

**Date:** Wednesday 26 March 2025  
**Time:** 10:00 am  
**Venue:** Rodney Local Board Office, 3 Elizabeth Street  
Warkworth

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## **Rodney Local Board Workshop**

### **ITEM ATTACHMENTS**

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# Snells Beach 'share the shore' proposal

Natural Environment Delivery  
Parks and Community Facilities

26 March 2025

## Attachment A

### **Purpose**

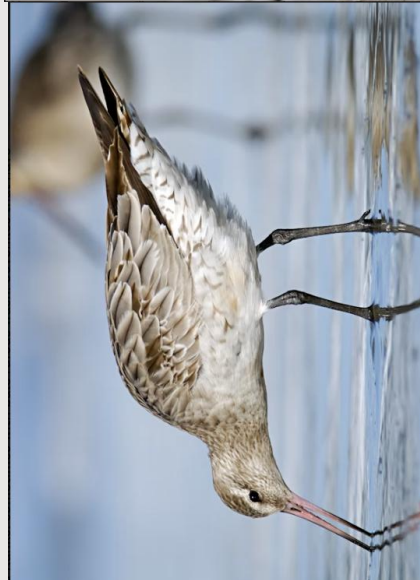
- Provide a brief overview of the Snells Beach shorebird roost project – ‘Share the Shore’
- Present the community feedback received on the project
- Present an alternative option for consideration and questions

## **Presentation outline**

- Recap of Snells Beach shorebird values and threats
- Recap of project proposal
- Summary of community engagement process
- Summary of feedback
- Council response to questions raised in feedback
- Present an alternative option

## Snells Beach shorebird values and threats

- Shorebirds populations persist at this site
- Pressures and threats; international, regional and local
  - Loss of coastal habitat
  - Disturbance
  - Predation



## Why is Snells different to other local beaches?

- Diversity and abundance of species.
- Special because of roosting, breeding and foraging habitat.

Common name	National conservation status 2021
Tara iti / New Zealand fairy tern	Threatened – Nationally Critical <sup>^</sup>
Taranui / Caspian tern	Threatened – Nationally Vulnerable
Tūturiwhatu / northern New Zealand dotterel*	Threatened – Nationally Increasing
Tōrea / South Island pied oystercatcher	At Risk - Declining
Kuaka / bar-tailed godwit	At Risk - Declining
Tarāpunga / red-billed gull	At Risk - Declining
Tōrea pango / variable oystercatcher	At Risk - Recovering
Poaka / pied stilt	Not threatened

\* Five pairs of northern New Zealand dotterel attempted to nest at Snells Beach during the 2022/23 breeding season.

<sup>^</sup> 'Threatened – Nationally Critical' is the most threatened/highest threat level under the New Zealand Threat Classification System. The population of fairy terns is c. 40 individuals.



New Zealand dotterel | Tūturiwhatu, Northern subspecies non-breeding adult. Miranda, Firth of Thames, February 2009. Image © Neil Fitzgerald by Neil Fitzgerald. [www.neilfitzgeraldphotography.com](http://www.neilfitzgeraldphotography.com)

