



Waikato District Council

Sunset Beach - Options Report

Community Engagement - Summary of Feedback

October 2015

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1. Introduction

GHD Ltd (GHD) was engaged by Waikato District Council, in 2014, to undertake an assessment of options for managing issues resulting from erosion affecting public assets at Okariha (or Sunset Beach) in Port Waikato.

This assessment identified managed retreat as the most appropriate action in response to existing and potential coastal erosion issues affecting public assets at Sunset Beach.

A focus group of partner organisations and stakeholders was established in response to this report to work with the Port Waikato and wider community and provide advice on solutions for managed retreat. Partner organisations include the Waikato District Council, Department of Conservation, Iwi, Waikato Regional Council, Residents and Ratepayers, Hall Committee, Beach Care Group and the Sunset Beach Surf Lifesaving Club.

On Saturday September 5, a community engagement workshop was held at the Sunset Beach Surf Life Saving Club. The intent of the workshop was to discuss with the community their thoughts on the managed retreat of community assets and gain direction on when, where and how they would like to see this completed. Around 100 people attended this event.

The workshop consisted of a series of discussion sessions during which the community provided feedback to four key topics relating to the current and future issues facing Sunset Beach. These topics were; parking, the use of the current site, community facilities and access. At each discussion station there were a number of focus questions which were used by facilitators to prompt conversation, ideas and generate feedback.

Following the meeting, a survey was created to gain further feedback from those with an interest in Sunset Beach. The survey was created on google forms and was delivered via email to all Sunset Beach contacts available to the Waikato District Council. The survey asked the questions that were presented at the workshop along with a number of additional questions that were generated from discussions held on the day. 32 responses were received to the survey.

The feedback received at both the workshop and survey is summarised in sections 4 to 7 of this report. Section 2 describes how the information received will be used to inform a number of short and long term actions completed by partner organisations. Section 3 describes how feedback received from the community will be used to inform the development of options for Sunset Beach.

2. How the feedback is being used

The information gathered from the community workshop and survey is being used in the following ways by the partner organisations:

Local iwi have identified the need for cultural assessments to be incorporated into the project and therefore any potential sites for retreat will be analysed for cultural issues as part of the design process. They have also provided a Kaumatua to provide cultural support to the project.

The Waikato District Council is working with the stakeholders to try to ensure safe and suitable access to and from the beach this summer as well as agree longer term solutions for the retreat of public assets.

The Waikato Regional Council is providing support to Waikato DC and other stakeholders at Port Waikato as required. The Waikato Regional Council support is to ensure that the decisions

made from the feedback and consultation are in line with Regional Policies and consenting requirements.

The Department of Conservation continues to work with the stakeholders with a focus on the conservation values at Port Waikato. The Department recognises the role of tangata whenua as kaitiaki and acknowledges their mana whenua, the special relationship they have with the land and its resources, especially the Waikato river and associated habitats for flora and fauna. Specific projects the Department is involved in includes dune habitat and shore nesting bird protection programme in association with the Port Waikato Beach-care group, the Ngati Karewa Ngati Tahinga Trust and the Waikato Regional Council. The Department is also responsible for managing the whitebait fisheries in the area and are involved in marine mammal protection, including helping out with whale stranding and developing the Maui Dolphin Threat Management Plan.

The Trust Waikato Sunset Beach Lifeguard Service (Surf Life Saving Club) has been collaborating with the Auckland University School of Architecture who have taken on the proposed new Lifeguard building project as a degree assignment. The Club hopes to engage with the WDC working group in early December as to the extent of community engagement with regard to inclusion of community facilities. Architectural drawings will be worked through by February 2016 and following that presentations to potential stakeholders and funders.

Port Waikato Beachcare is continuing with the existing Dune restoration project and have been approached by Architecture Students working on the Surf Club design for information on the biodiversity of the area. We look forward to assisting with restoration planting when the beach begins to recover. We support all initiatives that protect the recovery of the dune system and protects the biodiversity of the area like controlled access to the beach and dunes. We believe working with nature to be the best way forward.

2.1 Short term actions

- Continue to work with the stakeholders to try to ensure safe access to the beach.
- Removal of debris (concrete/asphalt) from the beach before Labour weekend. It is recognised that this may not solve the problem, but this will be monitored regularly to support safe use of the beach throughout the summer period.
- Clear the waterway next to the vehicle access way. This is currently blocked causing water to pond and become stagnated.
- Ensure appropriate fencing is in place to deter public from accessing the eroding edge.
- Ensure informational and warning signage is in place to advise the public of risks.
- Design options for future community facilities at Sunset Beach and Port Waikato (both function and location) based on feedback received by the community. These will be brought back to the community before the end of the year for further community discussion and input.

2.2 Medium term actions (the next 18 months)

- Provide input to the Waikato District Plan review to ensure this recognises the natural hazards present at Sunset Beach, and provides the correct zoning and development provisions to alignment with the requirements of the community facility's impacted by managed retreat. The District Plan is at an early stage of information gathering and engagement with this intended to be released for community consultation late in 2016.

2.3 Long term actions or potential direction

- Identify and seek funding to cover long term options for managed retreat within the Waikato District Council Long Term Plan (LTP). Allocation of funding will occur from 2018 for large projects but planning for this will commence in 2016
- Use the information received from the community, report and survey to feed into the review of the Regional Coastal Plan, which helps to inform how hazards will be managed and how natural character of the coastline will be protected.
- The Surf Life Saving Club will use the information to inform potential future investments into the Surf Club facilities.

3. How feedback will be used to develop options for managed retreat.

Options for the managed retreat of community assets will be developed for further community consultation before the end of 2015. This section provides a summary of points that will be used to inform the development of options based on the community feedback received.

3.1 Community facilities

The community would like a hall that will continue to provide for the existing variety of public and private events. Options to incorporate the hall with other venues such as the surf club or health camp will be explored alongside options to keep the hall separate.

The hall's central location, provision of parking and kitchen facilities, ability to resize the hall for different uses, acoustics and sufficient electricity supply are key aspects that should be incorporated into any future options.

In addition to these, potential impacts on local residents and availability of parking needs to be considered in the identification of sites for the hall. Locations to consider include the existing location, the end of Ocean Beach Road, the existing community area adjacent to Cordyline Road, the area around the rugby club and Maraetai Bay.

Locations considered for public toilets need to be close to the beach and it is desirable that these are less visible to residents. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles should be considered to ensure the safety of users.

