



## Forest & Bird

TE REO O TE TAIAO | *Giving Nature a Voice*  
Royal Forest and Bird Protection  
Society of New Zealand Inc.

34A Charlotte Street, Eden Terrace  
Auckland 1021  
[www.forestandbird.org.nz](http://www.forestandbird.org.nz)

### Submission on Kaipātiki Local Board Plan.

Wednesday, 02 August 2023

To: Kaipātiki Local Board  
Auckland Council  
Private Bag 92300  
Auckland 1142

➤ Emailed to: [kaipatikilocalboard@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:kaipatikilocalboard@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

#### 1. Submitter details

Royal Forest and Bird protection Society of New Zealand Inc. (Forest & Bird)  
North Shore Branch

Contacts:

Lynley Hunter (North Shore Branch Working Group Chair),  
[ljhunter@kinect.co.nz](mailto:ljhunter@kinect.co.nz), 021 08197845

Nicholas Mayne (North Shore Branch Working Group Member),  
[nicholas.mayne.nz@gmail.com](mailto:nicholas.mayne.nz@gmail.com), 022 0662963

Carl Morgan (Regional Conservation Manager - Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland),  
[c.morgan@forestandbird.org.nz](mailto:c.morgan@forestandbird.org.nz), 027 250 9777

#### 2. Trade competition declaration

Forest & Bird would not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.

#### 3. Hearing options

We wish to be heard in support of this submission.

## Forest and Bird Shore North Shore, North Auckland Local Board Plans Submission.

*Kereru don't fly in straight lines!*

*(A modern Whakataukī by Charmaine Bailie)*

*When doing restoration planting projects, it is usually seen as important to create consistent spacing between plants; so that each plant has room to grow, gaps don't appear as the canopy develops that allow weeds to grow, and for all this to happen for the least possible cost. In some places around Te Whenua Roa o Kahu, the North Shore of Auckland, this objective has created perverse outcomes. Places where native tree species, of similar age and a narrow collection of species, are lined in rows and columns, like the grid of an ancient Roman city. But when Char taught me to plan community restoration planting events, she pointed out that nature does not work like this. Like the Kereru with a full belly, it dodges and weaves, swoops and dives, around natural features, dispersing a diverse range of native seeds across the whenua. This abundance of diversity dispersed in chaotic fashion is not the redundancy it first appears. Each species has its own ecological niche and helps provide a robust ecosystem community that is resilient to changes in climate. Changes in conditions may favour one species over another, but within the shelter of the forest community all species thrive. It does not respect fences or property boundaries made by people; but rather it goes wherever it chooses. With some species following the path of water, as it travels from the mountain to the sea; and others etching out a living on the harsh clay soils of ridge lines. In doing so it deposits biodiversity in all the places which favour their own prosperity. The wisdom of nature's method, over the attempts people make, is seen in the success of natural ecosystems over millions of years of change and adversity. And so, as we placed plants for people to put into the ground on community planting days, we were encouraged to think like a kereru, by not planting things in straight lines according to our own convenience. Rather we were to scatter a diverse palate of plants across the planting site, being mindful of the landscape and species selection, and adapting where necessary, but mostly trying to mix plants up in uneven spacing in an attempt to imitate the success of nature.*

*(Nicholas Mayne)*

### Introduction

Forest & Bird is New Zealand's largest and longest-serving independent conservation organisation, with over 100,000 members and supporters. Its mission is to be a voice for nature, on land, in fresh water, and at sea, on behalf of its members and supporters. Volunteers in 50 branches throughout New Zealand carry out community conservation projects and advocate for nature. Forest & Bird has nine branches and three major projects in the Auckland region alone.

In support of the society's objectives, it has been involved in resource management processes at the national, regional, and district level. It routinely submits on regional and district plan provisions, some resource consents and advocates in the Environment Court in relation to biodiversity, landscape and natural character. It is particularly committed to ensuring that the environmental bottom lines established in national policy statements in order to give substance to the "protective" element of Part 2 of the RMA are given effect to in regional and district plans and achieved through decisions on resource consents.