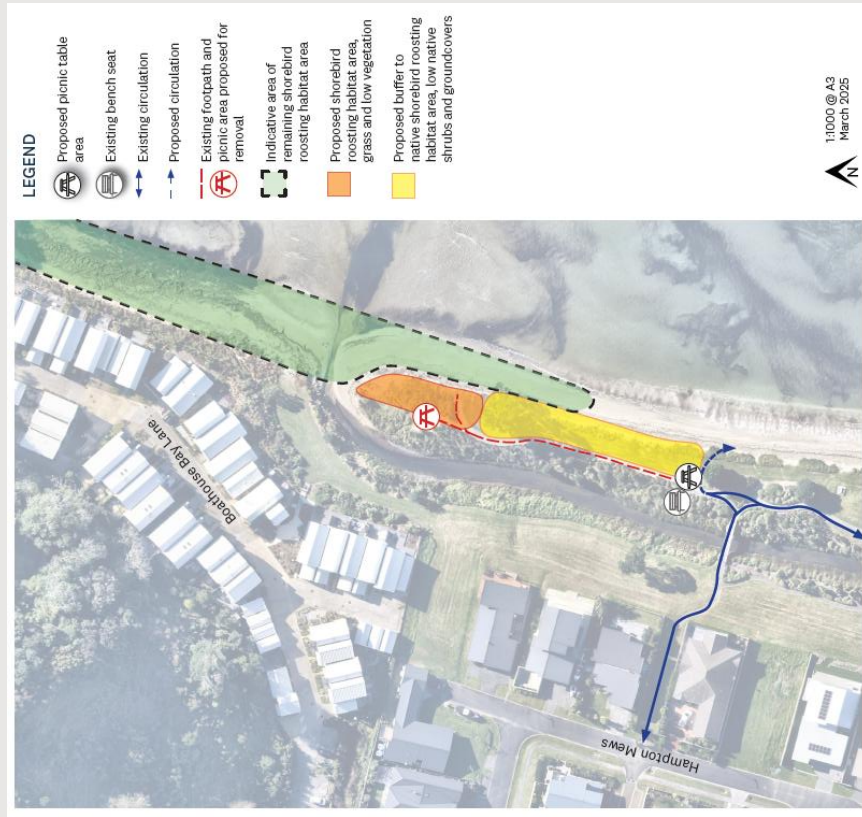


Attachment A





# Proposal recap – Picnic area reconfiguration



## **Alignment with council and local board plans**

- Auckland Plan 2050 - Environmental and cultural heritage outcome.
- Rodney Local Board Plan 2023 – We work together to protect and restore our biodiversity and natural ecosystems.
- Local Park Management Plan – Whisper Cove, Natural Values and Management Intentions.

# Auckland Plan 2050

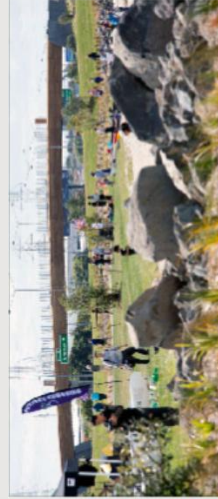
Environmental and  
cultural heritage  
outcome



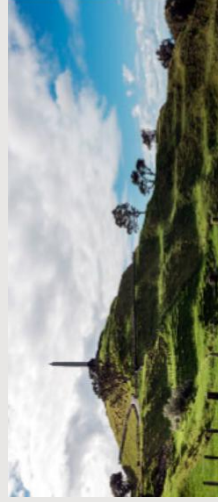
Direction 1: Ensure Auckland's  
natural environment and cultural  
heritage is valued and cared for



Focus area 1: Encourage all  
Aucklanders to be stewards of the  
natural environment, and to make  
sustainable choices



Focus area 2: Focus on restoring  
environments as Auckland grows



Focus area 4: Protect Auckland's  
significant natural environments  
and cultural heritage from further  
loss

# Local Board Plan 2023

## Tō Tātou Taiao

### Our Environment

Our land, waterways and coasts are cared for and protected

We work together to protect and restore our biodiversity and natural ecosystems

Support mana whenua to enhance and restore biodiversity in Rodney including coastal infrastructure, waterways, sites of significance, urupā, wāhi tapu

Partner with mana whenua to support community groups to build an understanding of te ao Māori and support opportunities for collaboration between iwi and community groups on biodiversity projects of mutual interest.

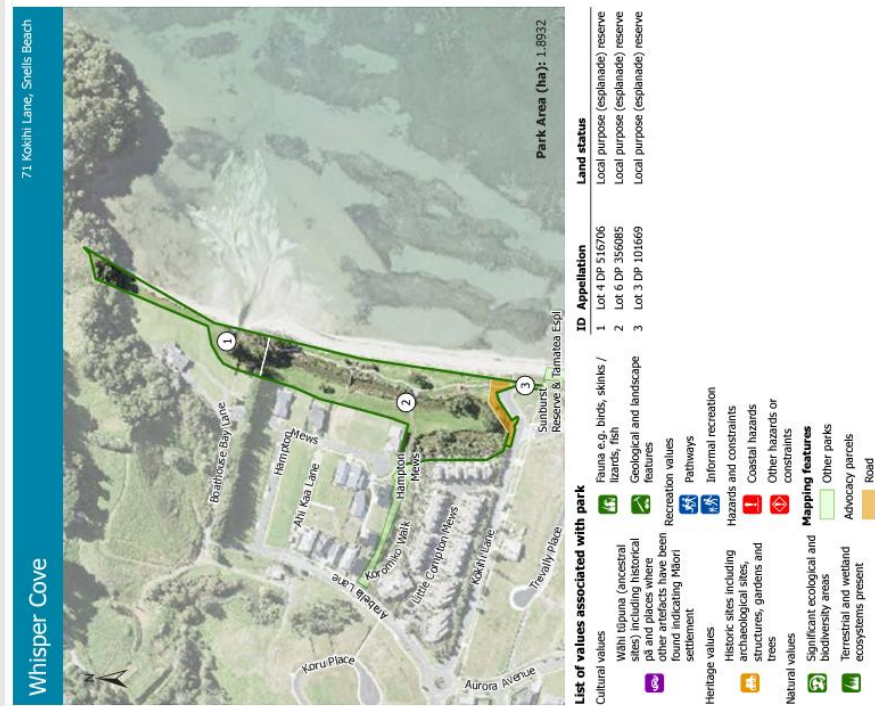
Support community groups, landowners, volunteers and schools to manage pest plants, animals and pathogens; to carry out native planting and stream restoration work in our parks, reserves, public and private land; to improve sites of high ecological value and protect local biodiversity such as threatened and at-risk species at a landscape scale

