

Auckland Regional Pest Management Plan consultation feedback and recommended changes

File No.: CP2018/20962

Te take mō te pūrongo / Purpose of the report

1. To receive a summary of consultation feedback from local board residents on the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan, and to provide feedback on recommended changes to the document.

Whakarāpopototanga matua / Executive summary

2. Auckland Council is currently developing a new Regional Pest Management Plan. This plan is prepared under the Biosecurity Act 1993, and describes the pest plants, animals and pathogens that will be managed in Auckland. It provides a framework to minimise the spread and impact of those pests and manage them through a regional approach. Once operative, the Regional Pest Management Plan will provide a regulatory framework to support the council's biosecurity activities, including those funded through the natural environment targeted rate.
3. The Proposed Regional Pest Management plan was approved for public consultation by the Environment and Community Committee in November 2017 (resolution numbers ENV/2017/161 to ENV/2017/167) and consulted on in February and March 2018 alongside the Long-term Plan 2018-2028.
4. A workshop was held with the board on 27 September 2018 to discuss the consultation feedback and proposed staff responses.
5. Puketāpapa Local Board residents provided 12 submissions on the plan, representing one per cent of overall submissions. The views of local board residents were similar to regional views, with high levels of support across all topics excluding the addition of cats as a pest. The extent of cat control resulting from the plan is likely to be less extensive than the concerns noted in many submissions. Staff are exploring options to mitigate submitter concerns in the wording of the final plan.
6. This report requests the board's formal feedback on recommended changes to the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan arising from key submission themes. Submission themes and corresponding changes are summarised in Attachment A.

Ngā tūtohunga / Recommendation/s

That the Puketāpapa Local Board:

- a) receive a summary of consultation feedback from Puketāpapa residents on the Proposed Auckland Regional Pest Management Plan.
- b) provide feedback on the recommended changes to the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan based on consultation feedback.

Horopaki / Context

7. Auckland Council is currently reviewing its 2007 Regional Pest Management Strategy. The new Regional Pest Management Plan will prescribe council's approach to pest management to reflect best practice and changes to various pest plants and animals in the Auckland region. The review is also in direct response to, and compliant with, the National Policy Direction for Pest Management 2015.

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8. The review of the Regional Pest Management Plan began with an issues and options paper discussed with elected members, followed by a public discussion document which was used as a basis for engagement with mana whenua, stakeholders and elected members.
9. At its November 2017 meeting, the Environment and Community Committee approved the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan for public consultation alongside the Long-term Plan 2018-2028 (resolution numbers ENV/2017/161 to ENV/2017/167).

Tātaritanga me ngā tohutohu / Analysis and advice

10. Consultation on the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan took place in February to March 2018 alongside consultation on the Long-term Plan and other statutory planning documents. A total of 1,262 submissions were received, which represents a significant increase on the approximately 400 submissions that were received on the 2015 discussion document. The breakdown by submission type is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan breakdown by submission type (Auckland-wide)

Submission type	Number of submissions	Percentage of submissions
Online form	1035	82%
Hardcopy form	183	15%
Non-form (e.g. email, letter)	44	3%

11. Of the 1,262 submissions received, 23 were pro-forma submissions from Forest and Bird. The number of submission received by local board area is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Breakdown of Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan submissions by local board area

Local board	Number of submitters	Percentage of submitters
Albert-Eden	116	9%
Great Barrier	24	4%
Devonport-Takapuna	53	4%
Franklin	50	2%
Henderson-Massey	46	4%
Hibiscus and Bays	85	7%
Howick	52	4%
Kaipātiki	98	8%
Māngere-Ōtāhuhu	17	1%
Manurewa	18	1%
Maungakiekie-Tāmaki	51	4%
Ōrākei	64	5%
Ōtara-Papatoetoe	7	1%
Papakura	21	2%
Puketāpapa	12	1%
Rodney	162	13%
Upper Harbour	41	3%
Waiheke	37	3%
Waitākere Ranges	87	7%
Waitematā	51	4%
Whau	41	3%
Regional	5	0%
Not Supplied	69	5%
Outside Auckland	55	4%

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Total	1,262	
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12. The consultation feedback form included eight questions relating to key programmes in the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan that were described in a summary document (see Attachment B for details around each of the proposed approaches). The responses received for each question from residents of the Puketāpapa Local Board area are summarised below in Table 3, and show a high level of support across all these topic areas.