3.2 Access to the beach

The community would like to keep an access way to the beach in the current location. Ideally separate pedestrian and vehicular access should be provided. Pedestrian access needs to cater for children, elderly and disabled whilst vehicular access needs to cater for trailers, quads, boats and emergency access.

Investigations into a second access for emergency/surf lifesaving use only should also be completed. To ensure the safety of beach users, access should only be provided within reasonable view and extent of surf life saving operations.

The viability of enforcing conditional vehicle access to the beach should be investigated, including the restriction of speed within the vicinity of patrolled/swimming areas, the control of the direction of access (one way), provision of annual permits and restricting any driving on or at the base of dunes should be investigated.

3.3 Parking

Any options developed should consider increasing the number of parks. Options for catering for up to 100 car parks in order to provide for demand in the short and long term should be considered.

The community would prefer to have access to a car park close to the beach.

The use of environmentally friendly material to reduce visual effects and allow stormwater percolation should also be considered. The community would like to see the recycling facility relocated providing an opportunity to use this area for parking or another use.

The community does not need any additional parking facilities for boats and trailers as long as access is available for parking boats and trailers on the beach. Any buses or large campervans should not park within the carpark and should use the campground facility at the holiday park.

3.4 Use of the existing site

Reliable and safe access to the beach and increased public safety should be the key actions undertaken by Council prior to the summer period. This is able to be temporary in nature until a more permanent solution has been designed.

The safety measures should include the installation of a number of signs and fences to increase awareness of the hazards present and to prevent access to the lower carpark.

Prevention of continued erosion as requested by a number of survey participants is not a viable option as identified in the initial options report. Information on managed retreat and the reasons why this is the preferred option should continue to be available to the community alongside information on frequently asked questions about alternative options.

At present, restoration of the dune system at the existing site is not a viable option whilst the site is undergoing active erosion. This option could be considered should volumes of sand on the beach increase and there are visible and lasting evidence of dune accretion. Enhancement of dune systems in the wider area should be further investigated.

3.5 Other points to consider when developing options for managed retreat.

Partner organisations are working together to plan for managed retreat in response to ongoing erosion at Sunset Beach. Partner organisations want to have a plan in place that can be employed should the risk from erosion continue in years to come. Community assets have been the target of studies and discussions had with the community to date as these assets and facilities are already being impacted and are immediately at risk. Private owners, such as the Surf Club, have also had to react to the immediate risk.

If erosion was to continue it is possible that other private land or assets could be at risk in the future. Feedback showed that landowners in the coastal zone are aware of the risks posed by living in such a dynamic environment and understand that local authorities are not responsible for erosion issues on private land. Information and links to additional information can be found on the Waikato District Council's website at <http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/Sunset-Beach-Port-Waikato-erosion.aspx> and at

the Regional Council website at <http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/Services/Regional-services/Regional-hazards-and-emergency-management/Coastal-hazards/Coastal-erosion/> or <http://www.waikatoregion.govt.nz/tr200814/>

5. Existing Community Facilities

- 5.1 What is the community hall currently used for? Could these be provided in another way if the community hall was to go? Does the community need or want a hall?

Strong support for a community hall within Port Waikato was received due to this providing a location for a variety of public and private events (Figure 1). The feedback highlighted that the current hall facility was an important contributor to the social and community fabric of Port Waikato and was a central hub for the community.

The majority of respondents stated that the role the hall played within the community was not able to be provided in another way. A small number of respondents stated that the functions of the hall could be incorporated with other venues such as the surf club or health camp.

Feedback showed that the current hall facility is used year round, almost daily by a number of groups for a variety of reasons, including:

- Social and community functions
 - Cooking school.
 - School holiday activities.
 - Music nights.
 - Art classes.
 - Market days.
 - Play group (twice weekly).
 - Church (every Sunday).
 - Craft days as part of Art at the Port.
 - Public meetings.
 - Civil Defence activities.
- Sport and Fitness
 - Zumba, taekwondo, yoga.
 - Bowls (twice weekly).
- Private Functions
 - Weddings (bookings exist until late 2016).
 - Functions e.g. parties - 21st, 50th, community parties.
 - Fundraising events e.g. Blue Breakfast, Pink Breakfast.
 - Official Functions e.g. Fire Awards.
- Supporting functions
 - Storage of equipment
 - Kitchen is used for prep for other events in the area

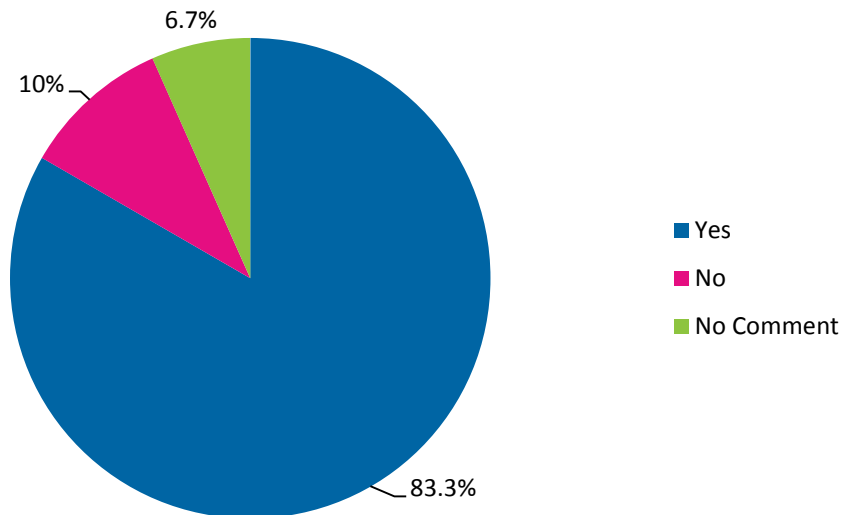


Figure 1 Internet survey responses to the question: Does the community need/ want a hall?

5.2 What does the community like/ not like about the current hall facility?

Responses at the workshop and through the survey highlighted that the hall's central location, provision of parking and kitchen facilities were the key aspects of the hall appreciated by the community.

The main negative attributes of the hall were the insufficient electricity supply, the small size of the hall and the acoustics being unsuitable for events.

A detailed overview of the responses received is provided below:

a) What the community like about the hall

- The current facility is close to the beach, very central and easy to access.
- The current facility has become a hub for the community.
- There is good parking available.
- The hall is located away from dwellings.
- The surf club is adjacent which provides some overnight accommodation- avoids issues with drinking and driving.
- Ability to access a commercial standard kitchen and BBQ facility.
- The hall has a fenced outdoor area.
- The hall has a good layout.

b) What the Community does not like about the hall

- The current facility has insufficient storage on site.
- There is no ability to change the size of the hall for different events- there is no formal partitioning.
- The kitchen is advertised as a commercial kitchen but has been set up with residential wiring- thus when overused many fuses blow.