Support community groups, volunteers and schools to engage, educate and raise awareness of environmental matters within the community

Protect and develop areas of particular importance to mana whenua in ways that are in accordance with mana whenua tikanga and



# Local Parks Management Plan



## CULTURAL VALUES

- A number of archaeological sites of Māori origin recorded at the park. A pā site is also recorded on nearby land.
- Kuaka that return to the shoreline each summer are of cultural significance to Ngāti Manuhiri.

## NATURAL VALUES

- The beach is known for its significant shorebird values - birds foraging at low tide and at the northern end of beach roosting and breeding in the high tide area. Species seen in the area include NZ dotterel, Caspian tern, New Zealand fairy tern, variable oystercatcher, South Island pied oystercatcher, bar-tailed godwit, red-billed gull and pied stilt.
- Geological / outstanding natural area or feature - Matakana River South - Area 38 recorded.

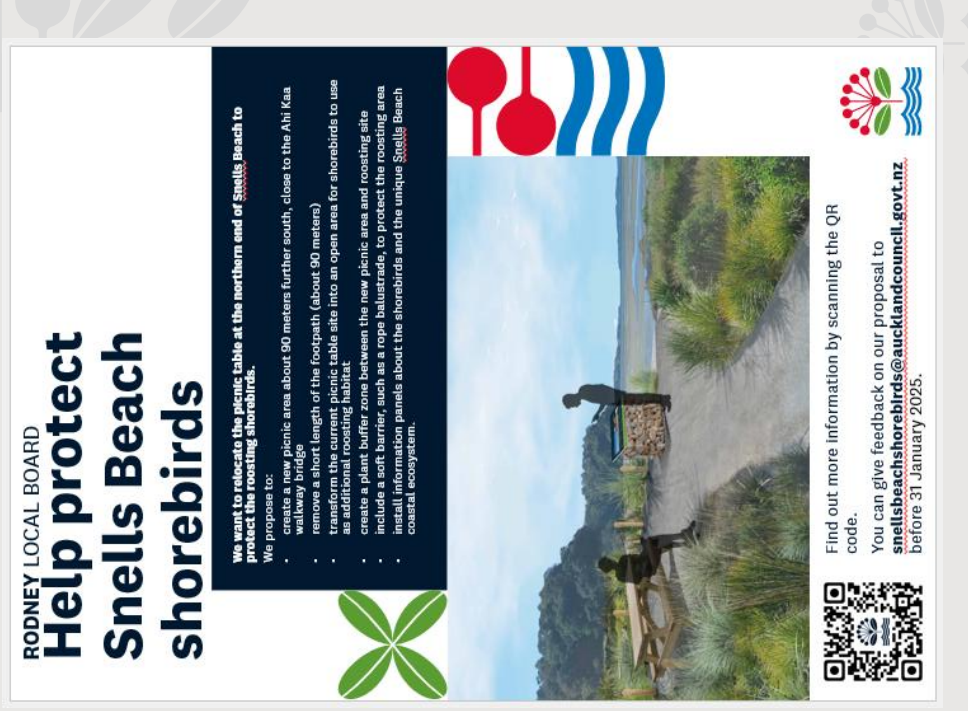
## MANAGEMENT INTENTIONS

- Investigate enhancements to high tide area for shorebird roosting and breeding including a hide for the public to view birds from a safe distance (approximate location south of the stream mouth, at the end of an existing pathway). Investigate temporary fencing around any areas where birds might be nesting to provide "ecological islands" for birds to nest safely and move between land and water.
- Raise awareness of wildlife and ecological values, and continue to support community initiatives providing stewardship over the natural environment including weed and pest management.
- Work with mana whenua over the protection of the significant cultural heritage in the park including archaeological sites and cultural landscapes.

