



## Submission of Civic Trust Auckland

### **Draft Hibiscus and Days Area Plan**

23 November 2012

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(1) Civic Trust Auckland (CTA) is a non-profit public interest group, incorporated in 1968, with activities and interests throughout the greater Auckland region.

The aims of the Trust include:

- Protection of natural landforms
- Preservation of heritage, in all its aspects
- Encouragement of good planning, for the city and region.

(2) We have submitted on the Auckland Plan as well as a variety of other Council plans, as listed on our website at:

<http://www.civictrustauckland.org.nz/subcommittees.php#submissions>

(3) A number of our members live or have lived and worked in the Hibiscus and Bays area and we have canvassed their views, as well as those of groups associated with our Trust who currently live and/or work in the area. Most of our members have visited Tiritiri Matangi and on some of these visits have given practical support for the regeneration of the island.

(4) Where this submission quotes from the Draft Hibiscus and Days Area Plan the page number is provided and the quote is in *blue italics*. Quotes from the feedback form are also in *blue italics*, with the question number provided.

(5) CTA supports in principle most aspects of the six key transformational shifts for the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area:

- *Establish the 'North-West Wildlink' as a continuous greenbelt, complemented by improved quality of the adjoining estuarine and marine environment*
- *Grow the green economy and ecotourism potential of Hibiscus and Bays by leveraging off the area's natural assets*
- *Build a continuous coastal pathway to connect and Bays' communities*

- *Focus growth in centres, and in areas with high amenity and good access to public transport*
- *Improve transport connections throughout the area by extending the Northern Busway, implementing Penlink and associated works, and by promoting potential, new water-based transport.*
- *Develop employment land in and around Silverdale to increase employment opportunities for local people.* (page 3)

(6) The Trust supports growth in centres where such growth takes into account the character of the area and is sensitive to that character. The draft plan itself aspires to *“support the population and job growth while keeping local character, environmental and amenity values”* (page 20).

(7) The Trust supports improved transport connections that are focussed on walking, cycling and public transport, particularly water transport.

(8) CTA supports developing employment land if such development takes into account the character of the area and such development is sensitive to that character.

(9) CTA does not support the Penlink project commencing sooner than 2018. We suggest that the project would seem to be contrary to the intention in the draft area plan at page 10 that: *“Any new development over the next 30 years should leverage off, rather than undermine, the qualities of the attractive coastal, natural and rural environment of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area”*.

(10) We question whether Penlink is the best response to the traffic congestion it is intended to solve. To quote from Jan Gehl, “Cites for People” (page 8): *“After 100 years of car traffic, the notion that more roads lead to more traffic is accepted as fact”*.

(11) We support the first and third parts of the fifth key transformational shift as here underlined: *“Improve transport connections throughout the area by extending the Northern Busway, implementing Penlink and associated works, and by promoting potential, new water-based transport.”* i.e. we support improved public transport for the area.

(12) We note that ideally people would live close to where they work and this should be encouraged as the Auckland population increases, in order to reduce travel time and minimise the resources, including land and infrastructure, that are seen to be needed when people desire to commute long distances. This is supported the aspiration stated in the draft plan at page 11: *“More local jobs would see the number and length of vehicle trips reduce benefiting the area’s economy and productivity”*.

(13) We suggest that accident areas on the current roads (which contribute to congestion) could be addressed by the placing of “Safe Speed Area” signs in these locations, as already implemented in other parts of the country, i.e. the speed limit in problem areas is reduced to 90kph.

(14) The draft plan at page 10 recognises the use of the waterways for transport: *“The coastline and coastal waters have provided opportunities for transport, food, defence and recreation since early Māori times”*.

(15) If Penlink does go ahead (which we do not support) then we submit that the design for the bridge across the Weiti River be by somebody who would produce a world class design, e.g. Santiago Calatrava, one of the world's finest architects/engineers: [www.calatrava.com](http://www.calatrava.com) Such a bridge should contain segregated busways which can become future tramways. Cycleways and walkways must also be included.

(16) CTA considers that *all* the features and amenities listed at Q7 are very important, i.e.

- *Natural environment*
- *Rural environment*
- *Recreation facilities, parks and reserves*
- *Water sports/boating/fishing*
- *Quality school/tertiary education*
- *Beaches*
- *Affordable housing and variety of housing types*
- *Thriving economy*
- *Local employment opportunities*
- *Health care services/facilities*
- *Public transport*
- *Walkways/cycleways*
- *Sense of place/community spirit/belonging a local community feeling*
- *Air quality.*

The Trust considers that also important are:

- Built heritage items, places and areas
- Views.

(17) *All* the concerns about housing in the future listed at Q12 are major concerns for members of any community, i.e.

