

Report on the deliberations of the Henderson-Massey Local Board on public submissions on the draft Harbourview-Orangihina Park Masterplan

The Henderson-Massey Local Board deliberated on submissions made to the draft Harbourview-Orangihina Park Masterplan (HOPM) on 4 December 2018 and 11 December 2018. This report summarises the key points of the deliberations.

1. Overall support for direction

The local board acknowledged the strength of support seen in submissions for a natural, open park; and how that aligns with the draft HOPM.

2. Items out of scope

It was acknowledged that a number of matters raised in submissions were out of scope, as listed in the 4 December 2018 report (CP2018/23031). Some crossover of lease matters related to the pony club extent and the masterplan were, however, acknowledged.

3. Weed/pest control and replanting, and wetland restoration and bird roosting area in the lower terrace

The local board noted the high levels of support for proposed improvements in the lower terrace; and acknowledged the need for a holistic restoration plan for the entire site. It was noted that the restoration plan recently approved by the board will review the entire site; and that the terrestrial Significant Ecological Area (primarily covering the scarp and lower terrace) should be recognised in the plan.

It was also recognised that a review of the area of the lower terrace currently drained to wetland would need to consider the impacts on fish life as reflected in submitter's concerns.

In regard to the bird roosting area in the lower terrace, the local board agreed with combining the separate roosting islands shown in the draft plan and indicatively locating those closer to the coast and further south in response to expert views that this would likely be more successful. While noting the concerns about potentially creating and maintaining an additional roost area (including considering sea level rise), the local board agreed that including an island would help future-proof the reserve for that option if needed.

To amend the following:

- a) Amend site-wide text, section 4.2, to state '~~Ongoing plant and animal pest management~~ Review of plant and animal pest management; and planting'
- b) Amend sections 4.2 and 4.3 to remove references to the 2012 Wildlands Report from legend and map and identify for restoration the entire scarp and lower terrace wetland area; being the location of the terrestrial Significant Ecological Area in the Auckland Unitary Plan
- c) Split proposal 6 into separate items; being:
 - "Investigate returning the exotic grassland on the lower terrace to wetland. Subject to environmental impact and feasibility assessments."

- Investigate creation of open areas simulating shell bank roosts. Requires ongoing weed control. Subject to environmental impact and feasibility assessments, including location
- d) Delete Section 4.2 site-wide consideration to “~~Return exotic grassland on the lower terrace to wetland~~”.
 - e) Combine the smaller islands shown in maps of sections 4.2 and 4.3 into one area and locate further towards the open water

4. Construction of boardwalks into the wetlands

The local board noted the good level of support for boardwalks evident in written submissions; but also, the numerous concerns about the impact on wildlife during their construction and ongoing use. This was echoed in comments made during the hearings.

Ben Paris, Senior Biodiversity Specialist for the council, noted that informal tracks (such as those that already exist in the wetland area) may also disturb wildlife, but acknowledged that boardwalks would encourage greater use and therefore disturbance.

The local board noted concerns that the Dog Management Bylaw provision for dogs on leash in the wetland area may undermine the protection of wildlife. However, the local board also noted that this bylaw may be amended prior to any construction of boardwalks; and further investigation of boardwalk location and design would be undertaken prior to implementation that would review the situation and ways to minimise any impact.

The local board acknowledged that recreational access to the lower wetland terrace and saltmarsh may help the public engage with and be educated on park values, as well as enjoy a different type of environment. However, they sought to reduce the extent of boardwalks on the plan as outlined in the amendments below.

To amend the following:

- f) Remove the northeastern boardwalk section on the plan located close to the yellow star (denoting interpretive signage) and associated spur to the coast (including associated birdhide); from maps in sections 4.2 and 4.3
- g) Add note under the Legend in section 4.2 that ‘Locations for proposed improvements are indicative.’

5. Southern grazed area – retention of grazing

Written submissions were largely supportive of continued grazing primarily based on the synergies with the bird roosting area and the enjoyment of seeing the ponies. Comments made at the hearings also reinforced the importance of grazing to provide a safe bird roosting area.

Those who did not support the pony grazing were concerned about the exclusivity of the pony club occupation.

From a birdlife protection point of view, the local board noted that the ponies were successful primarily due to the fencing of the area; and due to their grazing keeping the grass low with minimal impact on the birds. The local board supported amending the plan to reflect this.

To amend the following:

- h) Amend the Legend in section 4.2: Indicative grazed and fenced pony club extent area.

6. Southern grazed area – vehicle access

The proposed accessway to the proposed marae and re-located pony club is shown on the HOPM at the traffic lights on Old Te Atatū Rd. The local board agreed with submitters who noted that a location across from Titoki Street further south was preferable to reduce the incursion on the park including adverse effects on birdlife.

