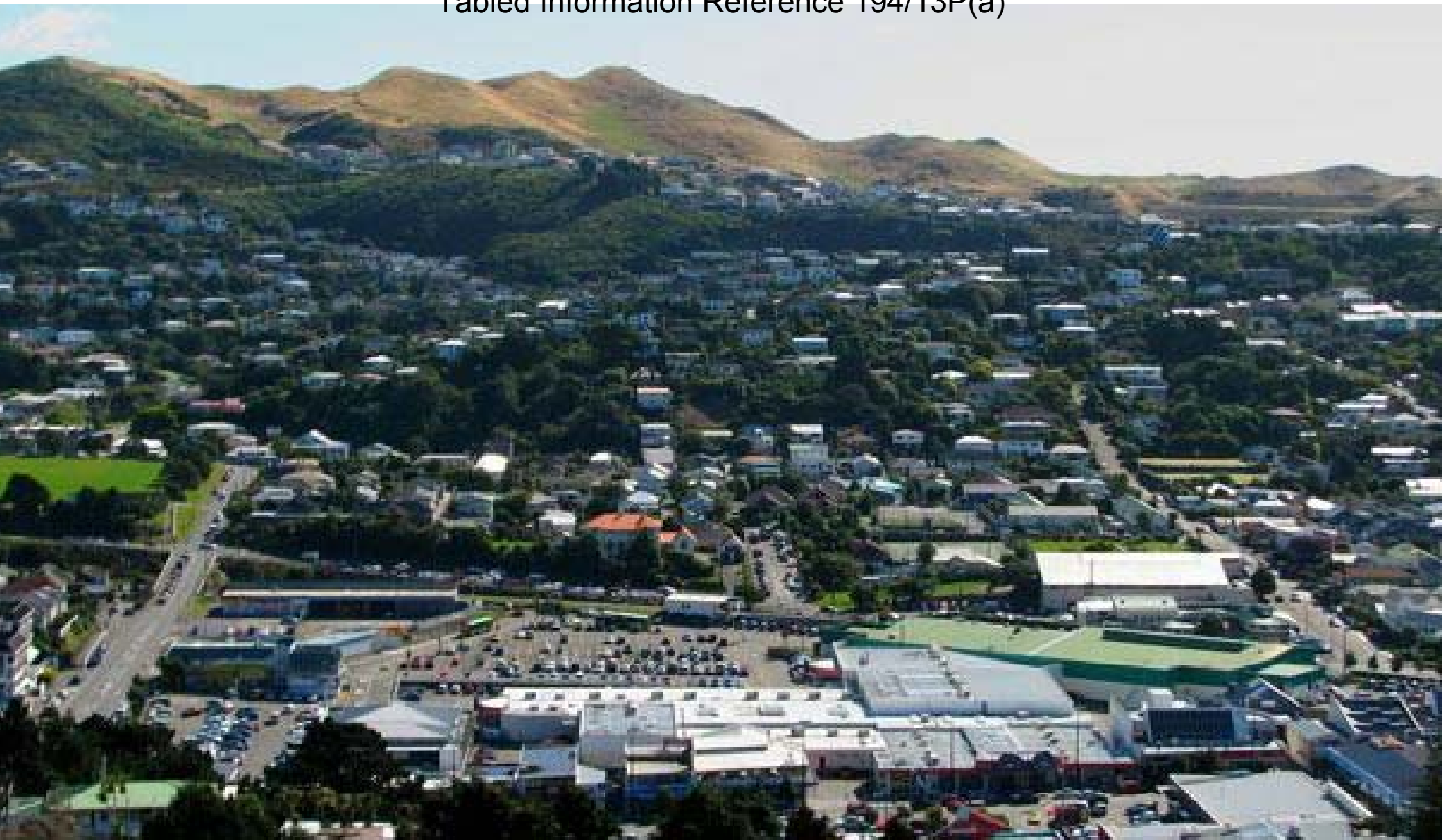


JCA
**Johnsonville Community
Association**

SUBMISSION TO “OUR CAPITAL SPACES” CONSULTATION, 1 AUG. 2013.

GRAEME SAWYER, VICE PRESIDENT, JCA.