## Community engagement approach

Targeted to reach the most impacted community members.

- Presentation to Snell Beach Ratepayers and Resident's Association community meeting (4 November 2024).
- Our Auckland Story, 21 November 2024
- On-site signage - period 18 December to 31 January 2025.
- Custom inbox for project.
- Local Matters published article on 17 January 2025.



**RODNEY LOCAL BOARD**  
**Help protect Snell's Beach shorebirds**

We want to relocate the picnic table at the northern end of Snell's Beach to protect the roosting shorebirds.

We propose to:

- create a new picnic area about 90 meters further south, close to the Ahi Kaa walkway bridge
- remove a short length of the footpath (about 90 meters)
- transform the current picnic table site into an open area for shorebirds to use as additional roosting habitat
- create a plant buffer zone between the new picnic area and roosting site
- include a soft barrier, such as a rope balustrade, to protect the roosting area
- install information panels about the shorebirds and the unique Snell's Beach coastal ecosystem.

Find out more information by scanning the QR code.  
You can give feedback on our proposal to [snellsbeachshorebirds@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:snellsbeachshorebirds@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) before 31 January 2025.

# Community consultation outcomes

Response	Percentage	Count
Supportive	34%	49
Opposed	66%	97
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>146</b>

Response	Percentage	Count
Support for moving picnic table and/or creating a roosting area only, not removing the path.	10%	10
Concerns about accessibility for elderly and disabled residents.	25%	24
Walkway viewed as a valuable community asset.	44%	42
Belief that birds are adaptable and current measures are sufficient.	25%	24
Would prefer alternative conservation efforts (such as better signage and education, predator proof fences, pest control, or seasonal restrictions).	36%	35
Concerns about the cost and "waste" of public funds.	46%	45
Belief that the proposal would harm birds (due to beach use and disturbance during nesting)	24%	23

## Community consultation outcomes continued

Petition – 701 signatures

Petition statement:

*“We believe the shorebirds are adapted to the present environment which is supported by pest and pet control and the provision of a pathway to use rather than foreshore roosting areas.*

*Cost concerns; the proposal would cause unnecessary expenditure in removing such a valued well used pathways.*

*Disruption of restful people friendly area*

*Disruption wildlife in the area.”*



## **Community consultation outcomes continued**

### **Strong organisational support from:**

- Snells Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association
- Pest Free Snells Beach
- Snells Conservation
- Forest and Bird Warkworth
- Restore Rodney East
- Wader Quest

Letter of support from the Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust (outside of this consultation process)

## Environmental Services feedback - shorebirds

Apparent misconceptions about shorebirds within the feedback:

- *That the proposal is to protect Northern New Zealand dotterels*

The purpose is to create space for at least six Threatened and At-Risk species with roosting numbers often in the hundreds. Dotterels will be one of the species that benefit from this project.

- *The shorebirds are fine with the measures in place already*  
Constant low level disturbance is as much a threat as being chased or predation. Being on constant alert, moving out of the way of people means shorebirds cannot rest adequately. Nests and eggs are left exposed.

## Roosting godwits at Snells Beach



Photo: <https://www.localmatters.co.nz/mahurangi-news/celebrate-the-return-of-kuaka/>

Attachment A

**Chronic low level disturbance**



## **SME feedback – engagement and parks**

Some comments raised concerns about accessibility for elderly and disabled.

Council staff have checked that bridges along the pathway meet accessibility standards and shouldn't pose an issue for accessibility users.