- The electricity supply is inadequate for large functions.
- The hall acoustics are not always suitable for events.
- The current facility is becoming dated and needs modernising- the age is increasing maintenance costs.
- There can be clashes with bookings and who has priority for use.
- The facility is cold in winter.
- The hall is not centrally located within the community- there is the belief that a more central location would enable a better sense of community around the hall.
- The hall is slightly too small.

5.3 What would the community like to use a hall for in the future?

The general response was that a community hall should be used for the range of events currently held within the existing facility. A number of additional uses were raised, these including:

- The hall providing a shared workshop space.
- The hall being combined with the library.
- There should be toilets in the community hall that are for users of the hall only, as people that hire the hall will often require exclusive use.
- The hall being a multi-use facility which incorporates an information centre about Port Waikato.
- The hall could include a museum type display with a focus on the area's past.
- The hall needs greater levels of storage space.

5.4 What might we need to consider when locating a community hall in the future?

The general consensus was that the hall needed to be located in a central easily accessible location that is away from residential activity to avoid effects from noise and has sufficient parking. Following these the risk of erosion and increasing the size of the facility were identified as key matters to address.

Other aspects included the provision of a playground nearby and the provision of good facilities.

A detailed overview of the responses received is provided below:

- Only provide a new hall when the current one can no longer be moved - do not turn the current hall location into car parking.
- The community hall will require a designated parking area to service parking needs. We should not rely on surrounding roads.
- The hall needs to be located a reasonable distance from too much residential accommodation due to the noise produced by weddings and functions late at night/ the hall will need to be subject to appropriate sound proofing to allow these events to occur with minimal disturbance.
- A location close to where the current hall is situated will allow for the community hub aspect of the hall, which is well established, to be carried over.

- Appropriate wiring must be used throughout, including for the (commercial) kitchen.
- Appropriate secure storage for a multitude of uses especially for events e.g. Art in the Port
- Will accommodation need to be provided nearby for those using the hall?
- Prevailing winds- the existing facility has, at times, limited indoor outdoor flow as a result of winds blowing sand into the hall thus resulting in doors needing to remain closed.
- Views of current residents will need to be considered – cannot take away views from those who already reside in the area.
- A new hall in a new location must not take away from the activity that is currently occurring in the location.
- Consider erosion and sea level rise. Do not locate in an area which is likely to be subject to inundation in the next 10 years.
- With an aging population the hall should be accessible to the elderly, this including the reduced distances from their houses.
- A playground adjacent could add a new dimension to the space.
- A growing community means a growing use for the hall- predicted growth levels need to be considered for size of hall in the future.
- An area with foot traffic is important for community markets and fundraising events.

5.5 What are your thoughts on a community hall at Maraetai Bay?

Discussions held at the workshop raised the potential for a community hall to be located at Maraetai Bay. The survey followed on from this and questioned people's thoughts on this as an option.

Strong opposition to this was received, with this opposition also enforced within responses to other questions. There is a consensus that the natural character of Maraetai Bay is to be protected and not reduced by the presence of a community facility. A detailed overview of the responses received at the workshop and through the survey is provided below:

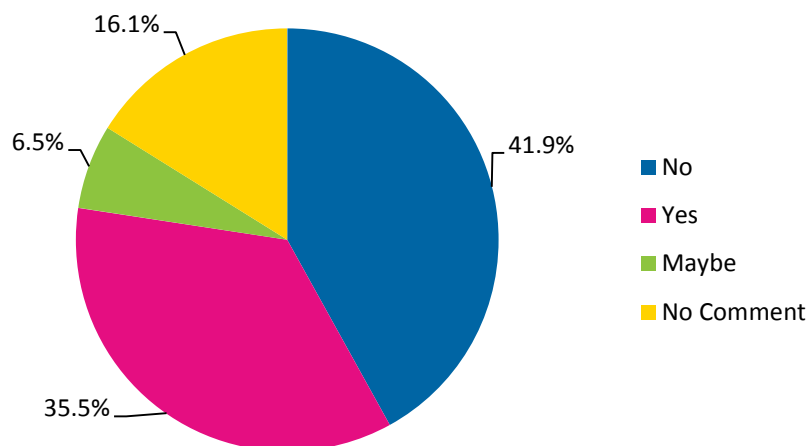


Figure 2 Internet survey responses to the presence of a Community Hall at Maraetai Bay.

Reasons for Support:

- It is considered to be a 'Great/good idea' however, no specific reasons were provided.
- Makes sense as Maraetai is a more stable location than the current location.
- This area has water views of the Waikato River.
- There is land here already owned by Council and there is ample room for parking.
- There is a strong potential for connections (walking and cycling) from the Sunset Beach Residential area.

Reasons Against:

- The people at Maraetai Bay would feel noise, visual and traffic impacts – this does not align with the reasons residents live there.
- Maraetai Bay is an area of natural beauty that needs to be protected.
- The hall should be in a more central location, closer to the beach.
- Houses in the area will lose value as a result of lost views.
- This would reduce the green space and alter the current uses of the site.
- There is not currently car parking in the area, other than on the side of roads.
- The reserve land at Maraetai Bay should be retained, it is flat land highly utilised for its open space. It is considered a family friendly and accessible place for elderly. The green space, amenity and ambience needs to be retained.
- Sea level rises may impact its viability as Maraetai Bay is also experiencing erosion.

5.6 Does the community need public toilets? What might we need to consider when locating toilets in the future?

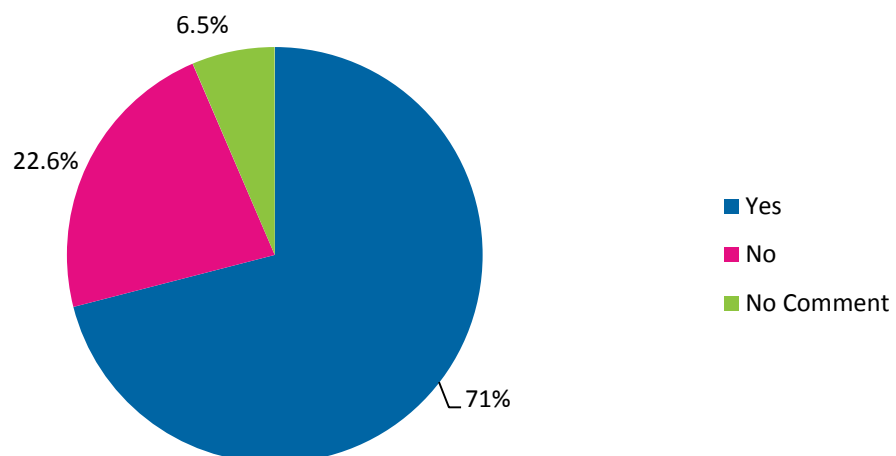


Figure 3 Internet survey responses to the question: Does the community need public toilets at the existing location?

