

17 June 2024

Mr David Harford
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Tēnā koe David,

CONISTON PARK LIMITED PLAN CHANGE

Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua (Arowhenua) and Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Limited (AECL) thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Private Plan Change seeking to alter the existing zone of Lot 4 DP 320165 and Lot 8 DP311232 to allow for a greater density of residential development that David Harford Consulting Limited have prepared on behalf of Golden Mile Trading and Carl Grove Limited. Arowhenua and AECL appreciated the ability to visit the subject site alongside yourself to gain a better understanding of the proposed development.

Proposed Development

Arowhenua have reviewed the Coniston Park Private Plan Change documentation and understand Golden Mile Trading Ltd and Carl Grove Developments Ltd are seeking to rezone some 16.32ha on the Ashburton town boundary from Residential D to Residential C to provide for greater intensity of land use for residential development (more than 167 allotments) at the site.

Having visited the site, AECL confirm the vacant site has frontage to both Farm Road and Racecourse Road and has been used for pastoral grazing and at times arable farming over many years. Additionally, Wakanui Creek passes through Lot 4 DP 320165.

It is understood from the application that the future residential development will be fully serviced with reticulated water, wastewater, electricity, and telecommunications. Stormwater management will consist of two large on-site infiltration basins for stormwater that will be designed with sufficient capacity to collect runoff from all allotments, adequate treatment and attenuate prior to discharging to ground and Wakanui Creek. Additionally, two proposed public stormwater soakage basins on each side of the creek will be designed to provide stormwater first flush treatment and attenuation.

Wakanui Creek

AECL note Wakanui Creek is identified as being a Runanga Sensitive Area (wāhi tapu and wāhi taonga) by Environment Canterbury within its Canterbury Land and Water Regional Plan due to the Creek and Lagoon at the coast being a traditional place name used by tīpuna (ancestors).

Arowhenua tīpuna described the Wakanui Creek and Lagoon as a kāika nohoanga (settlement) and kāika mahika kai (food-gathering site). The practice of gathering mahika kai in its various forms was an integral part of the Māori economy and culture before contact with Europeans. Early Ngāi Tahu led a highly mobile life. For hundreds of years, they pursued a seasonal round of hunting and food

gathering over their huge territories. The movement and an understanding of the resources available over a wide territory were crucial for life. The gathering of seasonal kai saw Ngāi Tahu disperse during late spring to autumn and then retreat to long term settlements in winter and early spring where preserved food gathered earlier would sustain rūnanga when food was less plentiful.

For Arowhenua, their survival largely depended on hunting and gathering kai¹ such as tuna (eels), aruhe (fernroot), kiore (native Polynesian rat), paraki (smelt) and a variety of birds, which were found in large numbers along the Canterbury Coastline, the expansive wetlands and the braided rivers fed by snow melt within the Southern Alps or freshwater springs on the Plains. Waterways such as Wakanui Creek provided those travelling between Arowhenua Pā near Temuka and Kaiapoi Pā north of Christchurch with fresh drinking water, a food source and a sheltered place to rest.

Recommendation

Having reviewed the planning and technical reports prepared for Coniston Park Private Plan Change, Arowhenua and AECL do not oppose the proposed rezoning and residential development of the site.

If Ashburton District Council are in a position to approve the Plan Change and subdivision development, Arowhenua ask that given the cultural significance of Wakanui Creek and the disturbed nature of the surrounding environment, that the recommendations put forward by Aquatic Ecology are imposed.

It is important to Arowhenua that fish passage within the creek is retained and a dense indigenous riparian zone along both banks of Wakanui Creek is established (rather than sewing the area in grass) to enhance mahika kai. The planting recommended will serve to enhance ecological pathways along the waterway, and between aquatic life-stages and winged-adult life-stages of insects and birds which utilise bank vegetation. Arowhenua and AECL also further recommend that indigenous trees and shrubs are planted within/around reserve areas to attract indigenous insects and birds to the area.

Please contact our Principal Planner Kylie Hall on 0276223460 or via email at kyliehall@aecltd.co.nz if you have any further questions.

Ngā mihi,



Ally Crane

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¹ The Ngai Tahu Report 1991. WAI 27 – Waitangi Tribunal Report 1991 sourced on 14/06/2024 from: https://forms.justice.govt.nz/search/Documents/WT/wt_DOC_160762113/Ngai%20Tahu%20Report%201991%20V3W.pdf.