The concerns provided by Auckland Transport (AT) about the Titoki Street location were reviewed. These relate to the proximity of the motorway interchange and need for NZTA approval. However, AT also noted that further investigation of traffic implications would be required at the time of marae development.

Local board members therefore supported an amendment to the plan to relocate the proposed vehicle accessway to a location opposite Titoki Street; including the notation against that proposal in section 4.2 of the plan that location is subject to investigation.

To amend the following:

- i) Amend proposal 9 (re-labeled as #10) to read: “Future vehicular access to marae complex and pony club facilities (location subject to investigation). Investigate incorporating parking along marae access road should parking demand increase.”
- j) Relocate proposed accessway to enter the park closer to Titoki Street.

7. Southern grazed area – pedestrian pathway and tree provision

Some written submissions had sought the removal of the pedestrian pathway and new specimen tree provision, and this was echoed in comments made at the hearing including concern that lighting can adversely affect birds.

As a result of these concerns, the local board supported amendments to remove the pathway and new tree provision in the southern area. Typically, details around lighting are determined at the detailed design phase, noting that lighting of recreational trails within parks is generally not supported.

The local board supported an amendment to the text for the marae in section 4.2 to note that any planting around the interface of the marae, and proposed connections, parking and circulation to and within the marae will be determined during the later stages of detailed planning.

Street tree provision along Te Atatū Road, as shown in the draft HOPM, is supported noting trees can be crown-lifted and noting the extent of activity in the road just beyond.

To amend the following:

- k) Remove the indicative trees shown within the southern paddocks (excluding street trees and trees on the bank beside the motorway) from the maps in sections 4.2 & 4.3.
- l) Amend the text associated with the Te Atatū marae on the map in section 4.2 to read: “Any planting around the interface of the marae and proposed connections, parking and circulation to and within the marae are shown where they meet existing and/or proposed park paths will be determined during the later stages of detailed planning”.

- m) Remove the proposed secondary path shown alongside the proposed access road and marae in maps in sections 4.2 & 4.3.

8. Provision of bird hides

Bird hides were supported in written and verbal submissions; although the board also noted the concerns outlined around antisocial behavior.

Mr Paris (Senior Biodiversity Advisor) outlined how birdhides create better opportunities to view birds in the wild, which can provide greater meaning to people than simply reading signage about birds. He also discussed the provision of birdhides at other parks such as Ambury Regional Park; which worked well to his knowledge.

The local board agreed that the educational and engagement benefits of birdhides are relevant to improving the park, especially given the emphasis to birdlife in the HOPM.

The local board consider this a low priority however, noting the lower levels of support and prioritisation of this proposal by surveyed submitters.

9. Extended planting of the stream banks

The local board noted the strong support from submitters for this proposal and also their concerns that views should be preserved. This applies to views from Te Atatū Rd, not just within the park. Suggestions to annotate the stream revegetation to be a low/medium height were supported.

To amend the following:

- n) Amend the site-wide notation in section 4.2 to read 'Revegetation and enhancement of stream corridors with low/medium height species'

10. Investigating the use of the brick villa as a community space/information centre

The local board noted that support for this proposal through submissions appeared to be based on opening the villa up to the public; rather than an identified need for a particular use. While the local board considered removing this proposal from the plan, they also noted the historic values of the villa and support the retention of this proposal in recognition that it may well serve an appropriate community / park use in the long term.

11. Public access to, and stabilisation and enhancement of the brickworks site

While submitters overall supported this proposal, the levels of support were not strong though a number noted the importance of the site's connection to local history. There were concerns about the costs of restoration and vandalism.

The HOPM proposal does not call for full restoration of the brickworks but seeks to stabilise and enhance the site. However, it is considered appropriate that stabilisation and enhancement is subject to feasibility to understand the extent of works that can be reasonably achieved. The local board support an amendment of this proposal to make explicit it is subject to feasibility.

To amend the following:

- o) Amend section 4.2 proposal 13 (renumbered as 14) to read 'Proposed heritage boardwalk along foreshore to historic brickworks, in conjunction with stabilisation and enhancement of the brickworks (subject to feasibility)'

12. Improving pedestrian access through and into the gun emplacements

Improved access through the gun emplacements including connections to the village were supported in some verbal submissions. However, access into the gun emplacements was unenthusiastic in both written and verbal submissions. Most submission comments noted concerns around vandalism, rubbish and graffiti. As a result, the local board supports removal of the proposal to access into the gun emplacements.

It was also noted briefly that there were ongoing discussions regarding the potential relocation of a naval gun to the site and dedication of a naval memorial. However, these were not at a stage to inform the masterplan.

To amend the following:

- p) Amend proposal 3 to read: "Improve pedestrian connections through gun emplacements to village centre and RSA. ~~Investigate providing access into the gun emplacements~~"

13. Additional park furniture and signage

The strong support in submissions for park furniture and interpretive signage was discussed, though the comments made in submissions around clutter and vandalism were noted.