Strong support for the provision of public toilets close to the beach was received. Following this the majority of survey respondents highlighted the need for these to be accessible, less visible to residential activities and located in a public open space to increase safety for children.

A detailed overview of the responses received is provided below:

- The toilets need to be near the beach.
- Regardless of where the hall is located, there needs to be toilets, changing rooms and cold water showers within close proximity to the Surf Club as this is where most people swim and highest demand for facilities will be.
- Composting toilets should be considered.
- The toilets should be designed in such a way that deters vandalism and loiterers.
- Need to ensure disabled and elderly access is provided.
- Need to ensure that the toilets are positioned in a located that is not highly visible to residential activities but are easily seen and close to other facilities to increase safety.
- Ensure that the toilets are cleaned regularly and useable.

5.7 What are your thoughts on a multi-use facility which incorporates the surf club, community hall and toilet facilities?

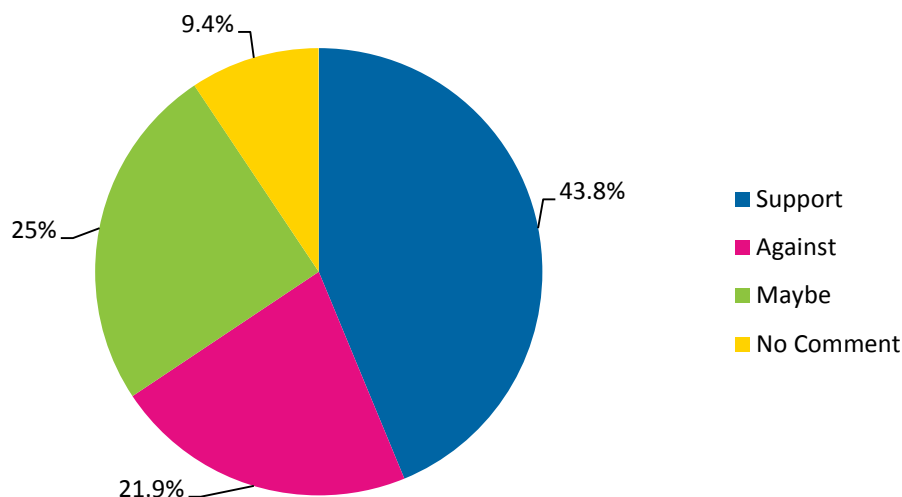


Figure 4 Internet survey responses on a multi-use facility at Sunset Beach.

Strong support for the development of a multi-use facility was received due to the perception that this would reduce costs and provide better value for money. However concerns were raised as to how this could be achieved onsite. A small number of respondents opposed the idea due to the functions of the hall and surf club being too different.

A detailed overview of the responses received at the workshop and through the survey is provided below:

Support

- General support provided – but no reasons given.
- Will keep the hall as the hub of the community.
- Main advantage would be one carpark facility for all.
- This would help to cut costs, keep rates down and provide a better, more useful facility.
- Minimal impact on the environment.
- This would need to be close to the surf tower.

- Is a sensible pooling of resources.

Maybe

- Unsure if this can be achieved in the current location, there may be issues in relation to available space.
- Need to see what the surf club thinks about this.
- Need to ensure the appropriate people are managing the facility.
- Unsure about toilet facilities and you would want to restrict public access during events.
- Still viable to have two halls in the community. The surf club can be used for community use (dinners, cards, clubs, and meetings) but not as a joint facility for dances and functions as these are not its core function.

Oppose

- The needs of the two organisations are different and putting them together would not work.
- Too much equipment could be damaged or broken.
- Need to work to stop erosion to save the town, otherwise it shouldn't go ahead.
- The hall committee are strongly against the idea of a multi facility development which would incorporate both the hall and the surf club.
- It was suggested that a trip is organised to the newly developed Muriwai surf club to identify an option of how a multi facility development can occur.

5.8 Other comments in relation to community facilities

- Introduce bollards at Maraetai Bay to reduce freedom campers, protect the children at the playground, and give others a chance to use the BBQ so cars can't park at it for long periods of time.
- There is no cemetery at Sunset Beach - suggestions were made that it would be nice to be buried in the community in which they lived.
- There is a desire to move the recycling area from where it currently is as it is an eyesore in the community.
- Will rates be affected by the development- where will funding come from?
- It should be noted that the groundwater table at Port Waikato is relatively high. This will need to be considered for any development- especially public toilets and sewerage systems so that ground water is not contaminated.
- The reason people are in Port Waikato must be considered- many people move here to get away from cities and dominating infrastructure. This should be considered in the form of whatever building is proposed.
- Any new development should be located in a location which will not be subject to coastal inundation- an area where the development can remain long term.
- It is suggested that there is underutilised space at Cordyline Park which could be used as a development site.
- There is a Health Camp in Port Waikato which currently hosts many social functions and parking is provided already along Waikaretu Road. This could replace the Community Hall, although there are suggestions this is already highly utilised and may not have the booking capacity to replace the hall.

- Restrict the use of the hall to local residents only which would reduce clashes with bookings and over utilisation.
- The community also requires recycling bins at the current hall location, including dog waste disposal.
- A space for a day care centre which was brought up at the open day. There are only a few pre-schoolers in the village - most of the permanent residents (who are themselves a minority of ratepayers) are retired people. Any pre-school facilities should be based at the nearest school (Te Kohanga).
- Port Waikato is not Raglan and doesn't have that beach town's commercial activity to provide at least a little employment nor is it under an hour's drive to a city (like Raglan is to Hamilton). No one has been able to even keep a cafe or fish and chip shop open for any length of time and the very few commercial buildings, except for the dairy by the old wharf are shut up.