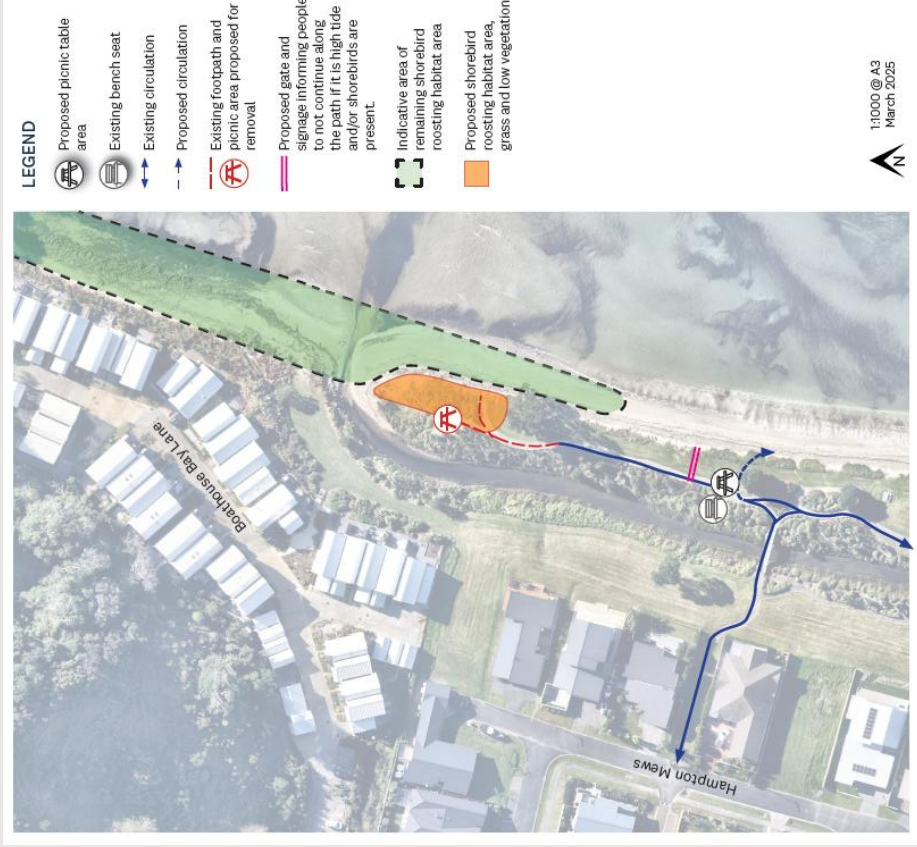


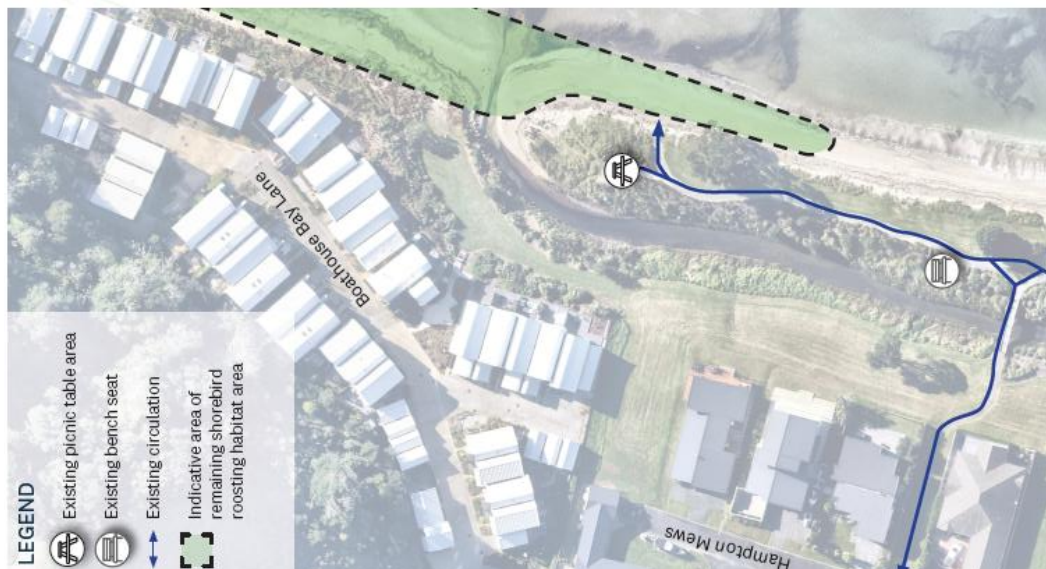
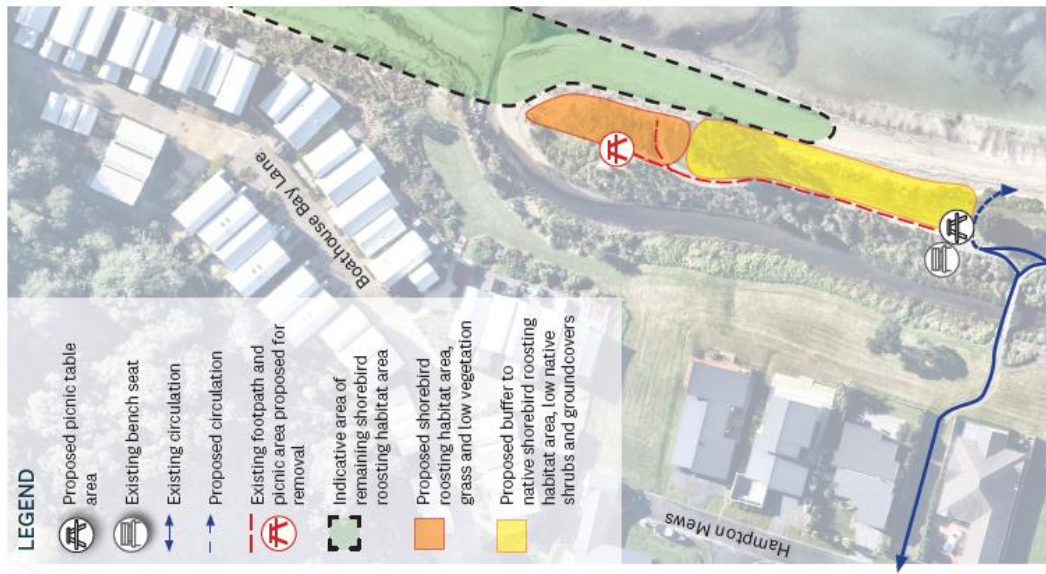
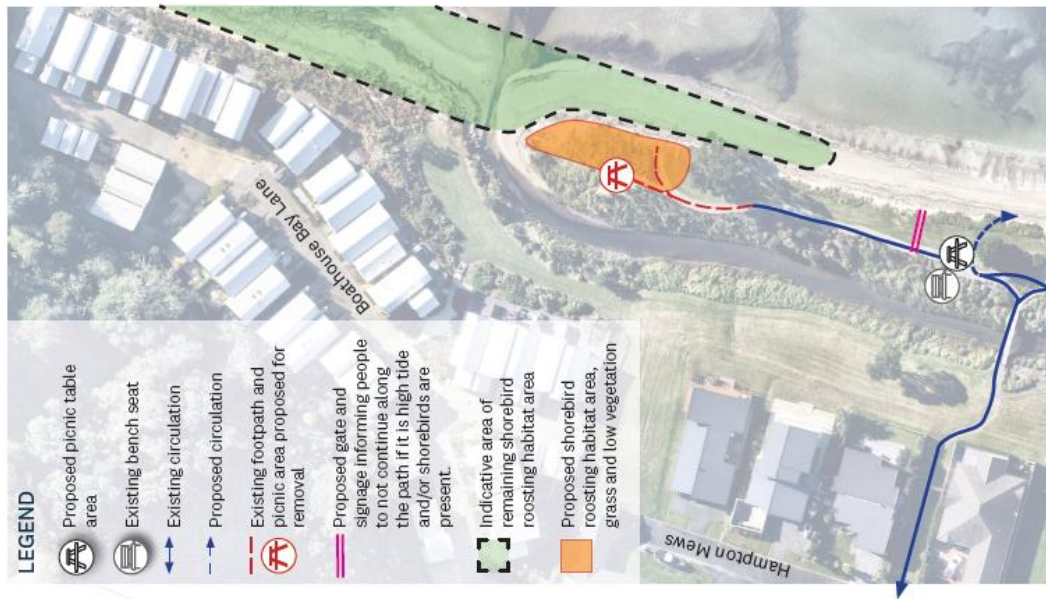
Staff are interested to learn more about barriers we may be unaware of with the remaining 1.5km of connected path.

Attachment A

# Amended option

An alternative option has been identified and can be further investigate





## Next Steps

- A report will be brought to the local board for a decision, including analysis of the three options.



