

Submission: Porirua Draft Growth Strategy.

From: Friends of Taupo Swamp and Catchment Incorporated. (FOTSC)

February 2019

Friends of the Taupo Swamp and Catchment Incorporated is a community led group which formed in 2018, largely out of concern for the protection and enhancement of the Taupo Swamp and Catchment and its ecological values. The aim is to work alongside key national and local bodies, other key community groups and landowners and engage with the local community in order to protect, monitor, restore, and advocate for the future of this functioning and vibrant ecological system.

Principle 2: A Harbour Centred City

Background to this FOTSC submission:

Porirua is already below national bottom lines for harbour water quality in a number of places. We note that the Draft Growth Strategy affirms that the harbour (and its catchment) is our Taonga, thus we are keenly following the proposed greenfield developments in the city's northern growth area, as defined by the areas of Grays Farm, the Plimmerton Farm, and the Mt Welcome farm. All these areas form part of the catchment for the nationally recognised and ecologically significant Taupo Swamp and its various waterways. Whatever comes down the Taupo Stream flows onto Plimmerton beach and into the harbour.

Our concerns are as follows:

Whilst development of open farm land in Porirua City has been and will be an inevitable part of the city's growth, our group urges that any consents given for future developers take into account the **area's unique landforms**, and provide for the **protection of the biodiversity and ecological values** in those areas. At the heart of any future change to landscapes must be that of **water quality**.

While the Draft Growth Strategy broadly acknowledges such issues, and talks about 'water-sensitive urban design approaches', we are keen to see explicit detail in all greenfield planning and consenting. Any consented earthworks must only take place with an improved consideration of water management and quality than is currently the case in Porirua.

We have concerns in regard to:

- Wastewater management
- Stormwater management
- Stream water quality – in particular possible sediment and/or contaminants arising from earthworks, particularly if they are the cut and fill type already consented and occurring in the City
- The protection and maintenance of indigenous vegetation in the catchment
- Any loss of stream habitat in the catchment due to inappropriate piping or bridging

Mt Welcome farm development. In addition we wish it noted that:

- We have concerns about the placement of some proposed housing developments as shown in the current concept plan for that area. One example: the proximity of affordable (cheaper?) housing to the QEII covenanted area.
- Any consents in environmentally unique and ecologically sensitive areas (such as the covenanted bush & surrounds in the Mt Welcome block), be considered conditional on there being a ban on cat ownership in that development.

We urge that:

- At the very least water quality in the Taupo Swamp catchment and out into the harbour is NO WORSE than currently, during and after any development of the areas identified in paragraph one above. (*National Policy Statement on Freshwater Management*).
- Water sensitive design approaches being insisted on at all levels of consent, and strict enforcement of all consents at all stages in light of this
- Developers be required to fund base line measurements for current water quality before any development commences
- Future Project Plans from developers show explicit plans for water quality controls

And finally:

- We understand that in order not to worsen water quality in the harbours, Porirua can only do greenfield development if it offsets at least the additional loading from greenfield with improvements (ie reduced loading) coming from existing developed areas (which means well done density housing, intelligent intensification, and possible retrofitting of some water related services).

Judy McKoy

Bill McAulay

On behalf of Friends of Taupo Swamp and Catchment Inc.