6. Access

6.1 What are the current issues with beach access?

The main issue highlighted by the community was that there was only one point of access that was shared by pedestrians and vehicles. Other than this the issue of erosion was highlighted as a constant issue along with debris often blocking vehicle access.

A detailed overview of the responses received at the workshop and through the survey is provided below:

- There is only one access point.
- The track is often littered with debris; it requires ongoing maintenance to remain usable (particularly after periods of bad weather).
- In order to keep the access way clear the creek needs to be cleaned.
- There are currently safety issues for children, disabled and elderly using the same access as vehicles.
- Often the access is blocked which prevents the life guards from having quick and direct access to the beach with safety gear- this is a hazard.
- All access is at the end of a narrow road- this was acceptable when the area was developed but the growth in the area has led to congestion.
- Erosion and storm damage is impacting access.
- Erosion from the freshwater outlet from the hills is cutting a track out to sea.
- Safety between horses and pedestrians.

6.2 Who needs access to the beach and when?

The survey highlighted that priority for general access to the beach should be given to lifesaving/emergency reasons, swimmers and pedestrians. In relation to vehicles priority was again given to lifesaving vehicles, followed by boats, trailers and towing vehicles. No specific comment was made to cars or horses.

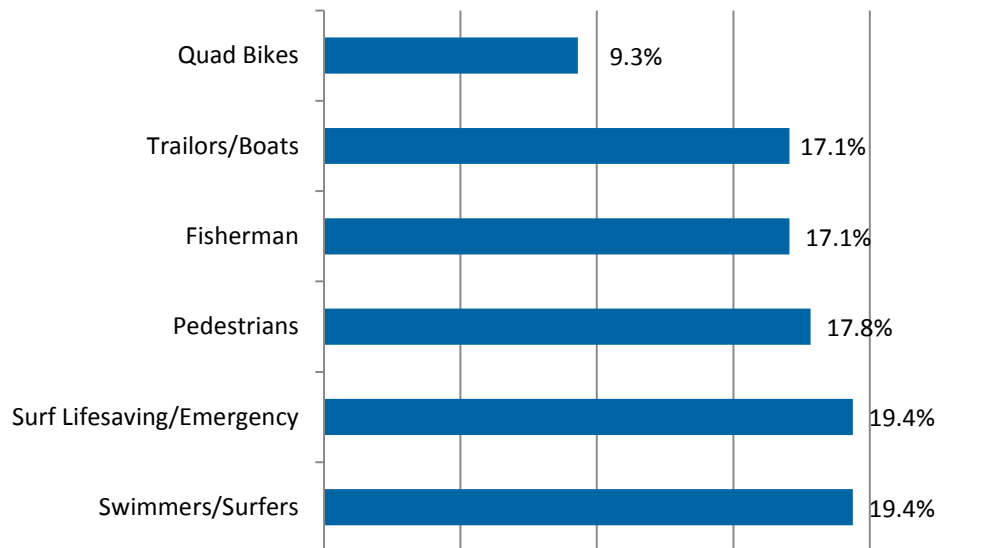


Figure 5 Types of access required (based on internet survey results)

The following provides a more detailed overview of the responses received from both the workshop and the survey:

- Surf lifesaving (including quad bikes).
- Families and swimmers.
- Day-trippers.
- Surfers (need access to wherever waves are forming).
- Jet skis potentially need a designated landing zone at Waikato River opposed to Sunset Beach.
- Boating-fishing (the beach is safer than the bar).
- Walkers (including those with dogs).
- Horses.
- Unaccompanied children.
- Other community members –elderly, disabled.
- Rescue helicopters.
- Quad Bikes.
- Tractors / vehicles towing boats.
- Emergency response.

6.3 Should vehicle access be allowed? If so who should have access?

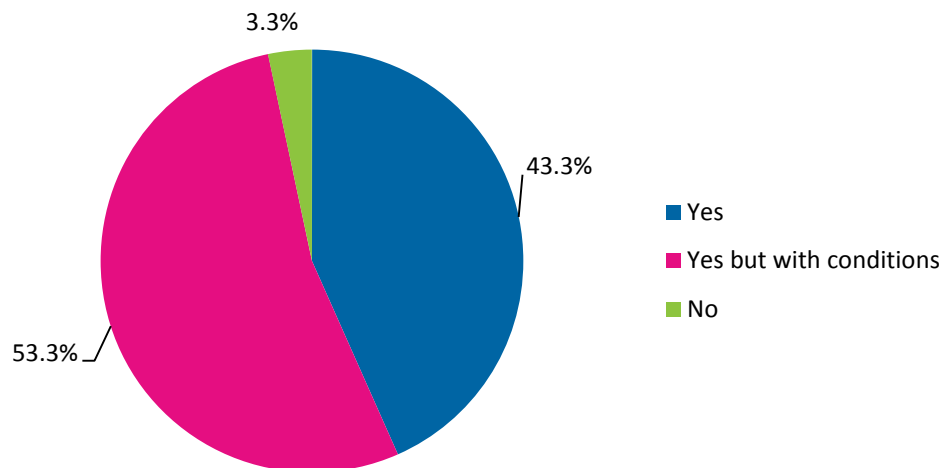


Figure 6 Internet survey responses to provision of vehicle access.

There was strong support for vehicle access to Sunset Beach to be maintained. However, most of those consulted advocated for strict conditions to be imposed to control access and behaviour on the beach. The majority of respondents supported speed restrictions within vicinity of a patrolled/swimming area, the control of the direction of access (one way), provision of annual permits, and restricting any driving on, or at the base of dunes. The one respondent that stated vehicle access should not be allowed outlined that access should be provided only for emergency vehicles and local fishermen with passes.

A detailed overview of the responses received at the workshop and through the survey is provided below:

- Provide additional vehicle access to the main beach, separate to and in addition of pedestrian only access.
- It was identified that in the past there was signage which outlined the use and type of dune access. It worked well in the past to identify who has right of way.
- Vehicle access to the beach over dunes should be restricted.
- Provide for conditional access, conditions could include the below:
 - Advertised and enforced speed management, particularly close to patrolled and swimming areas.
 - A yearly permit system to responsible vehicle owners only given upon application.
 - Only allow for Fishing boats and vehicles to the left (towards the cove) as required.
 - Any vehicle wheels should be a set distance from the base of the dunes.
 - No driving on dunes.
 - Only provide for vehicles that launch or retrieve boats in a designated location.
 - Restrict vehicle access throughout the day/season (especially during peak visitor times).
 - Vehicles banned from the north to the right of the current access point for the length of Ocean View Road.

