

Subdivision plan for 166 Māpua Drive

1 message

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Good afternoon Paul;

I hope you have had a happy Father's Day breakfast and morning.

I am taking advantage of catchup time during the ongoing lockdown to advise where I have got to re your request that I investigate water and drainage issues related to the [166 Māpua Drive](#) property and the planned subdivision. I am reporting in response to that request, and also to keep the committee and MDCA informed. I am sharing discussions on subdivision issues with my wife Judy and she is keeping her sister Helen informed (our property at [107 Aranui Rd](#) is owned by a family trust) and with Bruce Gilkison because of his work on significant trees on the site.

Judy and I are planning to make our own family submissions to the TDC re potential issues arising from the subdivision plan for western parts of our property at [107 Aranui Rd](#) including the Māpua Wetland and also affecting parts of Aranui Park. Both our property and the park directly adjoin the [166 Māpua Drive](#) property on its long eastern boundary fence.

Our main concern at the moment is that, while the draft plan has been submitted by Mt Hope Holdings to the council for consideration, the council has not made a decision over whether it will be publicly notified. We feel that:

a. The plan should be notified to the public for wider consideration and to allow submissions.

b. And, related to that the council should use the RMA and TRMP rules to ensure public notification before a council decision on the subdivision.

Judy and I are sending a letter to the planner handling the application, Jenna Walter, urging that the plan has implications and effects for nearby properties and saying that we feel the community should be formally notified through the RMA processes. We feel the draft plan needs to be available for the community so that residents can make submissions before a final decision by the council.

At this time, it may be helpful for the issue of public notification of the application or not to also be considered by the MDCA committee.

Other main issues re drainage and wetlands: **A major issue of the subdivision is that all the orchard land within the former Mt Hope, a major part of the total property, is contaminated with spray residues including arsenic and zinc.** The housing development site is within a TDC registered HAIL (Hazardous Activities and Industries List) site. (I need to see the records to confirm the boundaries of the HAIL site). As I understand, the site covers the full area of the proposed housing development. The total quantity of land considered contaminated with the spray contaminants is an estimated 7500 cu m.

The company proposal as described in the current draft application is to move contaminated soil and to put it into a bunker type arrangement with a wooden fence on the downward side of the slope adjoining Aranui Park and [107 Māpua Drive](#) land, with the contaminated soil to be stored on top of clean soil and wrapped and sealed in heavy duty plastic.

There are a number of issues related to the process and the storage management. Both the wooden fence and plastic are likely to deteriorate over time and if HDPE plastic deteriorates, I understand that it can leach a contaminant harmful to marine life into other groundwater. (This aspect needs more investigation).

The proposed site for the soil dumping does not currently meet TRMP and National Wetland Regulations, in part, this is because of how close the planned is to identified wetlands. The company's draft plan does say that, if necessary, it could remove the contaminated soil and dump it at one of the two council waste types that take this type of industrial waste. We feel that is a better solution than onsite long-term storage. The present storage plan does not appear to meet setback requirements in several areas. The applicants contend that Māpua Wetland is not a natural wetland and is a "constructed wetland"

However, we are sure that Māpua Wetland was and is a natural wetland (part of a big lowland wetland which extends to the paddocks south of our property). We are confident that the western (fenceline) part of Aranui Park is also natural wetland, but that may need confirmation from the council.

The plan also proposes reshaping the southern area of the site (near Māpua Wetland) to create a basin with a stormwater pond. At this point, we do not favour this proposal and believe it would increase the amount of water flowing into the Aranui drainage ditch. The present stormwater ditch starts close to the western boundaries of Māpua Wetland and southwestern corner of Aranui Park, traverses the park, flowing east, then flowing to the north. The ditch takes a turn eastward close to Māpua Drive, flows east to another wetland area in the northeast corner of the park, and then the stormwater flows under Aranui Rd via a pipe and out finally flowing southward to the sea via the Māpua Estuary and the Mapua Channel.

At this time, I would welcome any thoughts you and possibly MDCA on the proposed stormwater basin for the subdivision. I understand from the draft plan that further housing subdivisions are proposed for this part of Mapua, involving land further west. My feeling is that stormwater from the subdivision should join existing stormwater disposal pipes, which I assume run down the hill parallel with Māpua Drive.

Another issue that may need early attention by the Sustainability Committee of the MDCA or by the MDCA executive is that the developers have said in the plan that they still plan to fell the cluster of native trees on sloping ground immediately above the pā harakeke (flax-weavers garden). They are also close to an iconic stand of seven lovely, tall kahikatea trees that are just within Aranui Park, immediately beside the fenceline.

As we and Bruce understand it, the developers could fell the cluster of native trees on Mt Hope land immediately, with nothing to stop the process.

You probably know the background. A community group of residents led by Bruce Gilkison earlier appealed to Mt Hope Holdings to save these iconic trees, but the request was declined. Bruce has a fuller record of that initiative and is happy to support any other community effort to save the trees. As both Bruce and I understand it, the issue is urgent. The native trees were originally planted by the late (and great) Arnold Wells, a prominent early orchardist and, with his family, a donor of Aranui Park and also the land for the Presbyterian Church.

I hope this progress report helps. I am happy to answer any questions.

Regards

David Mitchell