

## **Notes of the Sounds Advisory Group Public Meeting, held at Port Underwood, on Monday 24 February 2014 commencing at 1.15 pm**

- Present:** Bruce Hearn, Jill Hearn, Irene Ross, Tamati Smith, Maureen Joyce, Roy Joyce, Kevin Sharp, Naida Sharp, Ruth Simonsen, Ross Simonsen, Diane Cranfield, John Cranfield, Bryon Gleeson, Wendy Simonsen, Sara Roush, Councillor Trevor Hook (Chairperson), Ken Roush, Victor Koller, Joe Heberley, Monyeen Wedge, Rob Schuckard, Tim Greenhough, Eric Jorgensen, Judy Hellstrom, Poneke Rene, Robin Cox and Councillor Graeme Barsanti.
- MDC Staff:** Alan Johnson, Steve Urlich and Kay Leach (Secretary).
- Apologies:** David Whyte, Brian Denny, Sue Denny, John Davison, Mara Davison, Pam Saunders, Lawrie Saunders, Graeme Coates, Kristen Gerard, David Hayes, Ron Sutherland, Ian Mitchell, Rachel Drake, Linda Booth, Raymond Smith, Councillors David Oddie, Jenny Andrews, Laressa Shenfield and Peter Jerram

Trevor introduced himself as Chairman of the Sounds Advisory Group and spoke on the role of the Group. Members of the Group introduced themselves and spoke on their representation on the Group. He then opened the floor to the public in attendance.

### **Neighbourhood Watch**

Sara advised she is head of Neighbourhood Watch in Port Underwood. Previously there had been a good support system through Picton Police. There are no longer meetings during the year. She understood the role had been taken over by Council, but Picton and the Sounds has been overlooked. As a group they do not know where to go from here. Graeme thought the Police (Russell Smith) is picking up Neighbourhood Support again. Graeme will investigate this.

*Graeme, following the meeting, advised Neighbourhood Watch is under Council's Emergency Management Team based at the Emergency Operations Centre. Graeme is communicating with Mary at Picton Police Station to keep the Sounds communications open through her.*

### **Forestry/Roading**

Ken had received an email from a Port Underwood Association member regarding forestry and roading. His main concern is the use of the public roads for forest extraction. If the use of public roads is granted, he had concerns about whether the usage would be adequately monitored and enforced, or if indeed it is enforceable at all. The email talked of the use of private roads as opposed to public roads. He would like to see the improvement of the private road to alleviate the use of public road through the Port Underwood area itself. He would invite Council to facilitate the internal road network through a collaborative effort by key stakeholders, Council, industry and the community. Tamiti advised the private road in question is not suitable for logging trucks.

Irene congratulated Council on the Smart Maps on the website. Fantastic.

Irene noted there is a lot of noise from the road due to forest harvesting. Her understanding is the forest will fall if it is not harvested. Who would be responsible if the trees fall into the sea. The forest needs to be harvested. She felt if the truck is licensed it could not be stopped from driving on the road. Irene spoke of an old County Council consent for planting which had a condition precluding the logs being trucked out, but they are being taken out by road. She questioned if Council looked at the original consent before allowing harvesting. Trevor spoke on the history of the consent Ken was discussing, where six months following consent approval an attachment was made advising 'if Council approved' the logs could be taken out by road.

That application was before the Assets & Services Committee last week and the application was declined. The logs must be barged. Irene felt discussion should continue for the sake of subsequent forestry harvesting. Trevor spoke of an informal agreement regarding a maximum of 10 trucks per day, certain hours, etc. Council needs to deal with each case as it comes up as consents have many differing conditions. Council is living with a legacy of issues. This is why there is a need to get the district plan as right as possible. Joe felt this is a safety issue. He would not have liked to have come across a logging truck on the road. Tourists also use this road.

Tamati advised he managed Underwood Farm, Rayonaire Forest and Whataroa. He advised the log quality at Whataroa is pretty good. The best timber is kept for the domestic market. There is the potential for 40-50% of the Whataroa wood to the domestic market. The reality is the logistics to make it happen. It is proposed to utilise the existing agreement with Council, i.e. 10 trucks a day.

