

Ohariu Valley Rural Community Plan

Executive Summary

The Plan

This plan was developed over middle to late 2001 and is about Ohariu Valley - its environment, its people and its future. It celebrates Ohariu Valley, and outlines the community's vision for the area. It brings together a range of methods which can address the needs of the community - service delivery, environmental management, community and individual decision making. The Community Plan is a non-statutory document, which means that it is guiding only and does not override legislation or other statutory documents of the Wellington City Council, such as its Annual Plan or District Plan.

The Area

The Ohariu Valley Rural Community Plan covers the area spanning all of the land west of the ridgeline between Kau Kau and Wellington City's boundary in the north (just south of Colonial Knob). The southern extent of the Community Plan area is the Takarau Gorge.

Significant Issues

Subdivision was a very topical issue in the community, and residents expressed a range of opinions on whether additional subdivision is desirable. Farmers in the Valley wished to have the ability of some very limited subdivision to assist them in maintaining their farming operations. Others, however, were generally opposed to further subdivision. A few considered the rules regarding subdivision should be made a lot more flexible. In general, however, the community were opposed to widespread "lifestyle block" subdivision.

Traffic safety and roading was a 'burning' issue expressed by residents in the process of obtaining information about the environment and resources of the area. The Community was particularly concerned about speeds on the roads in the area.

Key Proposals

- Provide for a very limited amount of additional subdivision through a change to the District Plan. Beyond this, the current system where subdivision is subject to a very rigorous assessment process should be retained.
- Retain the current District Plan distinction between rural and non-rural activities
- Erect signs at the entrance to Ohariu Valley, and prior to the "Crossroads," to encourage safer driving habits
- Annual Plan funding will be sought for a Gateway sign to be developed in consultation with the community and iwi, to help foster the identity of Ohariu Valley.
- Ongoing discussions will be had with landowners around the issue of public access and riparian management

1. Introduction

Welcome to the first community plan for the Ohariu Valley rural area.

The Community Planning process was one of the most extensive community consultation exercises undertaken by the Council in association with the Makara/Ohariu Community Board. Its intention was to give the people of Ohariu Valley the chance to spell out the things they held to be important about their area, and their vision for the future of that area. The Community Plan records those values and aspirations which make up that vision. It summarises a process in which a large proportion of the community were involved, including students of Ohariu Model School (whose wonderful mural representing the character of Ohariu Valley graces the front cover of the plan).

Of course not every individual will agree with every statement of recommended action, and there will be those who would argue just as passionately for methods that have been omitted. Consensus has not been possible on all issues. That is to be expected in a community with diverse and often strongly held views. Nor is that necessarily a bad thing – the Community Plan is not a document set in stone, but rather a record at a particular point in time, of an essentially dynamic process. The Community Plan does not seek to present one strongly unified world view, but rather reflects the diversity of views presented throughout the process. However, whilst recognising this diversity, it should also be recognised that the community did define some common goals and aspirations which were near-universally accepted. The Community Plan reflects that too.

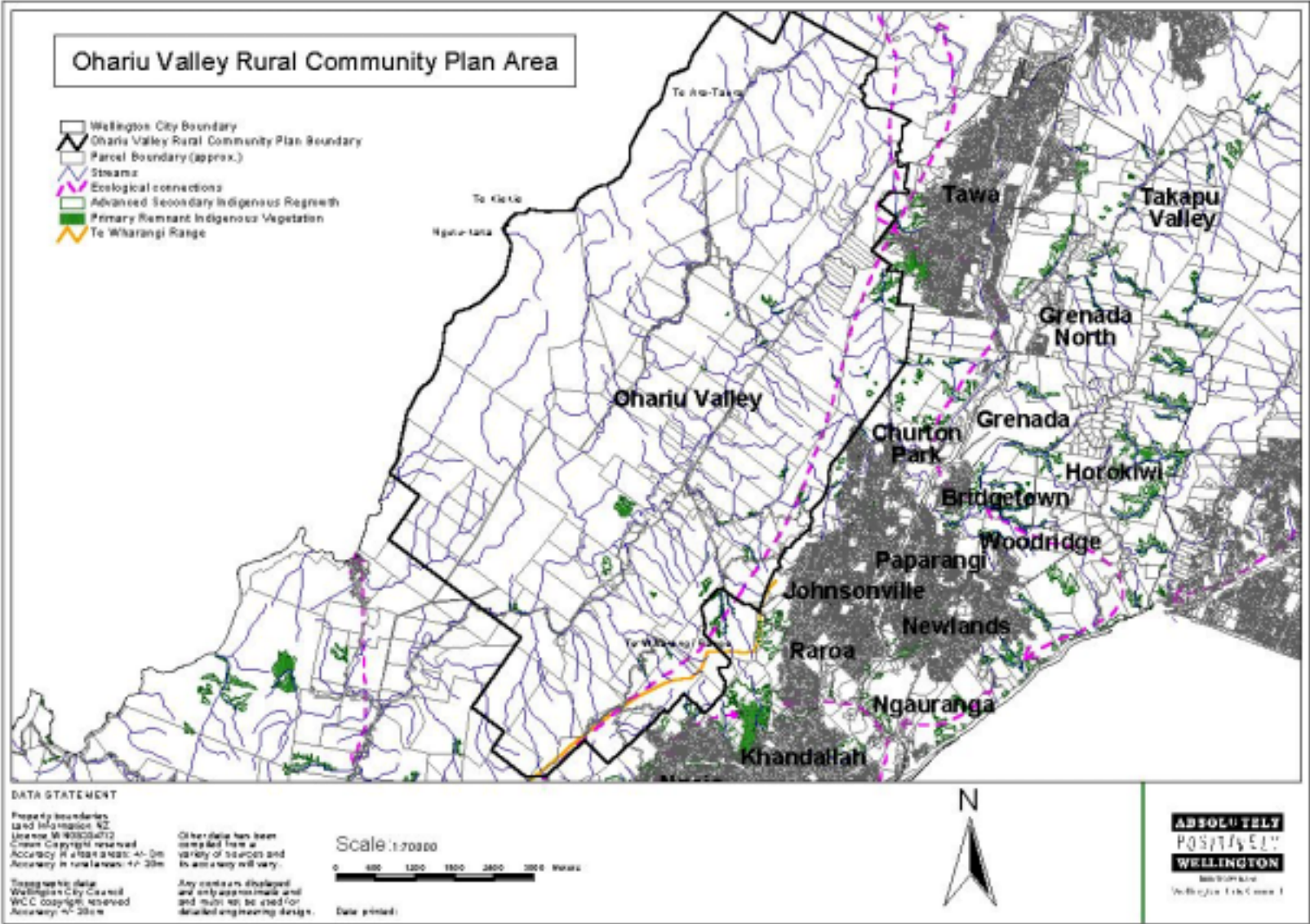
This document sets out a plan for the future of Ohariu Valley, and the steps (both non-statutory and statutory) toward achieving that vision. It also provides a reference point from which new ideas may evolve. The Makara/Ohariu Community Board extends its gratitude to the residents of Ohariu Valley for their enthusiastic participation in the planning process - the Ohariu Valley Rural Community Plan has benefited tremendously from the input of the area's committed and passionate residents.