The North Shore Branch carries out a range of activities, including but not limited to weed control, pest control, restorative planting, education events, content creation and environmental advocacy. The branch covers the North Shore area from the East Coast Bays, south to Devonport, west to Greenhithe, and north to the Weiti River including Okura Bush. Everyone involved in the branch is a volunteer, including the committee, trappers, and supporters.

## Approach

We began the process of making this submission by reviewing the Local Board Plans of all four Local Boards in the rohe of our branch, with the intention of making a submission on each plan. However, the more we worked on this the more we realised the similarities between the Local Board plans, and the issues we wanted all Local Boards to address, were more significant than the local issues that we could comment on. These similarities warrant a more cooperative approach between the four Local Boards. For example, both Kaipatiki Local Board and Hibiscus and Bays Local Boards' plans both propose undertaking work on dog walking rules. Our branch supports this proposal as it could allow for better protection of ground nesting birds, particularly along the foreshore. However, undertaking this in just these two Local Boards would not be good value for money (in terms of development and consultation costs) or achieve rules that are readily understood and applied to all vulnerable habitats across our rohe. Furthermore, we recognise the influence of Local Board's extends beyond the budgets and work programs they have direct decision making around. Local Board views must be considered in any decision that is made by the Governing Body of Auckland Council, or by a council department or CCO under the delegation of the Governing Body of Auckland Council (section 15.2.c Local Government (Auckland Council) Act 2009). Coordinating advocacy and feedback between the four Local Boards will have a greater impact on the decision making of the rest of Auckland Council. For this reason, we have decided to fly like the kereru, ignoring man-made boundaries, and submit a unified submission for each of the four Local Board plans in our rohe that focuses on achieving a strong common voice for nature.

We are submitting our submission as Objectives, Key Initiatives, and Advocacy items; just as they may appear in a Local Board Plan; along with commentary on some items. We would very much have liked to write a longer commentary on each of the suggestions detailing why we either support or propose them. Unfortunately, time and resources do not permit us to do this as we wanted to provide this submission to our members as early as possible. But we would like to request the opportunity to make an oral submission on the plan, with the Local Board, where we can answer any questions you have around our views.

## Local Board Plan submission in structural form

Environment: Nature thrives across our entire rohe.

Objectives	Key Initiatives
Access to indigenous and culturally valued biodiversity is managed to promote enjoyment while protecting vulnerable ecosystems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Review and promote the provision of paths and tracks to give people access to forests in local reserves that promote ecological hygiene and conservation of vulnerable habitats.</li> <li>● Identifying high value ecological areas close to urban populations, such as the shell banks of Oneoneroa and Te Onekiritea, and manage access to prevent damage.</li> <li>● Work with neighbouring Local Boards to review the Auckland Policy on Dogs, keeping dogs out of high value conservation areas while providing space for</li> </ul>

	<p>responsible pet ownership. Dogs off leash are causing significant damage in many reserves and streams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Preserve and restore the area's horticultural history by planting and maintaining heritage variety plants in parks with public access; including pā harakeke, rongoā gardens, and fruit tree libraries.</li> <li>● Continue to implement actions from the Urban Ngahere (forest) Strategy</li> </ul>
Continue to partner with the community to enhance the biodiversity of local parks and reserves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to support community restoration, environmental groups and environmental education initiatives that protect and enhance our natural assets</li> </ul>
The lifeforce (mauri) of our harbour and waterways is respected and restored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support schools, businesses, environmental groups and community volunteers to carry out stream restoration projects including pollution reduction, stream clean-ups, habitat improvement and native riparian planting on public and private land.</li> <li>● Prioritise ecological maintenance projects that protect and enhance identified potential inanga spawning sites through bank stabilisation, pest plant control, and pest animal control.</li> </ul>
Our communities practise te ao Māori kaitiakitanga (guardianship) principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Partner with mana whenua, matawaka and community groups to restore te taiao (the environment), prepare for the effects of climate change and deliver initiatives that increase understanding of matauranga Māori (Māori knowledge)</li> </ul>
We will adopt landscape approaches to managing our environment that recognise the connections between different local habitats, such as the North West Wildlink.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support initiatives that deliver on current ecological strategies.</li> <li>● Identify and prioritise restoration planting opportunities, for community and council projects, that create ecological connections by retiring hard to maintain areas within existing parks and reserves.</li> </ul>