6.4 How could access be located and designed to avoid impacts on coastal dunes, and increase user safety?

The majority of respondents supported access staying in its current location whilst having this redesigned to separate pedestrian and vehicles. This was due to the current location providing access to a safer area of the beach and being alongside existing surf lifesaving facilities and parking.

A small number of respondents (2) raised the potential of relocating the access and/or the surf club to the end of Ocean View Road.

The following provides a more detailed overview of the responses received from both the workshop and the survey:

- Support the idea of wooden pedestrian access paths with plantings on the slopes.
- Keep the existing access but with a path and railings on one side for pedestrians.
- Restructure/upgrade the existing access.
- Educate users to ensure they are aware of the risks with access to the beach.
- Install signage.
- Access for vehicles and pedestrians should be separated in the interest of safety.
- If erosion allows, better access should be created and maintained from Ocean View Road.
- There should be dedicated pedestrian access which is easy and close from the car parking areas.
- Pedestrian access only adjacent to surf club will encourage swimming only at this location and will therefore increase safety with swimmers more likely to stay within the flags.
- If appropriate speed limits are in place it will be acceptable to have shared access with pedestrians and vehicles.
- Install infrastructure (concrete path, wooden floating walkway, gabion baskets) over the dunes (handrails or the like) to provide safer and separated access for pedestrians from vehicles.
- Construct a pedestrian bridge across the freshwater stream so access can be gained from the southern side of the stream.
- The access needs to be located near to where it currently is (near the surf club) as the access location will determine where people swim, this location is also close to parking.
- Shift the surf lifesaving club to Ocean View Road so access can be provided there.
- Pedestrian access needs to be wheelchair and pram friendly.

6.5 How many access points do we need for pedestrians?

The general consensus was that one access point was sufficient subject to this being upgraded and suitable for its required uses. Those who supported the provision of two access points highlighted that one should only be used for access by the surf lifesaving club.

The below provides a more detailed overview of the comments received:

- If there is only one access then there are difficulties associated with the ever changing dunes
- One pedestrian access will result in congestion through the summer months.
- Depends on how many carparks there are- one access is needed per parking lot. Cannot expect people to park in an area where there is not access.
- Potential for a new access point at the northern side of the hall of the end of Ocean View Road.
- The more access points that are provided the more maintenance that will be required- who is in charge of maintenance?
- Only one is required for the general public but this needs to be a good one.
- The surf club may need a separate access point for emergencies.

6.6 Other comments in relation to access:

- Can the creek beside the existing access be piped?
- Vehicle access provided solely for use by Surf Club and boating.
- Aim to retain the natural character of Port Waikato.
- Is there any evidence that vehicles using the beach causes or accelerates erosion?
- What is the legal status of the access at the end of Ocean View?
- Are vehicles legally allowed on the beach?
- Is the beach a designated roadway?
- Keep costs to a minimum so not to impact rates.
- Look at alternative materials for constructing car parking.
- Work may be required to divert the stream.

7. Use of the Existing Site

7.1 What immediate actions would you like to see before the summer?

Based on the survey the main action that the community would like to see before summer is the provision of safe vehicle and pedestrian access to the beach. Second to this was the clean-up of debris and actions undertaken to prevent erosion. Parking was not a significant concern to the survey respondents.

A summary of the feedback received to this question is provided below:

- Provide alternative parking options.
- Improve vehicle access and remove debris to increase accessibility for lifeguards.
- Fence off any existing dune plants to protect them which will add to dune stabilisation, Increase planting of the dunes.
- Signs to warn visitors of erosion danger and restrict access to the lower carpark.
- No solid structures.
- Increase the safety of the bottom carpark and restrict access/use.
- Clean out creek from debris – requires ongoing maintenance.
- Increase car parking.
- Protect beach and assets from further erosion (Wire cages/rocks, sandbags).
- Provide separate pedestrian and vehicle access points to increase pedestrian safety (Pedestrian access to the current track north of the tower on Ocean View Road).
- Impose conditions on vehicle use on the beach (speed controls).
- Redirect stormwater.
- Cover the culverts within the road reserve near the beach to increase the road width.
- Remove debris from under the lower carpark to reduce hazards for beach users.
- Take no action.
- Strip the existing seal from the parking area to prevent future erosion increase hazardous debris on the beach.
- Horses and vehicles kept off the beach

7.2 How could we manage the existing risk from the site?

The main method of managing risk was identified as installing a number of signs and erecting fences to make beach users aware of the hazards present and to prevent access to the lower carpark.

An overview of the potential actions raised is provided below:

- Erect signage, these can be in a range of languages.
- Install warning signs for fishing vehicles about getting caught between high tide and steep dunes (signs needed at Maunsell Road access and at the end of the sand spit).
- Employ a local resident to complete daily check and remove risks/hazards.

- Install a safety fence/barrier and signage to reduce risk and prevent people accessing the old carpark both from the beach and from the upper carpark.
- Reduce erosion.
- Concrete the upper section of the existing ramp and build a wooden pedestrian walkway to the beach (potentially from the current track north of the tower on Ocean View Road or by splitting the current access).
- Remove debris from the beach.
- Educate beach users.
- Take no action.
- Appoint wardens to direct traffic.

7.3 What would the community like to see happen to the existing site? Would you like to see it reverted back to a natural dune and river? Or another use that can accommodate erosion should this happen?

Slightly more people voted in favour of the existing site being returned to its former state, than those against. No other options were provided, other than the installation of erosion controls similar to other west coast beaches.

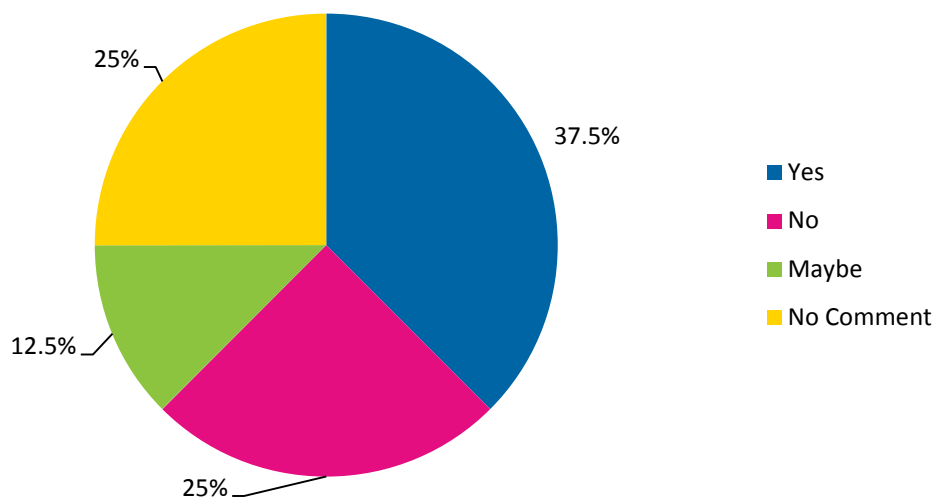


Figure 7 Internet survey responses received relating to returning the site to its former natural state.