How has it all come about?

Community input	Community Board and Council response
Provided views on visions for the rural area and the future of subdivision (Questionnaire in January 2000)	Formulated 'Rural Area Objectives' that capture the community's visions and the Community Plan process (South Karori, Makara, Ohariu Valley and Horokiwi)
Commented on 'Rural Area Objectives' and the Community Plan process (Discussion paper and questionnaire in October 2000)	Adopted revised set of 'Rural Area Objectives' and Community Plan process and timetable (January 2001)
Participated in "Ohariu Valley community planning day" providing local responses to the 'Rural Area Objectives' (10 June 2001)	Listened and Summarised local community response to 'Rural Area Objectives' and explored ideas for subdivision and land use management
Participated in Local Resident Workshops: Ohariu Crossroads (26 June 2001) Ohariu Farming (9 July 2001) Ohariu Valley Meeting (19 July 2001)	
	Formulated and released draft Ohariu Valley Rural Community Plan (August 2001)

Commented on draft Ohariu Valley Rural Community Plan (August/September 2001)	Considered the submissions and a revised Ohariu Valley Plan – Makara/Ohariu Community Board decided plan did not accurately reflect community feeling and recommended the Council not adopt it (20 September 2001). Council Committee decided to let plan lie rather than adopt plan in its current form (26 September 2001).
	After further thought and examination of the submissions the Board asked for the plan to be revised in accordance with the community response and brought back to them as a draft for further consideration
	A revised Community Plan prepared
	Local Body Elections October 2001 – New Community Board and Council Elected
	November/December 2001 - New Makara/Ohariu Community Board considered the revised community plan, made amendments and resolved to recommend to the Council that it adopt the community plan
	The Council adopted the community plan on 20 February 2002.
Community members can continue to discuss local issues, service delivery and lobby for special projects with members of the Makara/Ohariu Community Board and Councillors	Implementation of the community plan through the annual plan process, asset management plans and the district plan is commenced where appropriate
	The Board and the Council updates residents on progress in implementing the Ohariu Valley Rural Community Plan

2. The Area – Ohariu Valley



3. The Objectives for Ohariu Valley

The Rural Area Objectives (included in their original form as Appendix One) adopted by the City Development and Business and Environment & Recreation Committees of Council in January 2001 set the framework for the development of the Community Plan. The Ohariu Valley community took ownership of these objectives, and moulded them to give expression to their own aspirations for the future of the area. This was done through:

- Prioritising the objectives, by identifying an objective which was to be the *overarching principle* of the Community Plan
- Deleting Rural Area Objective 13 as adopted by the Council Committees (see Appendix One)
- Modifying the Rural Area Objectives so that they referred to Ohariu Valley rather than the more general reference to the “Rural Area” in the original Rural Area Objectives (see Appendix One)

Objective 1 below was identified by the Community as the *overarching principle* which should guide Ohariu Valley’s future. Below this primary objective are listed a range of secondary objectives, all of which are important in different ways.

1. TO MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE RURAL CHARACTER, AMENITY AND IDENTITY FOR PEOPLE LIVING, WORKING AND VISITING OHARIU VALLEY

2. To encourage and facilitate community involvement in decision-making for the future of Ohariu Valley through the Makara/Ohariu Community Board, Resident Groups, and through the development of this Rural Community Plan
3. To provide opportunities for rural living where the environment and the local infrastructure is able to support and accommodate growth
4. To allow for efficient, convenient and safe access for people and goods to and within Ohariu Valley
5. To monitor and, where necessary, improve the safety of rural roads to mitigate any traffic effects arising from rural living and land use activities
6. To protect important ridgelines, landscapes and views
7. To support the sustainable management of land by private landowners
8. To promote environmentally sustainable water, wastewater and rubbish disposal schemes
9. To improve indigenous biodiversity by protecting and enhancing natural features, indigenous vegetation and regenerating bush

10. To preserve and enhance the natural character of coastal and riparian environments
 11. To support a variety of high-quality rural recreational opportunities that do not adversely affect the environment
 12. To meet, support and enhance the social and economic needs of the Ohariu Valley community through co-operation between the Council and those living and working in Ohariu Valley
 13. To foster a safe environment for those living, working and visiting Ohariu Valley
 14. To promote opportunities for the Council and mana whenua to work in partnership on issues in Ohariu Valley
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4. The Community: Past, Present and Future

The Ohariu Valley area is an area of some significance for Maori, and one rich in stories. The area was important both for settlement and as a transportation route between the South Island and within the Wellington area and beyond. The strategic importance of the coastline and the visibility from certain lookout points were of key importance for the safe and efficient movement of groups and individuals.

The main ambition of the early European settlers was to farm their land, but they first had to clear it of dense forest. This led to extensive sawmilling operations in Ohariu and for many years the pioneers earned their living from the sale of logs, sawn timber, and firewood. In 1916 the first dairy was established, and soon a number of farmers began delivering their own milk in to Wellington. Over time, sheep farming also assumed importance in Ohariu Valley.

Farming is still an integral part of the Ohariu Valley, and in a sense dominates the landscape with its open, pastoral hill country.

Census data helps in building a demographic picture of the present resident community of Ohariu Valley. Whilst the community is not particularly diverse demographically speaking, there is diversity in the range of values and life experiences. There is also wide occupational diversity – traditional farming is still carried out in Ohariu Valley, whilst a number of residents work outside the valley.