Graeme queried Department of Conservation rules regarding the foreshore if a barge site is proposed. Robin advised they would need a licence from the Department of Conservation and resource consent from Council. The Department of Conservation would look at archaeological sites as part of their assessment. The log handling area would be the flat area behind Sounds Foreshore Reserve.

Alan queried what is the cheaper option, barge or road. Tamati advised road extraction is the most cost effective option.

### **Marine Significant Areas**

Bruce questioned if there are any areas in Port Underwood proposed to be designated marine significant areas. Steve thought there may be but could not remember the detail. Alan advised the RMA requires Council to put a level of protection on all things that are significant in terms of natural features. No decision has been made on those areas as yet. The community would be consulted over those areas. The 'Ecologically Significant Marine Sites in Marlborough' publication is available on the Council website. Eric thought Council is looking at dredging and bottom trawling. It was felt trawling and dredging, whether amateur or professional, could be excluded from any Sounds areas because of the damage to the environment. Alan advised Council needs to balance environmental concerns with economics and rights of existing fisheries through the legislation.

It was requested that East Bay Brachiopods be included as a priority. Extending mussel farming could endanger this specie.

### **Landscape**

Trevor asked for the public opinion regarding the colour pallet and reflectivity for new houses in the Sounds proposed by Council. Bruce advised when he had built, Carter Holt Harvey would not warranty timber painted a dark colour. Trevor wanted to know if this is really an issue in the Sounds. The general consensus was that it is not an issue. Eric considered there is a need to protect aesthetics/amenity values, including recreational opportunities, of the Sounds for the future. Trevor advised there will be more thought and discussion.

### **Management of Commercial Forestry**

Trevor asked if all new commercial forestry in the Sounds should be prohibited. Is this only exotic species? There is no clarification as yet. If you look at exotic that would include all exotic, including hardwoods. If prohibited is to be put in the Plan it is there for the length and life of the Plan (20-30 years), unless there is a private plan change, which is difficult to do. This would prohibit indigenous forestry and there is a good indigenous forestry plan, low yield, but works well. Tamati felt the wording of the survey could have been better. Prohibition of new commercial forestry is too narrow. There are not large areas left for new forestry in the Sounds. It was questioned if there should be a guideline regarding percentage of native to exotic forests in the Sounds. If this is the case, if someone planted native species it would free up other areas to become exotic forest.

There is an issue of sedimentation in water around harvesting of forests. Trevor felt there is required to be consideration of mitigating effects. One view was that mussel farms create more sedimentation than forestry. There is a need for investigation into sedimentation. It was felt a major effect of sedimentation to Port Underwood comes from the Wairau River.

It was felt the Council has a social responsibility to the community. Commercial forestry creates a lot of employment. Trevor noted economic data is on the Council website under Smart and Connected. Alan noted forestry was strong through the recession and took Marlborough through the recessionary period.

Judy spoke on a Council workshop on wilding pines. A paper was presented by Paul Millen on alternatives to conifers. Totara came up trumps in the workshop. Rob noted totara are complex to get going, but then they are okay. Do you need consent to plant natives? Would you be able to harvest? Robin noted if you farm native trees you can harvest whenever you want.

It was suggested to plant a totara at the same time as poisoning wilding pines. Judy felt the funding would probably be prohibitive.

### **Cemeteries**

Ruth spoke of her family history in Port Underwood. There are family burial plots around the area. She would like the Council to retain information of these sites on the website. These are private cemeteries. Alan advised Ruth to look at the Smart Maps to see what is available. Ruth is concerned that once this generation is gone the knowledge will be gone as well. If this information could go on to the website it would be protected. Graeme advised Ruth to advise Council of sites. Nic Crous at the Council will be requested to make contact with Ruth. These burial sites need protection, particularly damage from falling trees. Trevor noted if a cemetery is on private land there is not a lot Council can do. Robin noted that sites prior to 1900 could be registered as an archaeological site. Alan noted if Council know of these sites they can be considered when dealing with resource consent issues.

### **Dog Exercise Area**

Robin advised of a complication in Hakahaka Bay where the community sought the Department of Conservation to put up no dog signs and then immediately adjacent to that Sounds Foreshore Reserve is a Council dog exercise area. There is a conflict here. Council land is esplanade reserve, the no dog area is Sounds Foreshore Reserve, with these being a continuation of the same piece of coast. The only way people can get to the dog exercise area is across Sounds Foreshore Reserve. There is no public access to the dog exercise area. There is a need for consultation between the community, the Department of Conservation and Council to rectify this situation.