#### Advocacy:

- Advocate to the Governing Body that the Local Board and local volunteer groups are more directly involved in the setting and delivery of council-controlled ecological services
- Advocate to the governing body for continued use of the water quality targeted rate, and other funding, to strengthen coastal and marine protection around sedimentation into receiving environments particularly the Hauraki Gulf.
- Advocate for funding and regulation to enhance water retention and reduce stormwater surges in local streams through the use of retention tanks, rain gardens, wetland restoration, tree planting, reduced impermeable surfaces, and the daylighting of streams.
- Advocate for the development of Blue Green Spatial Network plans, especially in future urban zones (like Whenuapai and Dairy Flat) that support the preservation and

enhancement of natural assets (such as streams and wetlands) that will create greater resilience to flooding and improve water quality.

- Advocate for priority development of shoreline adaptation plans including funding to implement actions to ensure a sustainable approach to the management of our shorelines.
- Advocate for strong tree protection (in particular of mature native trees) to support the goals of Urban Ngahere action plans and strategies and maintained canopy coverage
- Advocate for reserve acquisition and planning rules that promote the development of new local habitats that improve ecological connectivity.

### Our Communities and Places: Our communities live well alongside nature as climate changes

Objectives	Key Initiatives
We adopt best practices for all council maintenance and projects to maximise the net benefit to community and nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improve climate impact statements in reports to consider net emissions, biodiversity loss, effect on impermeable surfaces and stormwater, and scarce resource use and recovery.</li> </ul>
Our communities are resilient to climate change and care for their surrounding environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support initiatives that build community networks and connections which help communities respond to emergencies and the impact of climate change</li> <li>● Support community led initiatives and projects that improve wellbeing by promoting a sustainable lifestyle, including waste minimisation and emissions reductions.</li> </ul>
Our aquatic, recreational, art, and community facilities are fit-for-service, meet the needs of our growing and changing population, and are resilient to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ensure our playing surfaces, sports fields, aquatic, recreational facilities, and community facilities meet increasing social and recreational needs, are accessible, well maintained, available to the public, sustainable, resilient to climate change, and fit for purpose.</li> </ul>

### Advocacy

- Advocate to the governing body for appropriate long-term planning and associated funding for infrastructure in growth areas that support Auckland climate goals.
- Advocate to the governing body for immediate long term risk scenario planning for the next 50 to 100 years to prepare for and respond to climate changes.
- Advocate for Te Onekiritea / Bomb Point to be vested as a Reserve either in Council or Government ownership.
- Advocate for adequate level of renewals funding to ensure existing assets are well maintained and are adapted to be resilient to climate change.
- Advocate to the governing body for more user-friendly fault reporting mechanisms for assets and infrastructure that have real time responses when the fault is corrected.
- Advocate to Watercare for the use of non-potable water, from Rosedale Treatment Plant, for irrigation of sports and recreation facilities.

- Advocate to the governing body, Auckland transport and Watercare to ensure Aucklanders have a greater understanding about the policies for maintaining and monitoring infrastructure and the importance of reporting faults.