This plan, by encouraging sustainable management of the resources of Ohariu Valley, will help to ensure that future communities living in the area will be able to enjoy the key qualities that the present community appreciates.

5. The Community Plan

EXPLANATION

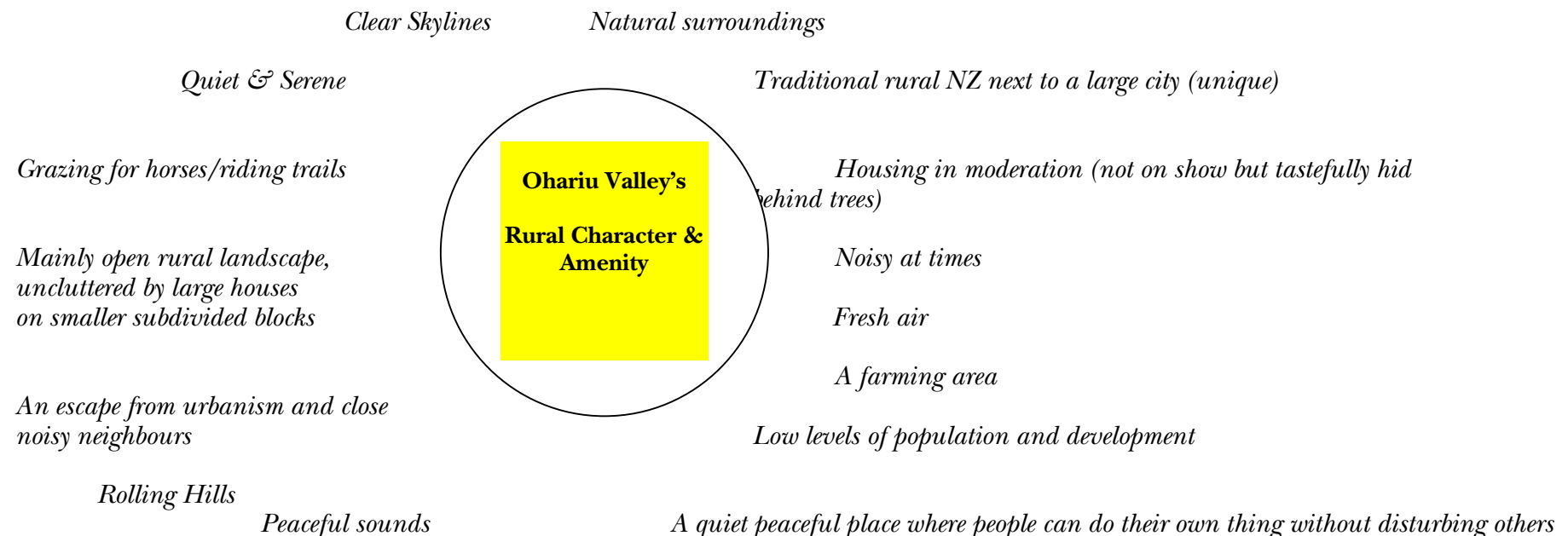
Listed in this section is each of the Rural Area Objectives that have been agreed by the Council, the Makara/Ohariu Community Board, and the community to apply to Ohariu Valley. Under each objective is a summary of the community's interpretation and response to the objective. This response has been integral to the identification of the significant issues and potential environmental effects of concern, and the choice of methods to address these. Whilst there are a range of methods available, some will work better than others, depending on the issue. The range of possible tools from which the methods under each objective have been chosen are:

Community projects	<i>Projects or actions that have resulted from members of the community deciding to take action independent of any external person or organisation</i>
New Community Board/City Council projects	<i>Projects that the Board/Council advocate and there is budget available in the current/proposed Annual Plan</i>
The way in which City Council services are provided	<i>Existing service provision or proposed changes address the issue of concern</i>
The way in which other services are provided to the community	<i>Other organisations that provide facilities or services to the community are lobbied or encouraged to provide/improve services</i>
Advocacy, facilitation and education initiatives by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>The Community Board/Council takes an active non-regulatory role in providing advice, advocating good practice (eg land management, riparian planting) and facilitating activities which support and enhance the Community itself and the environment of the area</i>
District Plan Provisions	<i>Objectives, policies and rules are retained, changed or introduced into the district plan which address the significant issues raised through the Rural Community Plan process</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Individuals through their actions take responsibility for addressing the significant issues</i>
Other	<i>In some situations, there may be a specific method to address a particular problem</i>

THE OHARIU VALLEY COMMUNITY'S RESPONSE TO THE RURAL AREA OBJECTIVES, SIGNIFICANT ISSUES AND PROPOSED METHODS

Rural Area Objective 1 (Overriding Objective): To maintain and enhance rural character, amenity and identity for people living, working and visiting Ohariu Valley

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *There was a great response from the community to define what rural character, amenity and identity means in Ohariu Valley:*



A voluntary survey was undertaken at the Ohariu Valley Community Open Day on 10 June 2001 which attempted to draw out the quintessential things about Ohariu Valley that set it apart from other rural areas. These were the responses:

Question	Response
Can you describe Ohariu's boundaries?	Ironside Road to Takarau. Rifle Range Road to Mt Kau Kau. Cross roads to end of Ohariu Valley Rd and Boom Rock Rd. Including the tops of hills
	See board boundaries Ohariu – Makara and rural area
	Not sure
	No
	From top Oriental Parade Johnsonville hill to start of Takarau Gorge
	Ridgeline from top of Ironside Rd to coast
	Johnsonville to coast
	For me it means just outside Johnsonville and to the sea, then north up the valley
	Coast to city
What first comes to mind, and what symbolises the word 'Ohariu' for you?	Rural retreat from the city pace!!
	Unique mix of lifestyles. Diverse personalities. Strong community belief positive thinkers with good mix of for and against on key issues which results in reasoned decision making.
	Rural aspect – hills and horses (primarily horses)
	Green. Trees.
	Rural lifestyle; peace and quiet; driving home is like dropping at the edge of the world...
	Rural life style dominated by farming activities
	Home, peace, quiet
	Escape from urbanism and close noisy neighbours
	A traditional rural NZ landscape unique next to a large city
	Space
	Farming
	Rolling hills, peaceful sounds, farming, horses
	Home, rural community/lifestyle
Imagine that 'Ohariu' came to life as a person. Describe the person (physical characteristics, lifestyle, personality, what's important to them, etc).	Beautiful, calm, serene, green. (was) The personality is under going a distinct change with the extra traffic that is being created by the number of road users. This could be controlled by consumer education i.e. slower driving, more concern by drivers, for the slower paced road users. I.e. walkers, cyclists, runners, horse riders etc.
	Calm and peaceful; cares for the environment but also like city amenities, e.g. theatre, orchestra etc. Likes having animals around – especially horses; like being part of a community and willing to participate. Understands pros and cons of rural life.
	Calm; smell; gentle; quiet; green; hard working.
	Egotistical with an 'im alright jack' attitude
	Gentle, quiet, secure
	Responsible, kind, caring, loving animals and the outdoors. Doesn't mind the weather and the turbulent life it brings. Hardworking and prepared to put in a lot of effort to enjoy life. Loves what 'mother nature' provided for us. Utilises the worlds natural resources