- *Cost/affordability*
- *Quality and design*
- *Having a range of housing types and sizes*
- *Being able to stay in your community*
- *Being able to stay in your home*
- *Living close to family and friends.*

Inviting submitters to choose one of the above does not seem to be useful from a planning point of view, whereas discussing the details of all of these concerns would seem to be.

Also important are:

- Noise
- Views
- Future developments in the neighbourhood
- Safety.

(18) The acceptability of height of apartments of up to four levels and terraced housing of up to three levels in Browns Bay, Ōrewa and Silverdale Town Centres would depend

on factors related to the area where it is proposed they be constructed, including the height of neighbouring buildings, the aesthetics of the new build and the nature of the surrounding landscape in terms of whether the proposed housing would cause unwanted shading and/or block views.

(19) The setting back from existing heritage character shops in Silverdale Village of apartments up to four storeys and the maximising of the views of the Weiti River would seem to be following good urban design principles.

(20) The new housing development at Millbrook (by Woods and Fulton Hogan) would seem not to be an example to follow as it is a collection of homogenous large expensive houses on small plots of land, i.e. it does not include a range of housing types. More affordable types of housing need to be included in new developments.

(21) CTA strongly supports the statement in the plan at page 9 that, *“New development will need to enhance the Hibiscus and Bays’ unique built and natural character”*. We submit that public input be invited towards a description of the character of the area in order to support the establishment of character overlays.

(22) There are references in the plan to *“best-practice urban design and environmental safety principles / design guidelines / improved urban design requirements”* (pages 24, 25, 27, 30 & 36). We submit that these principles / guidelines / requirements be included in the area plan. This would align with the statement on page 21 that: *“Local communities see a need for physical and visual controls on housing design to encourage greater integration with the landscape and less visual and physical impact on the environment”*. Local communities need to be informed as to what these principles / guidelines / requirements are and have the opportunity to comment on their usefulness and their interpretation by planners, developers and designers.

(23) All the environmental impacts listed in Q 14 are of concern, i.e.

- *Reduction in stream and marine water quality*
- *Wildlife and fish habitats*
- *Climate change*
- *Air pollution*
- *Protection of species*
- *Unplanned growth causing incompatible developments*
- *Intensification of houses*
- *Developments affecting natural ecosystem*
- *Loss of productive land*
- *Soil loss and erosion*
- *Increase in rubbish*
- *Condition of heritage places.*

Inviting submitters to choose up to three of the above does not seem to be useful from a planning point of view, whereas discussing the details of all of these concerns would seem to be.

(24) All of the factors listed in Q15 are important, i.e.

- *Faster broadband*
- *Better transport services*

- *Better educational facilities*
- *Supporting rural industry*
- *Ecotourism/green tourism opportunities*
- *High-quality business offices and commercial premises*
- *More people to support local businesses.*

We note that local businesses are supported by encouraging people who live in the area to work in the area.

(25) All the social/community development factors listed in Q 16 are important, i.e.

- *I know my neighbours*
- *Ethnic diversity*
- *Welcoming and friendly*
- *Multi-cultural events*
- *Heritage*
- *Village character*
- *Sense of pride*
- *Personal safety*
- *Community facilities and social services*
- *Recreation facilities.*

Inviting submitters to choose up to three of the above does not seem to be useful from a planning point of view, whereas discussing the details of all of these concerns would seem to be. Furthermore, some of the above are tangible, (e.g. heritage and community facilities) and some are not (e.g. welcoming and friendly, and sense of pride).

(26) The following choices in Q17 *all* make it easier for the community to use alternative transport.

- *Lower bus/ferry fares*
- *Frequent and reliable public transport services*
- *Close and convenient connections to public transport*
- *Park and Ride facilities*
- *Safe walking/cycling routes*
- *More bike lanes/footpaths/trails/bus routes*
- *Reduce travel times and congestion.*

Inviting submitters to choose up to three of the above does not seem to be useful from a planning point of view.

We would add support for car pooling to these choices.

We note that the more people use the active transport modes (walking and cycling) and public transport, the less congestion there is on the roads for motor vehicle users.

(27) The draft plan includes investigating ferry services and states at page 51 that: *“Potential ferry services for tourists and locals could be provided by the private or public sector in the future.”* We submit that ferry services should be a priority and that this area of Auckland should have many more ferry services than currently. The Hibiscus and Bays Area is a coastal area and the resource of the waterways is very underutilized and

underfunded. Increased water transport would not only alleviate congestion on the roads but open up more tourism and local employment opportunities.

(28) As the Trust has previously submitted on various transport and other plans, we propose that encouraging more people to use public transport could be achieved by offering them a day per month of free travel via public transport, perhaps by including with the rates bill a Hop card with some credit on it.

