

Local Area Plan for Te Henga (Bethells Beach) and the Waitākere River Valley

LAP News Issue 4, December 2014

From ideas to action

Thank you to everyone who attended the topic workshops, the open day and the Te Henga quarry site visit held in August and September. The topic workshops explored issues related to the LAP's five themes and identified actions. Input from the topic workshops was used to develop the draft discussion document which was circulated last month. The discussion document will become the LAP action plan.

We received 44 pieces of written feedback on the draft discussion document. In addition, we received comments from 25 people at the workshop held on 20 November at Waitākere Primary School.

A revised version of the discussion document is available. It explains the changes made to the previous draft. For a copy, email Raj Maharjan at raj.maharjan@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz or phone 021 897 216. Come talk to Auckland Council staff at the Bethells Community Day on 25 January 2015. Please give feedback on the discussion document by 16 February 2015.



Discussions at a recent workshop.

Thank you for your feedback

Between June and November of this year, you provided input at three large workshops, seven topic workshops and written feedback on the draft discussion document. A big thank you to everyone who took the time to give their feedback.

Have your photo featured in the LAP document

You are invited to take part in a photo competition. Winning photos will be published in the LAP document. Along with scenic views, we need photos on the following topics that illustrate the LAP themes:

- European and Maori history and cultural heritage
- parks, recreational features and visitors
- people, community and local businesses
- local roads and walkways
- ecology and ecosystems of the Waitākere River Valley, wetland, lakes, dunes, and coast.

You may enter up to two photos in the children category (up to 14 years) or young people and adult category (14 years and above). Please make sure your photos are a high resolution that is suitable for publication.

All competition entries will be exhibited at the Bethells Community Day on Sunday, 25 January 2015. Here you can vote for your favourite photo. The best photo will feature on the cover with other photos presented throughout the LAP document. All winning photos will receive a prize.

Contact Raj Maharjan at 021 897 216 if you want more information about the photo competition.

Email digital photos by **15 January 2015** to Raj Maharjan at raj.maharjan@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

LAP and feedback timeline

Here are key dates and more opportunities to give feedback through the LAP process.

When	What	How can you get involved
December 2014 and January to February 2015	Photo competition	Enter the photo competition and vote for your favourite photo at Bethells Community Day on Sunday, 25 January 2015.
	Discussion document	Give feedback on the revised discussion document by 16 February 2015. Talk to Auckland Council staff at the Bethells Community Day on Sunday, 25 January 2015.
April 2015	Public notification of draft LAP	Submit on the notified draft LAP during the four week submission period.
May 2015	Hearing on draft LAP (if required)	At the hearing, speak in support of your submission.
June 2015	LAP adopted by the local board	Attend the LAP launch event. This is likely to be after June 2015.

A sanctuary for endangered and rare native species

An aim of the ecology and ecosystems theme in the draft LAP discussion document is “*the biodiversity of the area is enhanced [...] provide a sanctuary for endangered and rare native wild life*”. The community and Auckland Council have been working to achieve this for years. Two initiatives are contributing towards this aim.



Photo: Gerard Kelly.

Are there bats roosting on your property?

Long-tailed bats have been recorded at different places in the Waitākere River Valley, Stoney Creek, Matuku Reserve, Lake Wainamu and Lake Kawaupaku.

The long-tailed bat is about the size of a thumb, with a wing-span the size of a hand. They weigh 8-14 grams and have big ears, which can hone in on tiny insects. They live in big old trees where they all cuddle together in a hibernation state called torpor, just coming out at dusk to eat mosquitos, moths and midges. Loss of habitat is one of their biggest threats, along with introduced predators like ship rats and feral cats.

Auckland Council's Biodiversity Advisor Ben Paris "Bat Man" is



Long-tailed bat, wings outstretched (Photo: J. L. Kendrick, Department of Conservation).

creating a bat map to identify where long-tailed bats are roosting with the help of residents, schools and community groups. This is to help people learn more about bats and to protect the bats' habitat.

You can borrow a community bat detector and go out at dusk on a still warm summer night. Bat detectors are sponsored by the local board. The detector converts the bats' echolocation sounds into something you can hear. Great places to look for bats include stream sides and bush edges with large old trees. To borrow a detector, contact the Weed Free Trust on info@weedfree.org.nz or 09 8264276.

Pateke release in early 2015

The pateke, one of the rarest duck species in the world, is planned to be released in the Te Henga wetland in early 2015. This has been made possible by an extensive predator control project – Habitat Te Henga.

Many local volunteers and land owners participate in Habitat Te Henga, which connects Ark in the Park, the coast and Bethells and O'Neills beaches.

Controlling predators such as stoats, weasels and rats will allow pateke to establish in the Te Henga wetland. Predator control will also benefit other rare species such as bitterns, spotless crakes and fernbirds.

Keeping pets indoors or restrained at night will be an important way for local residents to help pateke establish in the Te Henga wetland. The Pateke is active at night and sleeps during the day. If pets are allowed to hunt freely, they can become significant



killers of pateke. Other pateke releases at the Tutukaka Coast and the Coromandel have seen them well established with a helping hand from local communities.

For more information, see forestandbird.org.nz/habitattehenga



Photo: Jo Sim, Department of Conservation.

Find out more:

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