	Quiet, relaxed, with business mind and family morals.
What does Ohariu sound like?	Noisy
	Horses, sheep, cattle and birds
	Soft
	Rural – lots of animals etc.
	Rural
	Home
	No sound
	Rural
	Open
	Quiet with gentle noises, voices, animal sounds, the wind
	Noisy at times (no exhaust brakes for trucks would be good) Natural animal noises ok.
What does Ohariu smell and taste like?	It used to smell of country. Now it is oil, petrol & smoke. It tastes like horse shit.
	Clear & sweet
	Rural
	Grass
	Clean
	Fresh
	Fresh, clean, real, organic
	Manure and smoke
What physical features of Ohariu do you value the most and why?	I value the rural aspect. Hills, trees, birds, animals. Housing in moderation, not on show but tastefully & discreetly hidden by trees.
	Grazing for horses; rural aspect; riding trails; proximity to Wellington.
	Fresh air; calm; green; ridgelines; hills and mountains; water and streams; trees
	Low levels of population and development.
	Rural environment that has not been ruined by intensive rural urban development
	A quiet peaceful place where I can do my own thing without annoying others or them annoying me
	Free space and laid back attitudes
	Mainly open rural landscape uncluttered by large houses on smaller subdivided blocks now common in other areas in region
	Farming area
	The beautiful skies and how much of them I see. The quiet hills, animals and space. And I love hearing all the birds in the morning.
	Clear skylines, natural surroundings. Buildings should be single level and not visually dominant.

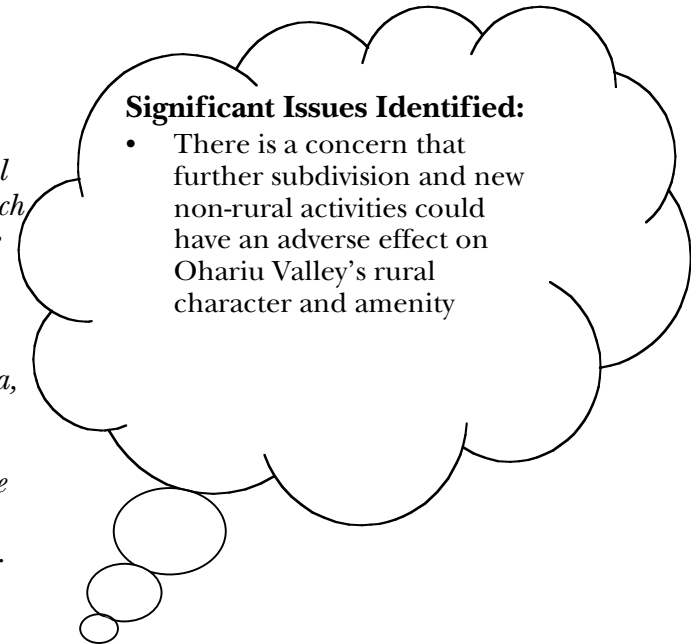
In addition to the above, students of Ohariu Model School created a wonderful mural which depicts the character of Ohariu Valley in their eyes. This graces the cover of the plan.

All of the valued qualities identified above contribute to the rural character of Ohariu Valley. It is vitally important for the community that these qualities are retained and fostered in the future.

How can this be done? The majority of the community believed that the currently restrictive approach to subdivision (with perhaps some exception of very limited subdivision for larger landowners), and the rigorous assessment process for non-rural activities, outlined in the District Plan, should be retained. Therefore, the existing District Plan distinction between rural and non-rural activities should be retained, to give primacy to traditional rural activities, which are consistent with the rural character of Ohariu Valley. This will help ensure that any change that may occur is gradual, and appropriate to the area.

The community expressed the view that the Ohariu Valley area cannot be divided up into a range of character sub areas, but rather it needs to be viewed as a whole. The “Crossroads” area, for example, should not be viewed separately from the rest of the Valley.

A welcoming sign or “Gateway” was suggested by some residents and could be established at the entrance to the Ohariu Valley area. This could be developed in a number of ways. A sign welcoming visitors to Ohariu Valley, along with planting and landscaping has been suggested. This would need to be developed in consultation with the Ohariu Valley community and iwi. Such a gateway could help reinforce Ohariu Valley’s identity.



Proposed Methods:

District Plan Provisions	<i>Provisions within the District Plan providing for subdivision and land use activities should be changed to allow larger landowners the opportunity of carrying out very limited subdivision which will not have a significantly adverse effect on the character of Ohariu Valley. Beyond this very limited provision, no change should be made to the current situation. The current approach of the District Plan, which distinguishes “rural” activities from “non-rural” activities, should be retained. This is considered important by the community, as it gives primacy to traditional rural activities, and provides some degree of certainty as to what activities can or cannot be carried out “as of right”.</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Neighbours should consult together when they know they may do something which will have an impact on another’s amenity or the wider amenity of the area</i>
Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>The Community Board will encourage applicants to address character and amenity issues in proposed developments.</i>
New Community Board/City Council projects	<i>In consultation with the community and iwi, the Council and Community Board will develop a “Gateway” concept at the entrance to Ohariu Valley, to help reinforce Ohariu Valley’s identity</i>