Other options for the existing site include:

- Keep the community hall at the beach.
- No solid structures for access- keep natural looking access over dunes.
- Access to the beach needs to remain where it is, if the access is moved it will encourage people to swim in areas not patrolled by guards.
- Maybe the community hall does not need to be based at the beach, surf lifesaving, parking and facility block do. Maraetai Bay has been suggested as an alternative location for the community hall.

- Install parking that can drain rainwater- not asphalt.
- Install a seawall that extends past a point parallel to the end of Westside Road to protect the community as a whole in this area of Port Waikato.
- Increase the height of the beach access to prevent flooding on surrounding low lying property.
- Complete dune replanting.
- Protect the coast from erosion using methods successful at other west coast beaches.

7.4 What should happen to the existing parking areas in the short and long term?

There was general agreement that in the short term the use of the existing parking would be sufficient, with the option of increasing parking if the recycling facility is relocated off site, or by extending this to the roundabout.

As for the long term it was noted that this is dependent on the success of any of erosion controls installed, as this would impact the available area for parking.

An overview of the short and long term actions provided is provided below:

Short Term

- Leave as is and maintain in the current form. These areas are sufficient for 95% of the time.
- Relocate recycling facilities and use for parking.
- Section off the lower carpark.

Long Term

- Maintain as is.
- Ensure parking is located close to the swimming area of the beach.
- Sea wall built to protect the upper carpark and the community.
- Potentially cut into the hill at the rear of the lower park to increase parking.
- Include public toilets within the surf club building and use land currently occupied by soakage for parking.
- Provide parking down one side of Maunsell Road.
- Extend the carpark to the roundabout.
- Ensure parking is located close to the lifeguards.
- Remove the carpark altogether.
- Keep the existing upper carpark and build another one down Ocean View Road.
- Create a reserve type area – picnic and play area as an alternative at high tide.

7.5 Should vehicle access to the beach remain in this area?

The response to this aligned with the results shown above in section 2.2.4 which relates to the location and design of access. The majority of respondents agreed that access should remain in the existing location due to this providing better access to the beach for boats, the surf club and avoiding further impacts on the beach from a new access point.

An overview of the responses gained from the survey and workshop is provided below:

- Yes – no reasons provided.
- Access could be provided further down the beach to keep cars away from children.
- Only for tractors and boat access.
- It has the least impact on the eroding dunes.
- Only with enforced conditions.
- Lifeguards or for emergencies only.
- Separate pedestrian and vehicle access.

7.6 Other comments provided for the existing site

- Recycling facilities- need to be considered- there is a need for recycling facilities near where high pedestrian traffic will be. Must be usable and accessible.
- Not all problems are located at the surf breaks- the river needs to be considered.
- Get the community involved to prevent the erosion.
- Public toilets need to remain- toilets need to be near the main access point.
- Need to beautify the area.
- Keep the Surf Life Saving Club there.

8. Parking

8.1 Are there any issues with parking at Sunset Beach

The responses show that there is a parking issue at Sunset Beach, however a high number of people have stated that this is only during peak season. An overview of the responses is provided below:

- Not enough parking available.
- There is insufficient parking during peak seasons (Summer) for about 4 weeks of the year.
- Yes – the growth of Tuakau and Pokeno will increase visitors and parking demand.
- No (no reasons provided).
- No – there has never been trailer parking in the carpark.
- It is adequate for most of the year; it's not worth the cost for such a short period.
- There is the potential to create a new carpark at the end of Ocean View Road.

8.2 What types of vehicles need parking e.g. mobile campers, buses, motorcycles, quad bikes, boats and boat trailers?

The survey highlighted that cars, motorcycles and campervans have the main parking requirements. Trailers and boats have been noted to either launch from and/or park at the wharf, or the cove on the beach. Quads have also been noted to park above high tide on the beach. Therefore parking within the carpark facility is not considered to be required for these vehicles.

A number of responses stated that buses and camper vans should not park within the carpark with these able to use the campground facility at the holiday park.

An overview of the responses gained from both the workshop and survey is provided below:

- Residents are cautious of providing parking for horse floats close to the beach as this will encourage use and create hazards for pedestrian beach users.
- Parking is required for disabled residents.
- Trailer and boat parking is not needed, they have always parked in the cove, southern end of the beach or have used 4WD to park on the beach above the high tide mark.
- Cars, buses, mobile campers, motorcycles, quad bikes, boats, boat trailers, vans need parking.
- Buses and motorhomes should be restricted due to limited space.

8.3 What number of car parks are required now and in the future (next ten years)?

There was a general consensus that additional carparks would be required in the future, with the total number of parks required ranging from 70 carparks up to 100. Four respondents thought more than 100 would be required in the future whilst two felt that no changes to the existing level of parking was required.

A number of residents, although aware of the need for increased parking were also against the modification of existing grassed areas (Waikato District Council Reserve) to create car parks due to this impacting the natural character of the area.

8.4 What solutions are available to manage peak parking during the summer period?

- Distributed parking zones – e.g. Long Bay in Auckland.
- Drop off zone with associated shuttle service (options include Maraetai Bay, the Marae, rugby grounds). However this raised questions of who would maintain and pay for this service.
- Allow/ encourage residents to hire out spaces on their land for a small fee- business opportunity.
- Traffic management signs.
- Install bike racks.
- Charge for parking for tourists but provide a free park pass for residents.
- Upgrade infrastructure (i.e. enclose culverts) to provide more room along the road berm for road side parking.
- Extend parking to the roundabout.
- Turn recycling and waste land into parking.
- Create a new parking area at the end of Ocean View Road.
- Restrict buses and mobile homes – Campers should be parked at the camp ground.
- Cars should park further away and walk to the beach.
- Do Nothing – First in, first served.
- Use the rugby ground site or horse paddock.
- Increase parking at the wharf for boats and trailers.
- Open up reserve in front of the shop for parking.
- Construct a parking building.
- Purchase private properties which are adjacent to the surf club and turn these into parking area – do not sacrifice existing green.
- Paint yellow lines along one side of the road and paint lines adjacent to driveways which cars have to be within.

