having 'great street frontage' (page 34) yet this a narrow reserve alongside an increasingly busy road, onto which a concrete path has recently been laid, reducing its grass area and intensifying its use.

The Draft Park and Open Space Plan states a desirable outcome is that open space should be more intensively available to be 'activated' for other purposes (page 33). The currently enjoyed free and direct access to local sports fields will stop.

In this Plan residents will be forced to ‘book’ sports fields well in advance or forgo their events. This is a very real loss of existing local access to amenities.
4.0 Widespread loss of natural habitat and reduction in biodiversity

The restoration and conservation of a diverse environmental habitat is based on the knowledge that human wellbeing and enjoyment is enhanced by the presence of thriving biodiversity.

In Tāmaki this biodiversity is demonstrated by the presence of shags, fish and shorebirds. This urban estuary is critical to many nationally-threatened species such as the Banded Dotterel. Yet bird counts show bird species are rapidly disappearing from the Tāmaki Estuary area. This is possibly related to reductions in habitat.

The Plan suggests there has been no, or little investigation (or biodiversity assessment) on the impact of the habitat reduction because of such measures as building concrete access paths throughout green corridors which were established to protect and enhance bird life.

Fig Four: Proposed reduction in open space and impact on bird nesting places
TEEF acknowledges sports fields, and their efficient management, are essential for promoting healthy individuals and communities. However, consideration needs to be given to the adverse impact on native fauna and birds of the increasing use of sports field floodlights.

**Fig Five: Impact of flood lights on the use of sports fields by birds**

During the census the Mt Wellington War Memorial Reserve went from being the third most important night roosting site to having no birds at all. The birds seem to have stopped using the site after these lights were installed.

*Endangered birds seen regularly in 2017*

*No birds May 2018*

Consideration is also needed to find ways to lessen the adverse environmental impact of the widespread installation of large artificial turf playing surfaces and artificially manicured, drained sport fields, with their associated roads, grandstands, supporting buildings and parking areas.
5.0 Loss of permeable surfaces

Poor and degrading water quality and effective stormwater and wastewater management are significant issues in the Maungakiekie-Tāmaki area. TEEF members support the Draft Park and Open Space Plan’s commitment to improving water quality and riparian planting.

However, TEEF Members are concerned this Plan has not adequately accounted for upcoming reductions in impermeable surface area and its recommendations do not adequately compensate for those significant losses of permeable surface anticipated.

Intensified housing is rapidly being built across the area due to the revised Unitary Plan and the Tamaki Regeneration project. Housing intensification on this scale and speed means garden lawns (front gardens and backyards) rapidly disappear. These lawns and their gardens have important ecological functions, such as drainage and providing habitat.

One key concern of our members is that the loss of grassy areas adjacent to roads will give them no other option but to wash their vehicle in the street – a practice that the Council has deemed not environmentally-friendly due to the negative effects on water quality.

In these circumstances it is vital to try to retain as many natural permeable surfaces within the public realm as possible, such as those within the green corridors and local parkland throughout the area.

TEEF members are concerned this Draft Plan, if implemented unamended will result in the degradation of existing biosystems and make it increasingly difficult and expensive to improve or maintain current water quality.

**Fig. six:** The Maungakiekie – Tāmaki Draft Open Space and Park plan adds to the impending loss of permeable surface by recommending large areas of concrete paving be built on green corridors intended for ecological protection and stormwater function.

(see pages 36 and 39 and figure 24).

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6.0 No apparent consideration of long-term climate change

The Tāmaki Estuary is a major natural land form within Tāmaki- Maku-Rau which is shaped and moulded by climate events. It is significant to wider Auckland culturally socially and environmentally.

Fig Seven: Tāmaki Estuary

The Draft Park and Open Space Plan includes no apparent geological assessment of any possible future effects of climate change in regard to tidal changes, rising sea levels and / or shoreline erosion.

TEEF members are concerned that in the event of rising sea level rises, parks in coastal areas will need to be abandoned – further reducing bird habitat and community access to open space. TEEF suggests that the Council might re-work the Open Space Plan to build infrastructure and environmental resilience to climate change where appropriate.

Fig eight: Birds feeding and resting on a natural grass sports field that in future may be underwater due to coastal flooding.
7.0 Conclusion

TEEF members suggest this Draft Plan is not aspirational enough.

Members are concerned the vision contemplated and presented in this Draft Open Space Plan leaves the Maungakiekie-Tāmaki Ward well short of open green space in comparison to many other Wards (e.g. Orakei, Albert-Eden and Whau). It is a concern that there may have been a lapse in Auckland Council’s recognition of its kaitiakitanga responsibility for Maungakiekie – Tāmaki tamariki and taiao (environment) resulting in the loss of tongarerewa that can never be replaced.

An Open Space Plan for Maungakiekie - Tāmaki must ensure there is enough open space for its residents. It must consider all conditions and strive to meet the cultural norms, environmental, health and psychosocial needs of the community. The final Plan, it is suggested, needs to provide a better balance between the provision of necessary infrastructure and the protection of environmental biodiversity and community wellbeing.

TEEF members respectfully ask that Local Board Members pass a Resolution for a full revision of the Maungakiekie – Tāmaki Draft Park and Open Space Plan.

Fig Eight: Events such as this will not be possible under the proposed draft Park and Open Space Plan.

Nāku iti noa, nā

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