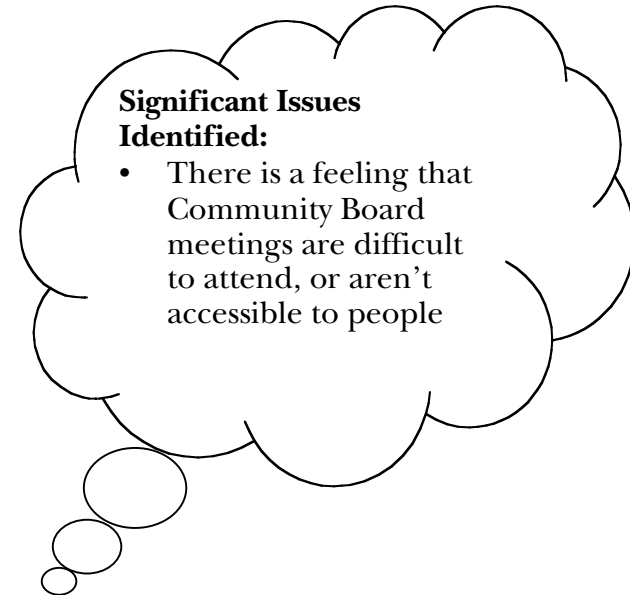
Rural Area Objective 2

To encourage and facilitate community involvement in decision-making for the future of Ohariu Valley through the Makara/Ohariu Community Board, residents groups, and through the development of this rural community plan

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *Ohariu Valley residents are very interested in the future of their area and were very involved in the development of this community plan. The Community Planning process was an inclusive one, allowing the whole community the opportunity of having their say on the future of Ohariu Valley.*

The community indicated that despite diversity, the community is generally close knit, and not disjointed by geographical area. The community looked on the area as a whole, and not in a segregated manner. It is important to note that the views expressed in the formation of this plan were not always unanimous and that this is an important aspect of the diversity within the community. Despite this, the community made a concerted effort to work through such differences.

Some members of the community suggested that greater community involvement in Community Board Meetings could be facilitated.



Proposed Methods:

<p>Advocacy, facilitation and education initiatives by the Community Board and the City Council</p>	<p><i>The Community Board/Council will use opportunities to be advocates/facilitators of community decision-making in Ohariu Valley</i></p> <p><i>The possibility of holding Community Board meetings in the evenings could be investigated as a way of making community participation easier (evening meeting were trialled in February and March 2002)</i></p> <p><i>Agendas and reports of Community Board Meetings could be available at locations accessible to the community</i></p>
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Rural Area Objective 3: To provide opportunities for rural living where the environment and the local infrastructure are able to support and accommodate growth

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *Responses at the Open Planning Day and subsequent public meetings indicated there were a variety of views in the community as to whether greater opportunities for rural living should be provided. Larger landowners would like the opportunity to carry out very limited subdivision without the current obstacles of time and cost. Whilst some of the wider Ohariu Valley community support this idea, others are generally opposed to the idea of any further rural living being facilitated in Ohariu Valley. A few people expressed the view that further subdivision is acceptable subject to a “case by case” assessment of environmental effects.*

It became apparent in the process that the community values the open, pastoral character of Ohariu Valley. However, some considered that the maintenance of this character is dependent on the ongoing financial ability of larger landowners to maintain their farming operations.

Limited subdivision is one means of supporting the ongoing financial viability of large farming operations. Therefore, whilst some of the community are opposed to any form of subdivision, limited subdivision may actually help support retaining the open, rural character of the area by helping maintain the viability of large farms.

The vast majority of the Community were strongly opposed to widespread “Lifestyle Block” development in Ohariu Valley.

Some effort was made during the development of this plan to try and establish the basis for allowing some very limited subdivision in Ohariu Valley. As this could not be resolved without detailed examination of options, further consultation should be undertaken on this issue.

Concern was expressed in the community regarding traffic safety on the roads in the area. Whilst there is concern that further subdivision may worsen this problem, by increasing traffic volumes on the roads, there is also recognition that traffic effects can be generated by a range of activities, not just rural living.



Significant Issues Identified:

- Providing more opportunities for rural living could threaten the retention of open spaces and existing low density housing patterns

The community appears unanimously opposed to a “Village” concept at “The Crossroads”, and do not wish to see further development there. This opposition is largely based on amenity considerations, however infrastructure constraints, particularly relating to effluent disposal, have been raised there.

Proposed Methods:

<p>District Plan Provisions</p>	<p><i>Provisions within the District Plan providing for subdivision should only be changed to allow larger landowners the opportunity of carrying out very limited subdivision. The exact nature of any new provision should be worked out in association with further community consultation.</i></p> <p><i>Beyond this very limited provision, the existing provisions requiring a very rigorous consent process should be retained.</i></p>
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Rural Area Objective 4: To allow for efficient, convenient and safe access for people and goods to and within the rural area.

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *Roading and traffic safety are of great concern to the community. There have been problems with speed and dangerous driving. The community considers that the speed limit of 100 kph is too high for the area, given the narrowness of much of the roading. It is imperative for the community that vehicular speeds on rural roads should be reduced, and that dangerous sections of road should be better managed.*

A number of traffic calming measures were suggested by residents, including: lay by areas for horse and pedestrian traffic, speed humps, and new signage. Education would help to make road users aware of the restrictive nature of rural roads.

New business ventures, as well as increased household numbers, have the potential to lead to significant increases in traffic volume on Ohariu Valley Road.

Significant Issues raised:

- Driver behaviour means there is a danger to people and property from excessive speed
- There is a growing conflict between vehicular and non-vehicular traffic (such as cyclists and horses)

Proposed Methods:

<p>The way in which City Council services are provided</p>	<p><i>\$50,000 was allocated in the Annual Plan for the 2001-2002 financial year for roading works in Makara/Ohariu. Thereafter an annual sum of \$20,000 has been earmarked to be available to the community. The Community Board has the opportunity to prioritise work within the community from which to spend this sum.</i></p> <p><i>Two new signs, one at the entrance to Ohariu Valley and one just prior to the Crossroads, will be erected, to encourage greater caution by motorists</i></p> <p><i>Council has, and will continue to, lobby LTSA for lower speed limits on roads throughout Ohariu Valley</i></p>
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Rural Area Objective 5: To monitor and, where necessary, improve the safety of rural roads to mitigate any traffic effects arising from rural living and land use activities