8.5 Where would you like to see parking located?

The majority of respondents stated that parking should remain within the existing location or close to the beach. A secondary option was the provision of parking at the end of Ocean View Road. This location has also been raised as a potential alternative access point in previous questions.

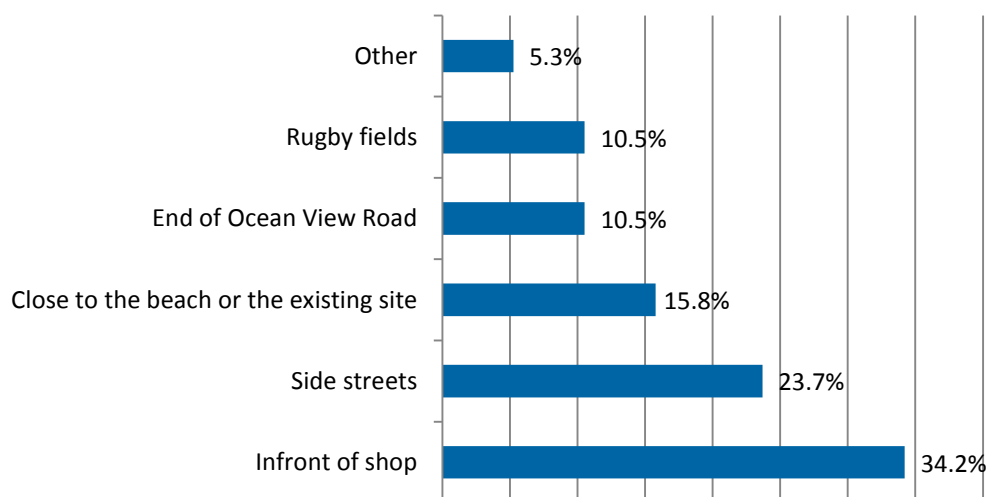


Figure 8 Internet survey results for preferred parking locations.

A more detailed overview of the potential parking locations is provided below:

- Within the WDC Reserve that is close to the beach.
- Any parking needs to be near toilets.
- Dispersed parking along the beach is not an option as this will encourage swimming in unsafe and unpatrolled areas.
- If the community hall is relocated then the currently occupied area becomes a potential option for parking.
- The end of Ocean View Road.
- Near the beach, where the lifeguards are located.
- Current site, taking up space used by recycling facilities and first two houses on Centreway Road.
- Opposite the shop.
- Close to the beach.
- The triangle of grass where the septic tank for the toilet is currently located.
- Where the existing hall is if it gets incorporated with the surf club.
- In the rugby field/club.
- The new subdivision.
- Maraetai Bay, behind the sport fields or the horse paddock.
- Along side streets or on one side of the road.

8.6 What are your thoughts on having a drop off/pick up area at Maraetai Bay

Whilst Maraetai Bay was suggested as a drop off point at the workshop, significant opposition to this was received in the survey (Figure 8).

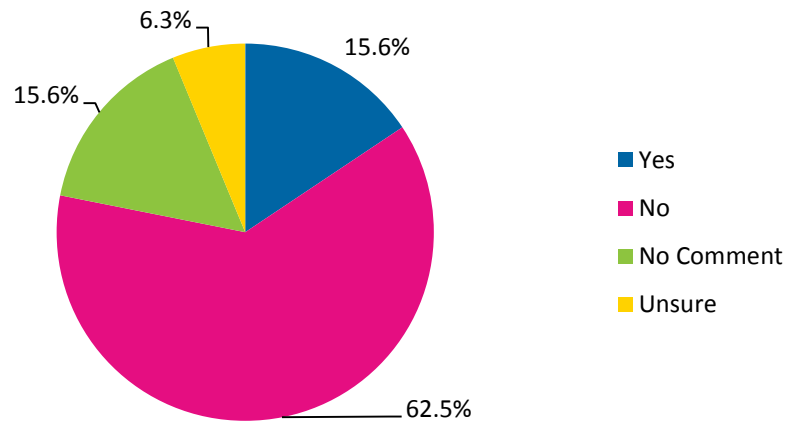


Figure 9 Internet survey responses to Maraetai Bay being used as a drop off/pick up point.

Those supporting this concept gave no reasons for their support. The main reasons for opposing a drop off area within Maraetai Bay included:

- Having to walk to Sunset Beach.
- Reduces the usability of the site for picnickers and children (swimming within shallow water).
- Reduces safety.
- Detracts from the natural character of the area.
- Too far away from the beach (reduces accessibility to the car).
- Question regarding who would pay for this service.

8.7 Other suggestions/ ideas / comments on Parking

- Road infrastructure needs to be improved- culverts need to be filled in.
- Car parks should be constructed from environmentally friendly products and resources.
- There is a café opening in October- this will likely create further parking and congestion issues and should be included in any assessments.
- Install speed bumps as a measure to control speed.
- A drop off/pick up point won't work in Port Waikato and the beach is used by day trippers that need close access.
- Building a cycle rack and encourage cycling.
- Parking is not an issue for the majority of the year.
- Filling in of culverts could cause flooding in winter if they get filled with sand.
- There is too much focus on the access of vehicles, which is secondary to pedestrians and lifeguards. Parking could be located further away.

9. General Comments:

- Okarahea is a significant area to the iwi of Ngāti Karewa and Ngāti Tahinga hapū. Therefore if there are any naming of roads, buildings or other, then the Iwi of Ngāti Karewa and Ngāti Tahinga hapū would like to be notified so that an appropriate name can be advised.
- Support the managed retreat plan.
- The whole of Port Waikato is at risk long term and the houses on Ocean View Road in the short term, not just the carpark and hall. Need to protect the town.
- Need to take a 25 year view and plan accordingly.
- There are a number of river foreshore areas before Port Waikato that could be developed into good useable recreational spaces if filled/levelled/grassed.
- Against the use of Maraetai Bay.
- Appreciate the engagement and the use of a survey.
- Ensure the area is developed for the locals not visitors.
- A lot of work is required as it has grown a lot in the last three years and needs to accommodate that.
- Not enough research has been done into the prevention of continued erosion.

GHD

GHD
Hamilton

Limited,Level

3

103

Tristram

Street
3204

T: 64 7 834 7900 F: 64 7 839 4278 E: hmnmail@ghd.com

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