**Our Places and Our Economy: Our economy meets the needs of our communities with minimal impact on nature.**

Objectives	Key Initiatives
Getting around without a car is attractive because of the seamless and safe network of paths and public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Continue to renew and enhance the path networks to create more direct routes shorter distances and well connected networks for walking and cycling</li> <li>● Support active modes of transport to be as connected and well maintained as our roading network, through improvements to connectivity and dedicated infrastructure - such as improved path surfaces signage or seating</li> <li>● Deliver and maintain more healthy street trees and rain gardens to beautify walking areas, while achieving Urban Ngahere plans and strategies, climate emissions mitigation, providing shade, and better stormwater management.</li> </ul>
People embrace and enjoy living working playing and travelling locally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Encourage local business associations to continue to support business development and to continue to meet the changing needs of our residents</li> <li>● Support an enhanced sense of community through safer, vibrant and connected town centres and neighbourhoods</li> </ul>
Our economy grows through sustainable practices by embracing the circular economy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support projects that engage, advise, educate, and assist our community on how to minimise and build the circular economy</li> <li>● Support the work and expansion of the network of community recycling centres for the benefit of our community</li> </ul>

### Advocacy

- Advocate to the Governing Body and central government to assist our local economy to become more sustainable by adapting circular economy practices and increase resilience to climate impacts.
- Advocate to the governing body to fund the planned expansion of community recycling centres that will benefit our communities.
- Advocate to the Governing Body for appropriate funding for compliance and education to ensure that minimising construction and demolition waste is a priority for all projects. Noting a local initiative for construction waste compliance education being successfully

piloted through local board funding and we advocate that this be an outcome invested in at a regional level.

- Advocate to the Governing Body for the retention of the Local Board transport capital fund
- Advocate for Auckland Transport to take a more proactive approach by taking the lead in working with new commercial developments that are trip generators, such as supermarkets, to include provision for safe public transport infrastructure, such as bus stops, even on streets with a higher volume of users.
- Advocate to Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi (New Zealand Transport Agency) for increased funding for walkways and cycleways, and their complementary infrastructure, to ensure a safe, fully connected active transport network, that is integrated with public transport.
- Advocate to Auckland Transport to better accommodate the integration of public transport vehicles, major bus stops and park and rides, with micro mobility and bicycles, to enable people to use these modes to connect with their public transport journey.
- Advocate to the Auckland Council for changes to the procurement policy to allow for greater flexibility to ensure increased use of local businesses, and more consideration of local boards views in decision making over major sub regional contracts – such as the full facilities contracts.
- Advocate to the Governing Body, Auckland Transport and Waka Kotahi (New Zealand Transport Authority) to fund all the elements of public transport networks, including free or low-cost park and rides, efficient and dependable Rapid and Frequent Transport Networks, and dedicated or priority public transport lanes or routes, to keep up with population growth.

## Selective Commentary

### Environment: Nature thrives across our entire rohe.

While Te Whenua Roa o Kahu is a highly urbanised area it still retains many areas of highly valued ecological habitats. On our East Coast is the Hauraki Gulf, meeting the Waitemata Harbour in the south which stretches along the western boundary of our rohe right up into the northern reaches of Albany. The western half of the rohe contains the largest concentration of urban forest in Auckland including Biodiversity hubs in Albany Heights, Hellyers Creek, and South Kaipātiki, as identified in the North West Wildlink Prioritisation Report (Boffa Miskell 2017). These natural spaces are under strain from their proximity to urban populations, with threats like pollution and sediment, pest species, domestic animals, pathogens, and even just the impacts of human footfall impacting the prosperity of the species that live there. Managing access to these spaces through both positive (development and promotion of hygienic track and trails) and negative (regulation and bylaws) methods is required to retain and enhance the health of these areas.

Connecting these highly valued ecological habitats is an important part of enhancing the biodiversity within them. Most native and indigenous biodiversity is not adapted to crossing sparse urban areas; with many forest birds only willing to fly a couple of hundred metres between forest fragments. As the city continues to intensify, with a corresponding loss of private open space, council needs to invest in developing and maintaining ecological corridors to connect biodiversity hotspots. This involves both the development of existing reserves to host biodiversity (daylighting streams, planting, etc) and acquiring new protected ecological spaces through acquisition and vesting of reserves and planning rules. Maintaining these biodiversity hotspots and ecological corridors requires a landscape approach to council controlled ecological maintenance. This means prioritising investment in ecological and park maintenance in order to manage pest plant and animal populations in specific areas rather than regional elimination of selective pests.

