
REPORT 6
(1215/13/IM)

MAKARA/OHARIU COMMUNITY BOARD SUBMISSION TO THE WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL WELLINGTON 2040

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of the report is for the Makara/Ohariu Community Board to consider the submission prepared and to approve it for consideration by the Wellington City Council.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Makara/Ohariu Community Board:

1. *Receive the information.*
2. *Agree to the submission to the Wellington City Council Wellington 2040 as attached as appendix 1.*

Submission for “Towards 2040: Smart Green Wellington” on behalf of the Makara/Ohariu Community Board

The Makara/Ohariu Community Board has focused the submission below on the Makara and Ohariu Valleys.

Makara and Ohariu are the largest “green lungs” of the Wellington City Council area. The role of the rural fringes of Wellington as a carbon sink are increasingly important.

We see Makara and Ohariu as retaining their rural characters, providing residents with the opportunity of living in such an environment, close to Wellington City, and also being able to provide a recreational facility for city residents in an area in close proximity to Wellington City and its suburbs. The Board also wishes to recognize and encourage the rural aspect and uniqueness provided by several large scale farms, providing clear open spaces and primary products only 20 minutes from the Wellington CBD. Retaining and enhancing the current rural environment by ensuring that suburban encroachment and large scale development in these areas does not lead to a fundamental change in character. This will require concerted policy decisions on the part of the Wellington City Council. It will also require affirmative policy decisions to ensure that the regeneration of the native flora and fauna is actively encouraged and supported. This latter suggestion can be achieved by providing incentives to community groups, and residents who currently live within the valleys to undertake active land and pest management in order to achieve these ends.

The two valleys and the Outer Green Belt currently support recreational facilities i.e. golf clubs, riding schools, walking tracks, and mountain bike/cycling facilities. These are activities that are in demand by those who live within the city and its suburban areas. Future development of such things such as horse trekking and walking tracks should be encouraged to provide safety and recreational opportunity for all users.

The Makara Beach and coastline should be protected as it provides a unique opportunity for recreational enjoyment within easy reach of the city. Makara Beach fronts and protects the only salt marsh wetland in the Wellington City Council area. It is a migratory bird stopover point, and hosts a colony of the rare black footed shag. The river hosts several healthy stocks of indigenous whitebait species. It is the only beach in the Wellington area from which boats can be launched when the wind is from the south. This is well demonstrated currently by the increasing number of boats being launched from Makara Beach, partly due to portions of the south coast being closed off for conservation reserve. This adds pressure to a finely balanced Makara Coast environment. Future launching facilities at Makara Beach may be part of this consideration.

The coastline and Makara Walkway needs to be cared for and well maintained into the future. It provides a great opportunity for recreational fishing, walking, cycling, swimming, diving etc. Increased human activity in the area may impact adversely on beach residents and the environment. The opening up of private land for public access will add to these impacts. Traffic management will need to be forefront.

APPENDIX 1

Increasing competing interests in this environment and their impacts will need to be carefully managed.

There are also the historical aspects of Makara and Ohariu, such as the churches, gold mining history, fishing history, gun emplacements, and some other old buildings which all add points of interest for visitors to Makara and Ohariu. The retaining of these facilities is important for the future.

It is also important to ensure that Makara and Ohariu are included in all technological developments in the future; this is particularly so because in the future, social and recreational activities will be tied in with technology and it is therefore important that those technologies are available in Ohariu and Makara, both of which are only 20 minutes travelling time from the Wellington City Council offices. It also gives the opportunity to those people who currently or would like to move into a rural lifestyle to work from home whereas at the present time, these opportunities are limited because there is inadequate cell phone technology and broadband facility. Any such new technologies therefore should be extended into the Makara and Ohariu valleys, as we are part and parcel of Wellington City.

The Board believes that it is unreasonable to have one community bear all the effects of wind power development in Wellington. Makara has already made a significant contribution towards ‘greening Wellington’ with the West Wind wind power development.

Earlier in the Board’s submission, we have referred to the recreational and environmental values inherent in the rural areas of Makara and Ohariu. We urge the Council to carefully consider any future proposed wind power development in Makara or Ohariu. The Board is concerned that creeping development may further erode the green benefits that the Makara/Ohariu area currently provides for the city. We do however support the development of renewable energy in other appropriate areas.

Ratified at the Makara/Ohariu Community Board Meeting held on Thursday 18 August.

Christine Grace
Chair.