Photo: <https://www.localmatters.co.nz/mahurangi-news/celebrate-the-return-of-kuaka/>



## Memorandum

19 March 2025

**To:** Rodney Local Board

**Cc:** Lesley Jenkins – Local Area Manager, Zigi Yates – Senior Local Board Advisor, Robyn Jones – Local Board Advisor

**Subject:** Update on feedback from public consultation about Snells Beach 'Share the Shore' proposal.

**From:** Environmental Services staff  
Parks and Community Facilities staff

**Contact information:** Nick Fitzherbert – Team Leader Relationship Advisory  
[nick.fitzherbert@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz]

### Purpose

1. To provide the Rodney Local Board with a summary of the feedback received from the public consultation about the Snells Beach picnic area and shorebird roost proposal (Share the Shore).
2. To present an alternative option for the Snells Beach picnic area and shorebird roost proposal

### Summary

3. In 2020 staff drafted a proposal to improve shorebird roosting habitat at Snells Beach after recognising the increased pressures on roosting habitat due to the installation of a picnic table and an increasing number of beach users.
4. In December 2023 staff held a workshop with the Rodney Local Board to present a proposal to improve shorebird roosting habitat at Snells Beach. The local board were supportive of staff undertaking community consultation about the proposal.
5. Community consultation was undertaken over December 2024 and January 2025 and we received 146 separate submissions, representing six organisations and 159 individuals (some submissions included more than one individual). The feedback has 34 per cent in support of the proposal and 66 per cent opposed.
6. In response to the opposition to the proposal staff have developed an alternative option to balance the concerns of the community and protect the shorebirds.

### Context

7. In 2020 Environmental Services staff drafted a concept proposal to improve shorebird roosting habitat at Snells Beach after recognising the increased pressures on roosting habitat due to the installation of a picnic table (installed by a Developer under Resource Consent) and increasing local population and beach users.
8. The concept proposal was shared with Parks and Community Facilities staff and opportunities to collaborate in delivering the concept plan were recognised.
9. The concept plan aligns with the 'Our Environment' section of the Rodney Local Board Plan 2023 and the Snells Beach Whisper Cove Local Parks Management Plan to "investigate enhancements to high tide area for shorebird roosting and breeding...".

10. In December 2023 the Senior Conservation Advisor, Environmental Services and Work Programme Lead, Parks and Community Facilities held a workshop with the Rodney Local Board to present a proposal to improve shorebird roosting habitat at Snells Beach.
11. Local Board members were supportive of the proposal. It was agreed that public consultation would be undertaken and community would have the opportunity to submit feedback on the proposal.
12. There were delays in commencing consultation after the 2023 workshop due to changes in staff and capacity issues.
13. An [OurAuckland](#) story was published on 21 November 2024 to share information about the proposal and signage (Attachment A) was installed at the project site to ensure people using the area were aware of the proposal. Both the OurAuckland Story and on-site signage advertised the opportunity to give feedback via the project specific email address.
14. In addition to this an article by Local Matters published an article on January 17 2025 including quotes and information provided by our team.
15. The proposal was presented at the Snells Beach Residents and Ratepayers Association on 4 November 2024, with approximately 20 people in attendance. Questions were received about shorebird conservation as well as supportive feedback. No objections to the proposal were made at this time.

### Discussion

16. The consultation period ran from the 18 December 2024 to 31 January 2025. In response to the call for feedback, 146 separate submissions were received, representing 6 organisations (five local and one international) and 159 individuals (some submissions included more than one individual).
17. Of the 146 responses, 34 per cent were in support of the proposal and 66 per cent were opposed.
18. The feedback that was opposed has been summarised into the following eight themes:
  - concerns about the cost and waste of public funds (identified in 45 responses)
  - walkway viewed as a valuable community asset (identified in 42 responses)
  - would prefer alternative conservation efforts (identified in 35 responses)
  - concerns about accessibility for elderly and disabled residents (identified in 24 responses)
  - belief that birds are adaptable and current measures are sufficient (identified in 24 responses)
  - belief that the proposal would harm birds (due to beach use and disruption during works) (23 responses)
  - support for moving picnic table and/or creating a roosting area only, not removing the path (identified in 10 responses).
19. A petition against the proposal has been submitted with 701 unique signatures. This petition was presented formally by the community representative at the Rodney Local Board Business Meeting on 19 March 2025.
20. The petition statement is as follows:

“We the undersigned are opposed to and object to the planned removal of the concrete pathway and picnic area at the northern end of Snells Beach and the relocation of it.

We believe shorebirds are adapted to the present environment which is supported by pest and pet control and the provision of a pathway for people to use rather than foreshore roosting areas.

Cost concerns; the proposal would cause unnecessary expenditure in removing such a valued well used pathway.