Table 3: Feedback from Puketāpapa residents on the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan

Question	Response	Percentage of submissions local board	Percentage of submissions regional
1. What is your view on the proposed approach to pest plant management in parks?	Full support	8%	26%
	Partial support	15%	17%
	Partial do not support	0%	3%
	Full do not support	0%	2%
	Other comments	77%	53%
2. What is your view on the proposed approach to managing kauri dieback?	Full support	33%	27%
	Partial support	11%	29%
	Partial do not support	0%	5%
	Full do not support	0%	2%
	Other comments	56%	37%
3. What is your view on the proposed approach to prevent the spread of pests to the Hauraki Gulf Islands?	Full support	69%	46%
	Partial support	0%	19%
	Partial do not support	23%	12%
	Full do not support	0%	2%
	Other comments	8%	21%
4. What is your view on the proposed approach to managing pests on Aotea/Great Barrier?	Full support	40%	44%
	Partial support	10%	20%
	Partial do not support	10%	4%
	Full do not support	0%	2%
	Other comments	40%	30%
5. What is your view on the proposed approach to managing pests on Kawau Island?	Full support	27%	43%
	Partial support	0%	23%
	Partial do not support	18%	7%
	Full do not support	18%	4%
	Other comments	36%	23%
6. What is your view on the proposed approach to managing pests on	Full support	45%	44%
	Partial support	9%	21%
	Partial do not support	9%	5%

Waiheke Island?	Full do not support	0%	3%
	Other comments	36%	28%
7. What is your view on the proposed approach to the management of rural possums?	Full support	45%	38%
	Partial support	9%	28%
	Partial do not support	18%	7%
	Full do not support	0%	4%
	Other comments	27%	23%
8. What is your view on the proposed approach to the management of freshwater pests?	Full support	56%	46%
	Partial support	0%	23%
	Partial do not support	0%	4%
	Full do not support	0%	3%
	Other comments	44%	25%

13. In addition to the eight themed questions covered in Table 3, a further open-ended question elicited responses about a wide range of other topics covered in the proposed plan.
14. The most commonly raised topic in the open-ended question was the issue of cat management. A wide range of views on this topic were expressed, including requests for increased cat management beyond that in the proposed plan. The majority of submissions on this topic voiced concerns about cats being included as pests. These submitters cited animal welfare issues and concerns that domestic cats throughout Auckland would be at risk under the proposed plan. Staff are exploring options for mitigating these concerns, which in many cases reflect a perception of more extensive cat control than was envisaged in the plan. Options for mitigating concerns include clarifying the spatial extent of the proposed approach in the final plan, and alternatives to the use of the term 'pest cat'.
15. Staff have worked through submissions to determine any changes to be recommended for the final plan. Attachment A identifies key themes where amendments to pest management programmes in the proposed plan were sought by submitters, along with proposed staff responses. Feedback themes have been grouped according to the questions in Table 3 (above), along with an 'other' category to capture feedback related to other topics.
16. This report seeks formal feedback from the board at its November 2018 business meeting on the recommended changes to the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan in response to consultation feedback.

Ngā whakaaweawe ā-rohe me ngā tirohanga a te poari ā-rohe / Local impacts and local board views

17. During engagement on the issues and options paper and wider public consultation on the discussion document, key issues were raised in relation to cats, possums, widespread pest plants, and the ban of sale of some pest species. In addition to these regional issues, the Puketāpapa Local Board provided feedback on locally specific issues of importance to the area, including pigeons, weeds on council land, rabbits, and the importance of education around pests.
18. Proposed approaches to be taken in relation to these issues were workshopped with the board in June 2017. At its August 2017 business meeting the board provided formal feedback on these proposed management approaches. A copy of this feedback is appended in Attachment C.
19. A recent workshop with the board was held on 27 September 2018 to discuss the consultation feedback and the recommended amendments to the plan, as set out in Attachment A.

