

FH 287
1/4

Jude Blair

From: Ray Henderson [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, 16 May 2022 12:17 pm
To: forresterheights
Subject: Harbour Hill consultation
Attachments: WDC- Harbour Hill submission.pdf



External Email Be careful with links and attachments. Think before clicking – do I know this person and does this person's request make sense?

Cover letter:

I am aware that my speaking time at the Hearings day will be limited to 5 minutes.

Thus I will cover as much ground as possible in this email. This is an Addendum to my completed Online 'survey' (which acted additionally as a Placeholder).

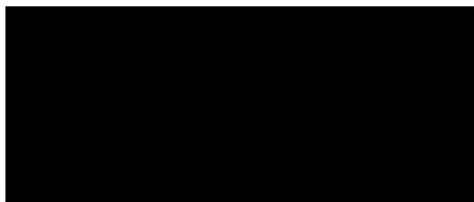
I will probably raise some more issues of the moment in my Verbal presentation as time permits.

>> PDF attached <<

Thank you,

Ray Henderson

I DO wish to Speak to my Submission.



Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

My Submission to the 'Forrester Heights' consultation

To Waitaki District Council,
the Chief Executive & staff,
the Mayor & elected Councilors.
16th May 2022 .. noon

Preamble:

Forrester Heights is not a legal description of this Land. It is just a hangover from the previous attempt to Develop it as a subdivision.

So, unless specific to the argument, I shall be using the term Harbour Hill.

Legally, it is Sections 1-23 of Block XXXI, and, mysteriously, Sections 4,14 of Block XXXII.

1/The consultation questionnaire:

The Options

The information booklet page3 states Option 1 as “Make Forrester Heights a Reserve”.

But the Questionnaire has added “Try to” .. effectively, an escape clause.

This indicates NO serious intention of following this path.

Option 2 “Sell some or all ..” has extra fish-hooks.

Drilling down on this Option in the Booklet reveals Development options.

Page5 shows this Option to actually consist of THREE distinct options.

a/ Sell the Land .. end of,

b/ Council develops the Subdivision,

c/ Council partners with a Developer.

Earlier Council Meetings had up to 7 options as possibilities, and I'm fairly certain Council as a Developer was taken off the table.

But apparently THREE options have been folded into this 'ONE'.

Option 3 – this shouldn't even be here. Mayor Kircher has stated that this decision has been “kicked down the road for too long” and a Decision either way (1 or 2) has to be made. I am concerned that many of the “No to Residential Development” may mistakenly select this option.

The Layout

Option choices usually go from Positive/for to Negative/against left to right but this Survey has chosen the opposite order. Starting with the Negative/”strongly disagree” leading to the Positive/”strongly agree” is designed (purposely) to confuse.

Page2 of the Submission Form lists several choices if Option 2 (Sell) is chosen.

There are no choices offered if Option 1 (Reserve) is chosen.

A Reserve could have many uses, Ecological, Recreational, even an Art installation.

Obviously Option 1 is NOT the preferred Option.

I sincerely hope that any answers on Page2 from “Don't Sell” Submitters are not lumped in to skew the statistics, or at the very least, they are identified as a separate group of responses.

2/Defining Endowment

In the second half of the Nineteenth century many immigrants came from mainly Britain with the support of an Endowment. This was to ensure an income while 'finding their feet' in a new land.

Exhausting the entire Endowment was a foolhardy action.

Similarly, Council must not diminish the Endowment portfolio. Derive Income from use of the Endowment, don't use Sale of the Endowment as said Income.

Previously, areas of the Cape Wanbrow Reserve were forested, and harvested, thus giving an Income. Other areas were leased for livestock grazing yielding Agistment fees as an Income. Both of these activities have ceased and we have been left with the unkempt, unmaintained piece of Land that has some detractors.