Often there is a correlation between ecological corridors and urban waterways. As such, investment in terrestrial ecology along streams and wetlands has a positive impact on managing stormwater while enhancing freshwater ecology and the health of the Waitematā and Hauraki Gulf. Blue-Green Spatial network plans are an important planning tool for identifying where open space needs to be retained or reclaimed from development in order to manage stormwater, to minimise sediment and pollution entering the harbour and to mitigate the risk of flooding. While not within our rohe, these are particularly important for areas like Whenuapai and Dairy Flat to prevent future damage to the Waitematā from the development of these areas. Within currently urbanised areas opportunities to reclaim open space in flood prone areas should be a priority, alongside reducing the impact of stormwater surge by supporting the use of water retention devices and planting in new development, and retrofitting older developments.

Highly valued ecological habitats are not the only places where biodiversity is valued. Tree cover across the entire urbanised area provides benefits for people and for native fauna; regardless of whether it is native or not. Many of our native plant species have evolved for forest ecosystems and won't grow as well in urban gardens with depleted topsoils. Many introduced or cultivated plants have been selected for horticulture or gardens and are better adapted to urban areas, without becoming a pest plant. Some plants; such as pa harakeke, rongoa gardens, and heritage fruit trees; have special cultural relevance to places that were once horticultural hubs prior to modern development. Including culturally valued plants within efforts to landscape public spaces and increase urban tree cover can add to the attraction of a place and reduce the demand for access to more sensitive ecological habitats, while still supporting native fauna.

#### **Our Communities and Places: Our communities live well alongside nature as climate changes**

Within many Local Board Plans, goals for sustainable lifestyles and climate change adaptation are included within the environment outcome. We suspect this has to do with a focus on communities of political interest rather than material outcomes within places and communities. We would advocate that these objectives are better placed in the outcome where they will be acted on more directly. This is of particular importance when considering that the end users of Local Board Plans are not residents and political interests, but rather Council Departments and CCOs with well defined responsibilities that are commonly perceived to relate to one or two outcomes rather than all outcomes holistically. We don't want climate change and sustainability to just be an issue considered by those parts of the council concerned with environment and infrastructure. Rather within this outcome we want it to be at the forefront of mind for those parts of council concerned with community development and resilience, and the provision of sports and recreation facilities. While these actions can have a positive impact on nature and areas of biodiversity, their primary benefit will be in the lives of people and communities.

#### **Our Places and Our Economy: Our economy meets the needs of our communities with minimal impact on nature.**

Our communities spend more time involved in economic activity than any other single activity. Economics is not simply the domain of business owners and managers; it is also the interest of workers, customers, and nature. Nature cannot be seen as a limitless resource of materials for economic systems and the mythical "away" to which we throw the waste of economic activity. The resources that fuel our economic activity are scarce and if we waste them for short term profits then we will continue to destroy our natural heritage and rob future generations of economic opportunity.



Adopting a circular economy; where the waste of one economic activity is recovered to fuel another economic activity, is the most responsible form of economic development. Investing in waste recovery, through incentives like community recycling centres, creates employment and new sources of raw materials for local businesses. Community initiatives like repair cafes improve the wellbeing of residents by extending the useful lifespan of the goods they already own.

Transport is another economic activity that requires reform to become more efficient. Not only can Auckland not financially afford to continue to address congestion by investing more in roads for private vehicles; but doing so deprives the city of many other benefits from public and active transport. Public and active transport are both more efficient uses of scarce resources, reducing economic impact on nature. They are also more social means of travel that can build community and make places safer by putting more active eyes onto the streets. Local Boards play an important role in the development of active transport through street to park connections in Greenways plans, Local Board transport capital funds and advocacy to Auckland Transport. Delivering an effective active transport network should not just be about paths though, street trees and facilities play an important part in making these spaces attractive options to meet transport needs.