The common theme of submissions seeking a toilet at Gloria Ave was discussed; and it was acknowledged that a toilet within the park would help fulfill that need for many park users. Toilet facilities in this location are provided for in the draft HOPM.

14. Pedestrian/cycle connections outside of the park

The strong support for improved connections across Te Atatū Rd seen in written comments was noted; and the local board referred to work already underway to support a pedestrian crossing in light of safety concerns.

While the concerns of some submitters around the impact of birds through potential connection to the Te Whau pathway were noted, the local board also discussed the support for a connection evident in a number of submissions. On balance, the board continue to support investigation of a potential connection with NZTA given that this would improve links between the peninsula and Te Atatū south.

15. Provision of looped pathway circuits on the upper terrace

The looped circuit around the recreational hub area at Gloria Ave including a better connection to Danica Ave, was specifically mentioned by a few submitters. The local board supported this pathway.

In regard to the proposed pathway connection at the south of the reserve from the cliff-top pathway to the footpath alongside Te Atatū Road, the local board suggested that be kept close to the edge of the reserve. However, the local board continue to support its provision noting that it is otherwise a long walk to the next connecting pathway across the park.

16. Provision of a Play Trail

The concerns of some submitters around how play equipment would not conflict with the natural values of the park was echoed by the local board. The local board were also interested in the need for formal play provision given opportunities for free play within the park.

The design principle of the draft HOPM to 'Provide for nature-themed play including bringing artistic, sculptural or symbolic elements into the park in association with mana whenua' was reviewed. This principle seeks that play provision responds to natural values amongst other things. The local board noted that play features such as a group of large branches to clamber over (engineered to ensure safety) could, for example, enable a richer play experience while complementing the park's natural values. Similarly artistic or sculptural play elements on a nature theme may enhance the park for all users.

The local board noted the general survey support and priority of a play trail made through the survey. Ms Utley (Service and Asset Planning Specialist) advised that the analysis of written comments from those who were not supportive or unsure of a play trail in the survey revealed more people supported greater provision for play (such as a playground) on the park; rather than less play provision.

The local board agreed that the low level of play provision signaled by a play trail in the masterplan was an appropriate response to the mixed community views of play provision.

17. Provision of a Fitness Trail

This proposal was less well supported than other proposals based on survey results; including rating low on submitter's priorities for the park.

The local board agreed with those submitters who noted the nearby fitness trail provision at Te Atatū Park, and support the removal of the fitness trail from the plan.

To amend the following:

- q) Remove fitness stations shown in sections 4.2 and 4.3 of the HOPM

18. Protection of viewshafts

The viewshafts of the original 2003 concept plan for the park were discussed, as were the viewshafts shown on the publicly consulted draft HOPM.

The HOPM design principle to protect the panoramic views to the harbour were discussed as an alternative to showing particular viewshafts on the plan. However, the local board agreed that showing particular viewshafts would help prioritise views to protect and help guide future park improvements.

In comparing the 2003 plan to the HOPM, the local board noted the absence in the 2003 plan of the Unitary Plan viewshaft from the gun emplacements, which is considered relevant to park improvements. Further, they agreed that the draft HOPM viewshafts relate more appropriately to that plan and support no further change to these.

19. Minor amendments sought to the plan

In regard to specific requests for changes to the specific text affecting the background and design principles sections of the HOPM, the local board supported the amendments suggested by staff, as described in report CP2018/23031 dated 4 December 2018 listed below:

To amend the following:

- r) Add notation at the end of section 1.1.2 (page 6) that: “The provision of a marae and its design are outside the scope of the masterplan. However, the interface of the marae with the park was considered as part of the process to create the masterplan”
- s) Include picture of the copper skink on page 19 and relabel that section as Estuarine and terrestrial fauna.
- t) Amend ‘People’ Design Principle 8, page 39, to read; “Manage parking, roading and park facilities so as to not compromise the park’s natural character, environmental and heritage values, or the safety of park users”
- u) Update ‘Environment’ Design Principle, page 38 ‘Protect and enhance the natural environment including use of eco-sourced native planting, riparian and wetland planting, consideration of native fauna, and providing protected areas for bird nesting and roosting
- v) Amend section 4.2, proposal 4, to read ‘Possible fernbird viewing hide with seating and interpretation within mangrove and mudflat habitat, with views of open sea.’
- w) Add notation to section 4.2, proposal 14 (reabeled as #15) to ‘investigate in conjunction with the NZTA’.
- x) Amend notation in section 4.2 Gloria Ave Entrance text to ‘Bollards and/or low planting along Te Atatū Rd in conjunction with AT to restrict vehicle access into park’