There is a historical problem of dogs allowed to run loose in the Bay. Dogs are allowed to exercise on the beach and are allowed off their leash under control, because it is designated as road. Dogs must not disturb the wildlife. Alan thought decisions such as this should be made via the residents association. Graeme will investigate this.

*Graeme, following the meeting, advised he had spoken with Council staff and Maata Waka and will deal directly with Irene Ross and the Chairman of the Port Underwood Association.*

### **Wilding Pines on Road Reserve**

Wendy advised that above Hakahaka Bay there is forestry land which has now gone back into regenerating bush, with some wilding pines. Who is responsible for the trees currently not harvested and wilding pines? Is there not something in their consent that they must spray or get rid of these wilding pines? If they are on road reserve, Graeme will get Marlborough Roads to look into this. Robin advised this is a classic example of forestry planting over the boundaries or too close.

## **Road Marking**

Ken noted there is a lot of tourist traffic on the road. Often they are used to driving on the other side of the road. He would like to see directional arrows on the paved roading, possibly around Rarangi/Whites Bay. Also between Waikawa and Hakahaka Bay. It was suggested the 50 kilometre signs could be changed to 'keep left' signs, as it is impossible to drive faster than 50 kilometres on this road. Graeme will take this issue to the Road Safety Committee.

## **Open Drain**

Wendy had an issue with a drain on Hakahaka Road which comes down from Tumbledown Bay Road. Recently it was requested for this drain to be filled in because it was a danger. It had been packed with hardcore, but when it rains it comes away again. This area had been tarsealed before. There had been erosion, which had been fixed, but new tarseal had not been provided. Wendy would like to see this area tarsealed, as previously. Graeme will investigate this.

## **Rubbish Bags**

Wendy questioned why Sounds properties do not get rubbish bags. Trevor advised Sounds residents do not pay rates for this. They could, as a community, apply to receive rubbish bags through the Annual Plan process, but there would be a rate charged for this. The most cost effective option would be to buy rubbish bags at the supermarket, squash them down as small as possible and take them to the transfer station, where charge is made on size. Council bags are designed for kerbside collection only.

## **Dog Fencing**

Wendy spoke of information received from Council which advised if a dog resided on a property that the property had to be fenced. Graeme advised if a dog is unmanageable or dangerous then the property must be fenced. Graeme will investigate this.

## **Freedom Camping**

It was questioned who to contact to advise of freedom camping. Trevor advised to ring Council with details re location, description and possibly vehicle registration. This would be anonymous. A ranger would move them on. It was requested a sign be placed at the bottom of Hakahaka Hill where the turnoff is to Tumbledown Bay Road advising no freedom camping past this point. Trevor advised it would be illegal to state past this point. Alan advised there would then be a requirement for further signs in other areas. Trevor advised Council needs to know the extent of issues around freedom camping in order to make decisions. The more information Council had the better the picture for what is happening around the region. Please do not hesitate to ring Council. Robin felt the wording 'freedom camping' is wrong. To some this means you can do whatever you like wherever you like. He thought there is two components, one being contained campers who could stay more or less anywhere for two nights, and then are the vans and cars who just stop without containment. There has not been a differentiation between the two. Those in the vans and cars should only stay at sites that have toilets, including Department of Conservation campsites, which charge a nominal fee. Robin noted an article in the paper which advised only 20 infringement notices had been issued. He suggested notification of illegal campers would greatly increase these figures.

The meeting closed at 2.55 pm

Action	Responsibility
Marine Significant Areas - East Bay Brachiopods be included as a priority	Alan
Cemeteries - Nic Crous to be requested to make contact with Ruth Simonsen.	Kay
Wilding Pines on Road Reserve - Marlborough Roads to look into this.	Graeme
Road Marking - Road Safety Committee to consider directional arrows on the paved roading and 50 kilometre signs changed to 'keep left' signs.	Graeme
Open Drain - Tarseal reinstated on road.	Graeme
Dog Fencing - Brochure or information sheet advising all dogs must be fenced.	Graeme

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