Tauākī whakaaweawe Māori / Māori impact statement

20. Section 61 of the Biosecurity Act requires that a Regional Pest Management Plan set out the effects that implementation of the plan would have on the relationship between Māori, their culture, their traditions and their ancestral lands, waters, sites, maunga, mahinga kai, wāhi tapu, and taonga.
21. Engagement has been undertaken with interested mana whenua in the Auckland region during development of the plan, and formal submissions were received from the mana whenua groups listed below. In addition, staff are working closely with mana whenua on the development and implementation of a range of biosecurity programmes, providing opportunities for mana whenua to exercise kaitiakitanga, through direct involvement in the protection of culturally significant sites and taonga species.
 - Mana Whenua Kaitiaki Forum
 - Te Kawerau ā Maki
 - Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Whātua
 - Te Uri o Hau
 - Te Tira Whakamātaki - Māori Biosecurity Network
22. Submissions were largely supportive of the approaches set out in the proposed plan, and key themes noted in feedback from mana whenua included:
 - the need to enhance rather than protect ecosystem function and resilience
 - the need to recognise ecological value outside Significant Ecological Areas
 - the need to identify performance measures to enable people to readily evaluate success
 - the need to adopt management strategies that incentivise good management approaches
 - the importance of community education and involvement in pest management
 - mana whenua participation in pest management in collaboration with Auckland Council.
23. Staff have prepared a summary of mana whenua feedback, including proposed staff responses. This document will be circulated to mana whenua submitters for their consideration in November and December 2018. This content will be included in the final submission summary that is reported to the Environment and Community Committee in March 2019, alongside the final plan. This content will be made available to all local boards prior to the committee meeting.

Ngā ritenga ā-pūtea / Financial implications

24. The Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan presents a major change in pest management in Auckland, and therefore requires a significant increase in investment. As part of consultation on the Long-term Plan 2018-2028, the council sought community views on two options for increased investment in the natural environment funded by a targeted rate.
25. On 31 May 2018 the Governing Body approved the introduction of a natural environment targeted rate to raise \$311 million for environmental initiatives. These initiatives include addressing kauri dieback and targeted ecological protection (resolution GB/2018/91).
26. This level of investment allows substantial (approximately 80 per cent), but not full, implementation of the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan. Some changes to the proposed plan will be made to fit the funding envelope, most notably reducing the spatial extent of parks supported by pest plant control in buffer zones, and removing the moth plant

good neighbour rule from the Hauraki Gulf Islands. These changes are addressed in further detail in Attachment A.

Ngā raru tūpono / Risks

27. There are no significant risks arising from the board giving feedback on the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan at this time. However, if the board chooses not to give feedback this would create a risk that their views will not be reflected in the final Regional Pest Management Plan.
28. If adoption of the Regional Pest Management Plan is delayed, this will create significant risks to the council's ability to achieve targets for protecting native biodiversity, through effectively regulating the control of pest plants, animals and pathogens.

Ngā koringa ā-muri / Next steps

29. Attachment A has been prepared to facilitate local board feedback on the recommended changes to the proposed Regional Pest Management Plan.
30. Staff will progress development of the final Regional Pest Management Plan in line with the process and indicative timeframes outlined in Table 4 below. A copy of the final plan and supporting information (including a full submissions analysis report and staff recommendations) will be provided to local boards for information prior to Environment and Community Committee adoption in March 2019.

Table 4: Timeframes for the finalisation of the Regional Pest Management Plan

Action/Milestone	Indicative timeframe
Mana whenua engagement to address changes proposed in submissions	September – October 2018
Local boards resolve formal feedback at business meetings	November – December 2018
Environment and Community Committee workshop	November 2018
Staff draft final plan	December 2018 – February 2019
Environment and Community Committee adopt plan	March 2019
Closing the loop with local boards and submitters	April – May 2019

Ngā tāpirihanga / Attachments

No.	Title	Page
A	Key submission themes and recommended amendments to the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan consultation feedback	
B	Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan 2018 - Summary Document	
C	Puketāpapa Local Board feedback on the Proposed Regional Pest Management Plan	

Ngā kaihaina / Signatories

Authors	Dr Imogen Bassett – Biosecurity Principal Advisor
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Authorisers	Gael Ogilvie – General Manager Environmental Services Barry Potter - Director Infrastructure and Environmental Services Louse Mason – General Manager, Local Board Services Victoria Villaraza - Relationship Manager Manager
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