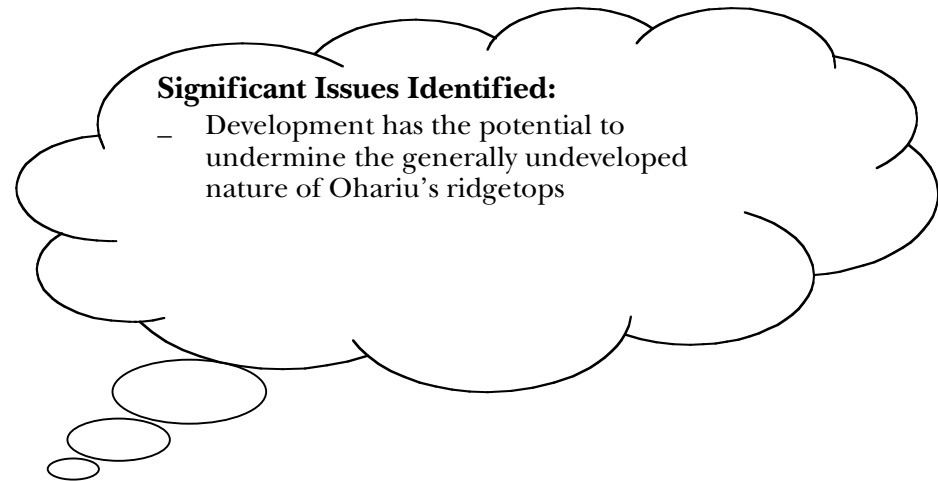
Ohariu Valley Community Response: *The community expressed concern that any further development in the rural area could undermine safety on rural roads in the area. Some people in the community pointed out that a range of activities can generate significant volumes of traffic. An equitable approach should therefore be taken to managing the traffic effects of any activity in Ohariu Valley through the District Plan.*

Proposed Methods:

The way in which City Council services are provided	<p><i>Extension of line marking and signage improvements</i></p> <p><i>Two new signs, one at the entrance to Ohariu Valley and one just prior to the Crossroads, will be erected, to encourage greater caution by motorists</i></p> <p><i>Council has, and will continue to, lobby LTSA for lower speed limits on roads throughout Ohariu Valley</i></p>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Individuals through their actions take responsibility for driving safely</i>
Other	<i>Monitoring of traffic safety through various mechanisms including surveys and road accident records</i>

Rural Area Objective 6: To protect important ridgelines, landscapes and views

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *There were different views on how ridgelines should be managed within the community. The majority of the community value undeveloped ridgelines, landscapes and views. However, some of the community believe ridgelines and hilltops are logical places to build.*



Proposed Methods:

Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>Many influences over avoiding, remedying or mitigating adverse visual effects on ridgelines can be achieved simply through promoting good design. This can be done in a non-regulatory way such as through publicity and information about good design in rural areas. Pamphlets promoting such matters could be produced.</i>
District Plan Provisions	<i>Current District Plan provisions seek to address the effects of development on ridgelines and hilltops. Any future changes to these provisions must recognise and provide for the protection of any important ridgelines and hilltops in Ohariu Valley, in association with community consultation.</i> <i>Retaining restrictive subdivision controls will limit the potential for new residential development on important ridgelines and landscapes.</i>

Rural Area Objective 7: To support the sustainable management of land by private landowners

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *People in the community have been doing good things in managing their own land in a sustainable manner. However, some of the community suggested a number of ways in which the City Council and Regional Council could assist private landowners in supporting the sustainable management of their land:*

- *Donating native plants to people willing to fence areas off*
- *Assisting in pest control*
- *Council conservation schemes*
- *Having an Arbor Day*

Some people suggested that the Council could set a better example of managing its own land in a more sustainable manner.

Some of the community considered that further subdivision would enhance sustainable management of land. They argue that by cutting up larger blocks into smaller blocks, the land becomes more manageable.

Proposed Methods:

The way in which City Council services are provided	<i>The Council has an ongoing role to support the sustainable management of land by private landowners</i>
Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>The Council and Community Board will take opportunities to support and advocate for good land management practices by private landowners. The Council will do more to lead by example in the sustainable management of its own land.</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Landowners have an ongoing responsibility to manage the land sustainably</i>

Rural Area Objective 8: To promote environmentally sustainable water, wastewater and rubbish disposal schemes

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *In Ohariu Valley, all properties collect their own water and dispose of wastewater through septic tanks. Rubbish is mostly disposed of by burning, or dropping it off at the landfill, although some have their rubbish collected, some bury it and others compost. Surveys completed by members of the community generally indicated satisfaction with their systems, and general satisfaction with the environmental impact of these methods. The community expressed concern that further subdivision, particularly around the “Crossroads” area, could adversely affect surface and groundwater quality through increased wastewater disposal.*

Proposed Methods:

The way in which City Council services are provided	<i>The Council has an ongoing role in maintaining the present infrastructure</i>
The way in which other services are provided to the community	<i>It is possible that landowners could contract their own rubbish disposal service and this would be encouraged where it would be more environmentally sustainable to do so</i>
Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>The Community Board and the Council each have a role in advocating good practices, particularly in on-site disposal of household wastewater and in the disposal of rubbish</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Individuals need to take responsibility for ensuring the individual systems they use are environmentally sustainable.</i>
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>– The Regional Council has objectives, policies and rules which address discharges to land and freshwater</i> <i>– Building Act requirements are also relevant to the type and standard of individual schemes</i>

Rural Area Objective 9: To improve indigenous biodiversity by protecting and enhancing natural features, indigenous vegetation and regenerating bush

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *Most of the Ohariu Valley area is characterised by areas of open pastoral land, with pockets of indigenous vegetation and regenerating bush through the valley. Generally, the majority of the community did not highlight indigenous biodiversity as a key issue.*

Some of the community supported the idea of a tree planting scheme. Council could offer support and encourage people to fence off stands of native vegetation. A community Arbor Day is a venture which could be investigated and supported. Council could assist further in controlling pests.