Tabled Information Reference 194/13P(a)





1. *Do you think Our Capital Spaces sets the right priorities and actions?*

What other priorities or actions would you like to see included?

Unsure

It is unfair to ask for support for such change without detailing specifically reduction in services – both qualitative and quantitative.

We think the Johnsonville community will benefit from Alex Moore Park becoming a multi-purpose community space (although we do object to the wasteful use of playing fields for WCC car parking!!) .

We support the linking of green space networks to create short walks and to ensure that the Johnsonville community is connected to the Skyline and other major walkways such as Te Araroa.

Past “policy changes” have preceded decommissioning Johnsonville playgrounds. Other playground “upgrades” have resulted in “dumbed down” play infrastructure for our kids (Kipling St. Play Area – aimed at 11 year olds, ignored by 8+ year olds))

We would like to be actively involved in making decisions around any playgrounds within our community

2. *Do you agree that we need to do more to raise awareness about local play, sport and recreation opportunities?*

How can we best do this?

Yes....but.

“Yes” to the question.....**But:** This question does not align well with “have our say on Our Capital Spaces Plan” document.

“Sport” and to some extent “Play” are well catered for by sports clubs. They promote their own activities.

“Recreation” based on WCCs massive infrastructure (tracks, reserves open spaces) does need more and better awareness raising

- walking has the best “lifetime” health benefits
- Phone “ apps” are nice (and cheap), but
- Apps are no substitute for adequate signage

More and better “old fashioned” Signage is the single cheapest and easiest way to increase usage of tracks, this is the biggest “recreation” activity in our area.

3. *Do you support how we plan to partner with and support sports clubs as the nature of participation in sport and recreation changes?*

Unsure.

Plan is common sense & reflects what is already occurring (ie, at Alex Moore “sportsville” redevelopment) – *so is this really a change?*

Local sport & recreational facilities **Good.**

Distant, centralised facilities **Bad.**

Kilbirnie ASB Sports centre represents what we don't want:

- **Colossal capex cost** (Contrasts with Alex Moore – zero WCC capex expenditure on buildings)
- Huge ongoing operating costs – fiscally very poor return,
- Questionable *raison d'être* – bringing outdoor sports indoors ????
- Poor geographic accessibility. (Far too far away from northern suburbs)
- *The combined Capex and debt servicing costs of the Kilburnie ASB Stadium could pay for the Complete costs of Alex More complex development each year, for decades.*

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4 *Do you support the concept of investing in parks, recreational and community spaces where a range of activities are possible? Do you support this even if it means limiting investment in parks that do not appeal to a wide range of people or do not have important roles for protecting nature?*

Yes and No.

Leading question – Unfair to ask in this way. (“Activities” vs. “nature”? Too high level...).

“Protecting” nature as a priority ? **Not at the expense** of re-establishing nature on badly degraded sites begging for reforestation. We reject this defensive, “museum” approach to our environment.

We strongly support “multi-modal” parks;

- But we oppose using “policy changes” as a reason for decommissioning local playgrounds as has happened in the past decade;
 - Tralee reserve – Small local play area - Decommissioned
 - Meekswood reserve – Bigger kids play fort - Decommissioned
- Currently, dogs incompatible with family play areas – illogical as **dogs = play** for many families.
- Some play areas sterile, dull and unappealing – Branscombe St.
- Oppose “dumbed down” play areas – like new co-funded
- **Our kids ask: More challenging playground equipment please!**

Ask us First Please!!! **Let local's prioritise, not WCC officials.** Nothing about us without us.

5 Will the suggestions in Our Capital Spaces make it easy for you to get active? Do you have any other suggestions around this?

Unsure.

Alex more project already well advanced – planned “prior” to OCS initiatives.

OCS Plan is unspecific, high-level, without budget or timeframes. Reductions in some areas could offset any OCS benefit, but without details we can't know....

So it is hard to see how and when it will make it easier to get active without specific projects.

If major new walking track routes (and associated plantings) are completed under OCS, they may “make it easier”.

6 *Do you support the focus on short local tracks that are accessible to local communities? Where in Wellington do you think we should prioritise our investment in tracks?*

Yes

Focus on tracks that make the best use of green space, Provide access so community groups can engage in reforestation

Strongly support the focus on short local tracks - Johnsonville an excellent starting point.