This is akin to the 'demolition by neglect' that has happened/is happening to some of our Historic buildings. It is easier for Council to say we need to make better use of an untidy bit of scrub-land, than to Develop/destroy a pleasant Nature spot.

3/The importance of 'the view'

There has been much made of the view of the Harbour and Oamaru beyond from parts of the Cape. The Lookout Point view is already compromised by the height of the nearby trees. Some Points of Interest on the brass Guide are no longer visible. Roof-lines of intended Residential Development would remove more amenity, ie the view.

However, I have approached 'the View' from the opposite direction. When driving into Oamaru from the North, or on Rail, Harbour Hill can be seen from quite a distance.

This pastoral scene is somewhat comforting. I'm not an overtly religious person, but do note that there's a definite connection between pastoral views and pastoral care.

Harbour Hill is able to be viewed from many parts of Oamaru township and it is so much better to have a view from Urban sites that is not of just more houses. It has been said that green spaces in Urban environments are integral to Residents' well-being.

4/Concerns over stability

I'm no Engineer but I do have commonsense. Looking at the substantial caves under Harbour Hill does cause me to worry about the Land stability. I note that the latest Report is 2009. This is prior to the TWO Major earthquakes in Christchurch which were felt significantly in Oamaru.

Any prospective Land purchaser would request a LIM, so a new Geotechnical survey would be required. This has bearing on the Costs in part 5/ below.

Just a further bit of observational knowledge -

when dense development takes place on what is formerly bare land then there is a redirection of water, Nature's sculptor. Instead of filtering through the surface naturally to the ground below, it is all collected on roofs and redirected via stormwater drains.

I'm sure this could have an effect on land with such a considerable slope.

As Council would be ticking off Stages of any Development then should there be a land collapse, the Council, =the Ratepayers, would be liable. This is not a risk I wish to take on.

5/The cost benefit = expected Profit

A member of the current Council has publicly stated that there won't be a tremendous windfall from the sale of the Land. There is almost certainly going to be a cost to Council for Infrastructure work. If a Developer is not accommodated with this, then they'll walk away. The Council has already spent a tidy sum on instigating this Consultation. This is despite having made a decision at a Meeting around the time of the ROLD Bill that apart from the Fees for that process, no more will be spent on Forrester Heights. If the Land is sold then there has to be a replacement Asset of the current 'book' value to keep the Endowment portfolio topped up. Bottom line – a lot of effort has gone into making a very small profit (maybe a loss). Remember, there will be that Geotechnical account.

6/The Campaign

There have been some low blows leading up to, and during this Consultation. Implications that a fringe group had no right to call the land Harbour Hill (especially the unofficial signage). But similarly, where is the legal status of “Forrester Heights”? Actually it's just Block XXXI. References to 'facts' from the Friends of Oamaru Harbour being misleading. I can state unequivocally that no-one I know of has told lies on this matter. Differing opinions that may be viewed as right or wrong from different perspectives cannot be dubbed Truth versus Lies. Initially, I did agree that the artistic depiction of Millionaire houses dominating the landscape may have been OTT. But now that I have recently seen a very large residence in Moeraki it is definitely a realistic view. I have also heard mutterings of “Quality of Submissions”. Are Council, or Councilors going to decide whether a Submission is 'fit for purpose'? Is Democracy going to be watered down? I hope we do not go down this path!

7/The Solution?

It would be foolish to just say No to a proposal without offering an alternative. Obviously I DO NOT want Harbour Hill to be developed as a Residential Subdivision. I DO want formal recognition/re-designation as a Reserve, then planted out in Natives would be the Best result. Central Government is now considering that Carbon Sequestration does NOT have to be only exotics, =Pine. Thus the Carbon Credits becomes an income to Council.

?? Compromise

It could be acceptable if the Native planting went ahead
AND
some housing just below the trees against Lookout Point. Effectively, on the paper extension of Avon Street.
However, infrastructure costs may mean that the minimum number of houses to make the project viable may not be able to be accommodated on that piece of land.