Proposed Methods:

Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board, the City Council and the Regional Council	<i>The Community Board and City Council will be strong advocates for the protection and enhancement of regenerating bush areas by encouraging willing landowners to use measures such as fencing and covenanting to protect native bush areas. A strategy for the regeneration of bush and streams across the whole city has been adopted by Council. This strategy outlines a range of non-statutory and statutory methods of encouraging bush and stream regeneration – weed management, planting initiatives, stormwater quality and flood management, regulation, education and advocacy.</i>
District Plan Provisions	<i>The District Plan could be changed to be more proactive in preventing the loss of indigenous vegetation and encouraging landowners to protect and enhance regenerating bush..</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Everyone has a responsibility for sustaining biodiversity</i>
Other	<i>Central Government has reinforced the role of individuals and communities in taking responsibility for halting the decline in New Zealand’s indigenous biodiversity and addressing the effects of private land management on indigenous biodiversity. Further guidance is due to come from Central Government that will have an influence over future land management practices</i> <i>A number of Regional Council initiatives are relevant, including the Regional Pest Management Strategy.</i>

Rural Area Objective 10: To preserve and enhance the natural character of coastal and riparian environments

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *Generally, the riparian margins of Ohariu Stream and Mill Creek are not heavily vegetated, being mainly pasture up to the stream edges.*

Planting of stream edges is supported by some in the community. The Council could encourage this through advocacy.

There was generally little discussion on public access issues along waterways, however this is a sensitive issue that needs to be worked through in discussion with landowners.

Note: *The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands and rivers and their protection from inappropriate subdivision, use and development is a matter of national importance under the Resource Management Act, as is the maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coast, lakes and rivers. It is important to acknowledge that the issues in achieving these goals affect the rights of private property*

Significant Issues Identified:

- Wellington Regional Council figures show that the water quality of Ohariu Stream is not as good as it could be. In particular, faecal coliform counts are relatively high

owners and sometimes the ability for certain land use practices to be freely maintained. Also, as Wellington is such a hilly landscape, often the best places for public walking tracks are along the ridges and high points. A careful and reasoned approach therefore needs to be taken by all involved in identifying and working through the issues relating to the management of stream and coastal environments.

Proposed Methods:

<p>The way in which City Council services are provided</p>	<p><i>The Council has an ongoing role to manage its own operations and activities so as to preserve and enhance the natural character of the coast and riparian environments</i></p> <p><i>The Council will be proactive in developing its priorities for the management of coastal and stream environments and discussing the development of policy with landowners</i></p>
<p>Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council</p>	<p><i>The Community Board and the Council have an advocacy role in promoting good management around streams and being involved in initiatives which support the stream and coastal environment. The Bush and Stream Regeneration Plan adopted by Council (September 2001) outlines a range of non-statutory and statutory methods to encourage sound riparian management.</i></p>
<p>District Plan Provisions</p>	<p><i>The Council wishes to reduce the amount of regulation involved in the management of Ohariu Valley’s streams and use advocacy and other non-regulatory methods as its primary means to ensure the natural character of streams is safeguarded. This also applies to situations in which public access is an issue – in most cases, the Council will seek to discuss options with willing landowners, rather than ‘take’ land as reserve. However, the Resource Management Act requires the District Plan to stipulate rules about when esplanade reserves (vested as Council reserve) or esplanade strips (remain in private ownership) will be sought <u>at the time of subdivision</u> for public access, the protection of conservation values and/or natural hazard mitigation.</i></p> <p><i>Administration of the District Plan has suggested that the current rules should be altered to be more specific about which streams and methods are appropriate. At present there is just a “catch-all” provision which means that the whole of the coast and every stream in the valley is assessed for esplanade land at the time of subdivision.</i></p> <p><i>Some analysis of the values of waterways in Ohariu Valley has been undertaken¹. This information would normally form the basis of a change to the current District Plan provisions. However, it should be made clear that the priorities identified in “Routes, Risks and Restoration” are not necessarily supported by the whole of the community. Therefore, at this stage it has been decided, through the Makara/Ohariu Community Board, that the community plan only endorse esplanade land being sought as outlined below. Otherwise, for every other waterway in Ohariu Valley, a case by case assessment should be made at the time of subdivision where a stream is over the three metre width limit.</i></p> <p><i>Esplanade provisions generally supported by the Ohariu Valley Community:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>– Esplanade Reserves be taken on subdivision associated with the Coast</i> <i>– Esplanade Strips should be negotiated along the short section of the Ohariu Stream between its confluence with the Makara Stream and Takarau Gorge to assist in floodplain management (needs to be co-ordinated with similar</i>

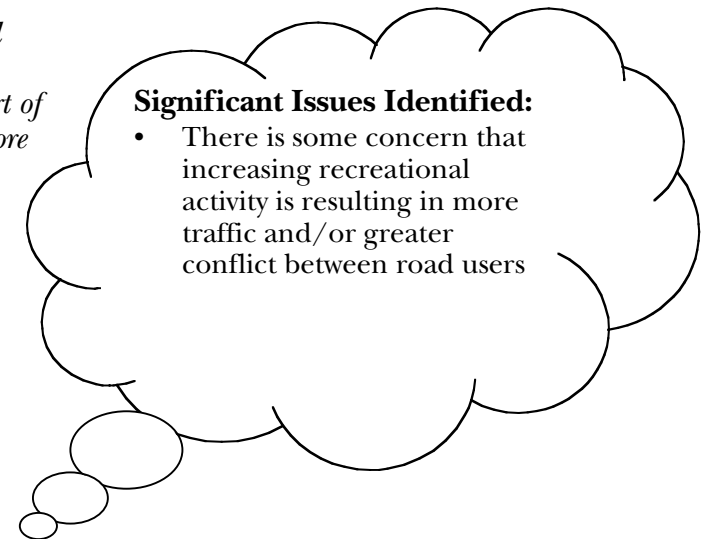
¹ “Routes, Risks and Restoration: an assessment of riparian zones in rural areas of the Wellington City District with special reference to ecological significance and public access linkages”, a report prepared for Wellington City Council by Anstey, C., Cosslet, C., Green W (1998)

	<i>approach in the Makara Stream)</i>
	<i>Regulation is only one tool and is only intended to support voluntary and non-regulatory methods, advocacy and the Council and community groups doing restoration work or achieving public access in some other way</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Individuals have a responsibility to ensure their actions do not pollute or damage the stream/coastal environment</i>
Other	<i>New Zealand Coastal Policy Statement Wellington Regional Policy Statement Wellington Regional Coastal Plan Wellington City Council's Bush and Stream Regeneration Plan</i>

Rural Area Objective 11: To support a variety of high-quality rural recreational opportunities that do not adversely affect the environment

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *A range of both commercial and non-commercial recreational activities take place in Ohariu Valley. Horseriding is traditionally the predominant recreational activity in Ohariu Valley, and is considered by the community to be an important part of Ohariu Valley's identity. Horseriding, walking and cycling through the valley could be made a more pleasant experience by improving the safety of different roadusers in Ohariu Valley. Some of the community believe that creating a separate lane using the unformed legal road, in order to separate different road users could improve safety. However, the practicality of achieving such an undertaking has been questioned.*

Many in the community support commercial recreational ventures, provided such ventures are subject to a resource consent process. Such activities may be acceptable if they do not lead to an unacceptable increase of traffic and noise over time.