Encourage connection of local parks and reserves with each other, and to the Skyline and Te Araroa walkway tracks.

Johnsonville families wish to make use of the outdoor amenities. The opportunity to walk in a connected network of tracks is an encouragement for local families to get active.

Urban Johnsonville encircled by “scrub” – slowly regenerating native bush with low species diversity and an **absence of pre-European canopy species**,

Massive quantities of noxious weeds – **Darwins barberry in plague proportions with no apparent control due to neglect over the last 20 years....).**

More effort and resource required to

- link existing reserves together as “walking routes”,
- signposting routes and installing 'all weather” tracks through green-spaces wherever possible, and
- providing more and better linkages with existing walkways.

We have specific proposals in mind and are prepared to encourage community “manpower” to ensure these objectives are met.

7 Do you think we need to continue protecting and/or acquiring new land to expand the network of open spaces as the city grows and if so where?

Yes

DPC72 & 73 “medium density” and “high density” residential zones have been allowed in Johnsonville;

- Zero private ground floor open space requirements in MDRA 2
- Up to 60% site coverage to 3 storeys high – the only open space will be Car parking !

All this Without any corresponding increase in open space or play areas.

Pool Expansion, Library building and Alex Moore development “car parking” **will all reduce the already minimal green-space in central Johnsonville.**

Initial WCC consultants reports highlighted low numbers & poor quality of open spaces. Recommended “Pocket park” development. THESE HAVE BEEN IGNORED.

Road reserves and private encroachments” **are WCC owned land.** PRIORITISE their development into Public ‘pocket parks’ and biodiversity islands.

Take a 200 year view – do not sell land that will be the next century's public space treasures!

ø *Do you agree with our focus on restoring more ecological areas and encouraging native birds and other important species into every community? How can we achieve this?*

Yes

Invest in Ecological capital - Re-establishment of a balanced and complete “pre-European” set of flora should be the highest priority,

Only native fauna will create sustainable means to establishing habitat to support indigenous fauna.

Planting of native species indigenous to the region should become a priority

Investment in the planning of ecological corridors is needed,

Residents will respond well to being part of such planning.

Darwin’s barberry needs **urgent** and **serious** attention.

Darwins barberry – *out of control !!*



9 *Do you agree with how we plan to develop, celebrate and promote our natural attractions? How can we become a walking and mountain bike destination?*

Unsure

Re-establish or native forests behind Johnsonville first and the tourists will follow – in 100 years.

Our community usage of our own natural attractions - re-establishment of our natural environment and improved access to it for our local residents on a day-to-day basis – are #1 Priority.

If we do that right, tourism and events may eventually follow, but we need to invest in the natural capital first and foremost.

10 Do you support more community involvement in, and management of, our parks, playgrounds, reserves and other open spaces? Do you have ideas about how this can best be encouraged?

Yes

Current state of reserves in Johnsonville is at best disappointing, at worst, a disgrace.

We Want to help. JCA is a group committed to improving the Johnsonville Environment - restoring biodiversity and the ecological balance of reserve spaces are central to that.

We strongly welcome a more open and direct partnership with WCC so we may better prioritise expenditure and projects in our region.

Johnsonville residents are more than willing to play an active part in planting, etc, to achieve our objectives.

We are willing to coordinate with Johnsonville litter removal, planting, stream clean-ups - you name it: We also wish to work with our community to ascertain their priorities in terms of improving reserves, and we hope for WCCs support in achieving those objectives.

Issues with OCS and its consultation

Concerns

Two very important, but distinctly different initiatives appear to have been cobbled together here. Both are important, but **together there may be loss of focus, or trade-offs between the two that Wellingtonians do not want.**

Lack of metrics (specific \$ budget implications) in consultation documents, plus high-level approach **must render consultation results “questionable”.**

What has been promised in the past but not delivered? Several detailed initiatives on the “Northern Reserves” and “Outer Green belt” management plans were placed in the “5 to 10 year” category for implementation, yet seem to have been effectively abandoned: **We request a “gap analysis” so the initiatives planned for but not carried out can be identified and communicated to Wellingtonians.**