Disruption to restful people friendly environment.

Disruption to wildlife in the area.”
21. Feedback responses which supported the project recognise the value of shorebirds at Snells Beach and the impacts of habitat loss and disturbance. It was recognised that Auckland Council and local

boards have a role in protecting Threatened and At-Risk wildlife and mitigating impacts of population growth and development.

22. Supportive feedback was received from the following organisations and community groups:

- The Manuhiri Kaitiaki Settlement Trust, an arm of the Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust (via a letter of support outside of the feedback process)
- Snells Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association
- Snells Conservation
- Pest Free Snells
- Restore Rodney East committee
- Warkworth Forest and Bird
- Wader Quest (a charity registered in England and Wales).

### Options for consideration

23. Based on analysis of the feedback, Environmental Services and Parks and Community Facilities staff have identified an alternative option which balances the needs of the community and protection of the shorebirds (see Attachment B).

24. The alternative option involves:

- Relocating the picnic table approximately 90 metres south as originally proposed.
- Removing the northern most 30 metres of path from the pōhutukawa to the north (retain the 60 metres to the south of the pōhutukawa). This would allow people to walk as far as the pōhutukawa while still creating some additional roosting space for shorebirds and deterring people from accessing the beach from within the roost area.
- Including a gate (something that people using walkers and wheelchairs can still get through easily) across the path with signage requesting that if it is high tide and/or birds are roosting in the vicinity that people turn around and continue their walk back south along the 1.5 kilometres of path. This option empowers community members to make active decisions about how they use the reserve and beach area in relation to wildlife.
- Retain the area as managed grass with no additional planting. Community-led planting may be considered again in the future if desired.
- Include interpretive signage at the picnic area or gate to provide more information about shorebird disturbance and how people can support shorebird conservation.

### Next steps

25. A business meeting report will be brought to the local board including analysis of the three options for a decision.

26. Following this workshop, all submitters will be provided with an update on the outcome of the consultation, and next steps for the project.


### Attachments

**Attachment A. Example of sign installed at the proposed project site**

**Attachment B. Alternative option proposal**

Attachment A. Example of sign installed at the proposed project site.

Attachment B





## RODNEY LOCAL BOARD

# Help protect Snells Beach shorebirds


**We want to relocate the picnic table at the northern end of Snells Beach to protect the roosting shorebirds.**

We propose to:


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- create a plant buffer zone between the new picnic area and roosting site
- include a soft barrier, such as a rope balustrade, to protect the roosting area
- install information panels about the shorebirds and the unique Snells Beach coastal ecosystem.



Find out more information by scanning the QR code.



You can give feedback on our proposal to [snellsbeachshorebirds@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:snellsbeachshorebirds@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz) before 31 January 2025.



Attachment B. Alternative option proposal

**SNELLS BEACH SHOREBIRD ROOSTING PROPOSAL**  
**Amended proposal**





# Snells Beach shorebirds consultation results

Prepared by Madison O'Dwyer – Senior Community  
Engagement Advisor

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## Engagement Approach Summary

Auckland Council's consultation approach was designed to reach and receive feedback from the most impacted community members which we identified to be local residents and park/beach users during the summer months.

We presented the proposal to the Snells Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association on 4 November 2024.

An [OurAuckland story](#) was published on 21 November 2024 to introduce the proposal and create an online reference to link to on our consultation poster.

The consultation period was advertised with on-site signage (appendix 1) from 18 December 2024 – 31 January 2025 asking for feedback to be sent to a custom inbox: [Snellsbeach.shorebirds@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Snellsbeach.shorebirds@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz).

Additionally, [Local Matters published an article](#) on January 17 2025 including quotes and information provided by our team.

Please note, we accepted late submissions until 7 March 2025 as, due to decreased staff capacity over the summer, we were unable to answer official information requests before the consultation period finished.

## Community Participation

In response to our call for feedback, we received 146 separate submissions, including 5 local organisations, one international organisation and 159 individuals (some submissions included more than one individual). The large majority of submissions were from local residents and community members.

Organisations included:

- Forest and Bird Warkworth
- Pest Free Snells Beach
- Restore Rodney East
- Snells Beach Ratepayers and Residents Association
- Snells Conservation
- [Wader Quest](#) (a charity registered in England and Wales)

We also received a petition against the proposal with 701 unique signatures.

Many community members and organisations expressed a desire to speak to their submissions if there was an opportunity to do so.





























































































