Proposed Methods:

Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>The Community Board and the Council are in a position to facilitate and encourage recreational use of the area and can work on issues such as a separate lane for non-vehicle road users</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Individuals have a responsibility to act with respect if permitted access to private land for recreational purposes</i>
Other	<i>“Capital Spaces” – the Council’s Open Space Strategy Te Araroa Walkway – A concept for a nationwide walkway, led by Sir Edmund Hillary amongst others. The proposed route for the walkway runs down Ohariu Valley Road. As the concept is developed further, this may lead to greater impetus for formalising a different route for pedestrians through the Valley. More information on the Te Araroa Walkway is available on the internet at teararoa.org.nz</i>



Rural Area Objective 12: To meet, support and enhance the social and economic needs of the rural community through co-operation between the Council and those living and working in the rural area

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *Generally the community did not indicate any strong need for Council to support and enhance the social and economic needs of the Ohariu Valley community. Some of the Community expressed the view that they do not consider it necessary or appropriate for Council to intervene in the economic needs of the Community. The Ohariu Hall is seen as a central focus of the community. This role could be enhanced further.*



Proposed Methods:

The way in which City Council services are provided	<i>The Council has a role in promoting community development and fostering the well-being of city residents generally</i>
Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>The Community Board and the Council have a key role in facilitating actions or activities that help to meet, support and enhance the social and economic needs of the Ohariu Valley community</i>

Rural Area Objective 13: To foster a safe environment for those living, working and visiting the rural area

Ohariu Valley Community Response: *As outlined earlier in the Plan, traffic safety is of great concern to the community. No other safety concerns were raised by the community.*

Proposed Methods:

The way in which City Council services are provided	<i>The Council has a duty to ensure the provision of services provides for a safe environment and also that the way in which services are delivered is within health and safety requirements.</i>
Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>Encouraging individuals to act responsibly to improve safety for all is an important role for the Community Board, the Council and other key agencies</i>
Individual Responsibility	<i>Individuals have a responsibility to act safely and consider the safety of others in their actions</i>

Rural Area Objective 14: To promote opportunities for the Council and mana whenua to work in partnership on rural issues

Iwi Response: *The area is of high importance for a range of reasons and the relationship is an ongoing one, not just historic. Management of the coast, streams and discharges to each are particular issues. Education is a key way in which iwi associations with the area can become more widely known and appreciated.*

WCC Response: *Ongoing consultation and strengthening of the relationship between the Council and its Treaty Partners is integral to the sustainable management of natural and physical resources in this area. It is hoped that, through this ongoing rural community plan process, an overall appreciation for the cultural and spiritual values associated with this area is enhanced and developed further.*

Proposed Methods:

Advocacy and facilitation actions by the Community Board and the City Council	<i>The Council has a role in assisting in the dissemination of knowledge about the cultural importance of this area and in reinforcing its own role as a Treaty Partner in the management of the natural and physical resources of the area</i>
District Plan Provisions	<i>The District Plan currently recognises and provides for sites of significance in this area. The District Plan will be responsive to new information that requires any changes or additions to be made</i>

6. Conclusion

This Community Plan has addressed a wide range of issues for Ohariu Valley, in order to tackle the needs of the area in a holistic manner. Despite the broad scope of the plan, community attention has had a strong focus on a narrow range of issues - predominantly related to subdivision and traffic. This may reflect the fact that, on the whole, the Ohariu Valley community is generally happy with its area and the way it is managed.

Key proposals to address the concerns expressed by the community have been outlined in the plan. Whilst some proposals will be initiated by Council (for example, work on District Plan amendments), other proposals are best initiated by the Makara/Ohariu Community Board on behalf of the community. This sits well with the general trend towards greater community self-management and decision making for areas (an example of this is the \$50,000 allocated to the Makara/Ohariu Community Board to prioritise roading works for the 2001-2002 financial year, over and above normal Council spending in this area).

The Community Plan has been particularly important in spelling out what is valued by the Ohariu Valley community, which is the first step in determining a future vision. The vision expressed in the Community Plan will now set the platform for the future management of the area, which will span both regulatory and non-regulatory methods.

But the implications of all this are hopefully much greater than the document you have before you in your hands. Hopefully, the Community Planning process has allowed the Ohariu Valley community to take a look at itself, to think about what is unique and important to the area, and to empower the community with the opportunity of strongly influencing the future of its own area.

Appendix 1: Rural Area Objectives²

1. To encourage and facilitate community involvement in decision-making for the future of Wellington's rural areas through the Makara/Ohariu Community Board, Resident Groups, and through the development of Rural Community Plans
2. To maintain and enhance rural character, amenity and identity for people living, working and visiting the rural area
3. To provide opportunities for rural living where the environment and the local infrastructure is able to support and accommodate growth
4. To allow for efficient, convenient and safe access for people and goods to and within the rural area
5. To monitor and, where necessary, improve the safety of rural roads to mitigate any traffic effects arising from rural living and land use activities
6. To protect important ridgelines, landscapes and views
7. To support the sustainable management of land by private landowners
8. To promote environmentally sustainable water, wastewater and rubbish disposal schemes
9. To improve indigenous biodiversity by protecting and enhancing natural features, indigenous vegetation and regenerating bush
10. To preserve and enhance the natural character of coastal and riparian environments
11. To support a variety of high-quality rural recreational opportunities that do not adversely affect the environment
12. To meet, support and enhance the social and economic needs of the rural community through co-operation between the Council and those living and working in the rural area
13. To meet, support and enhance the rural area's contribution to the Wellington economy
14. To foster a safe environment for those living, working and visiting the rural area
15. To promote opportunities for the Council and mana whenua to work in partnership on rural issues

² Adopted by the Council's City Development & Business and Environment & Recreation Committees in January 2001.