(29) CTA strongly supports the statement on page 10 of the draft plan:

*“Beaches, estuaries, headlands and cliffs are significant features along the coastline. The coastline and coastal waters have provided opportunities for transport, food, defence and recreation since early Māori times. Consequently it features many heritage and cultural features which need to be celebrated and protected. Some are major attractions such as the environmental jewels of Long Bay-Ōkura Marine Reserve, Ōkura Scenic Reserve and the Long Bay and Shakespear Regional Parks. Any new development over the next 30 years should leverage off, rather than undermine, the qualities of the attractive coastal, natural and rural environment of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area.”*

(30) CTA endorses the statement on page 11 that, *“New development and associated civic spaces should be attractive and well-designed to encourage and enhance community interaction”*.

(31) CTA does not support the growth of industry on the coastline and therefore endorses the statement in the draft plan at page 20 that, *“The general approach is to encourage heavier industrial activities away from sensitive waterways and control adverse effects on their surrounding catchments”* and (page 21) *“Stricter controls must be developed to protect the waterways, estuaries and their upper catchments from degradation, especially in Ōkura/ Weiti and Long Bay”*.

(32) CTA is pleased to see that the community will be consulted on details of planning, as stated at page 23: *“There are areas that need more detailed planning work, such as precinct or structure planning process. This will involve further engagement with the local community”*. Community input is also essential (alongside that of site owners) with regard to the *“large sites near town centres that, when developed in an integrated and comprehensive way, may enhance local social, cultural, environmental and economic vitality”* (page 23).

(33) CTA is pleased to see that large format retail is discouraged in Mairangi Bay, Windsor Park, Torbay, Northcross, Long Bay and Gulf Harbour.

(34) We question the desirability of buildings three storeys high fronting the beach at Browns Bay as this would seem to have a negative effect on the amenity of the beach.

(35) Strict controls over the bulk and design of new two-storey buildings on the beachfront at Ōrewa would seem to be necessary to preserve the character of this area.

(36) CTA proposes that the rock wall along Ōrewa Beach be rebuilt as this served to keep the sand in place.

(37) We propose the siting of a community-based resource recovery facility in the area. This would serve to provide local employment as well as supporting the area's high environmental and amenity values.

(38) CTA supports the outcomes listed on pages 34 - 36:

*“Outcome 1*

*The highly appreciated rural, natural, marine and coastal landscapes of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board area are recognised and enhanced as the area's point of difference.*

*Outcome 2*

*The Hibiscus and Bays' coastal and marine ecosystems and estuarine areas are protected, restored and enhanced.”*

*Outcome 3*

*All land and freshwater ecosystems are protected, maintained and enhanced to achieve a connected network that supports wildlife habitats.*

*Outcome 4*

*4 “Each town centre grows sustainably and has a point of difference, based on its specific local character and setting, while offering a mix of housing and employment opportunities.”*

*Outcome 5*

*Suburban and rural areas are distinctive, attractive and connected, offering a variety of lifestyle options and recreational spaces that contribute to high quality living and a strong sense of community and place.*

*Outcome 6 “Historic heritage places and culturally significant landscapes are identified, protected and celebrated.”*

(39) We urge that the intended identification of historic heritage places takes place well before any plans for development get underway.

(40) We support the development of an interpretation plan for the Local Board Area's historic heritage *“to enable greater understanding of and appreciation for the collective value of existing and emerging historic heritage places”* (page 37). We also support the intention to *“work with Mana Whenua to investigate and implement measures that identify, protect and manage wāhi tapu and other sites of significance to Māori”* (page 37).

(41) We note the statement on page 58 that *“Members of the community are an untapped resource in the development and implementation of environmental and social initiatives”*. We encourage Council to work closely with individuals and groups in the community that have knowledge about our collective taonga.

(42) CTA supports the preparation of a parks and recreation strategy for the area and endorses the project on page 62 to: *“Support volunteer groups across all parks and reserves to provide maintenance, predator control and other responsibilities”*.

(43) We are pleased to see included in the top priorities for the next ten years is to: *“Develop an open space strategy and a heritage strategy for the Local Board area”*. (page 65. However, this priority has only “possible funding” status and we submit that funding be made available as soon as possible.

(44) We would like to see the “Proposed 2040 cycle network” made a priority and work on it commenced in the near future. We note that improved cycling and pedestrian infrastructure is emphasised in the Auckland Plan [give reference].

(45) We would like to see more funding commitment given to walking, cycling and public transport projects as compared to roading projects, such as those listed on page 63. In comparison, the following has only “possible funding” status: *“Extend the Regional Cycle Network along Glenvar Road and East Coast Road, and around Ōrewa, Silverdale North, Red Beach, Whangaparoa Road and Gulf Harbour”* (page 65).

(46) As expressed in vision of the Hibiscus and Bays Local Board Plan (page 2), CTA also values the beaches and coastal context, landscapes, way of life and people in this beautiful part of the Auckland region and recognises the importance protecting its value and seeing development proceed in a way that respects its unique character and amenity.