

Coromandel Heritage Region - Summary of Stakeholder Engagement Meetings

TO	Economic Development Committee
FROM	Peter Wishart - Strategic Relations Manager
DATE	30 May 2016
SUBJECT	Coromandel Heritage Region - Summary of Stakeholder Engagement Meetings

1 Purpose of Report

To present for the Committee's information a summary of the consultative meetings held during the period 19 to 27 May 2016 with Community and sector leaders in regard to the Coromandel Heritage Region proposal.

2 Background

The District Mayor, His Worship Glenn Leach, together with Mr Brent Page, Chair of the Council's Economic Development Committee, held a series of seven meetings with community leaders and key stakeholder representatives numbering upwards of 120 attendees.

A presentation to the Hauraki Maori Trust Board was also given on the 20 May.

The purpose of the meetings was to engage with invitees to both present and receive feedback on the proposal to establish a Coromandel Heritage Region (CHR). A summary of the meetings is appended as **Attachment 1**.

3 Issue

The Economic Development Committee is investigating the concept of a Coromandel Heritage Region noting that the name is a working title only.

4 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Economic Development Committee:

1. Receives the report.

References-Tabled/Agenda Attachments

Attachment A *Coromandel Heritage Region - May 2016 Stakeholder Meetings Summary*

Coromandel Heritage Region Proposal

Summary of Consultative Meetings held with Stakeholders and Community Leaders: 19 - 27 May 2016

The District Mayor, His Worship Glenn Leach, together with Mr Brent Page, Chair of the Council's Economic Development Committee, held a series of seven meetings with community leaders and key stakeholder representatives numbering upwards of 120 attendees.

A presentation to the Hauraki Maori Trust Board was also given on the 20 May.

The purpose of the meetings was to engage with invitees to both present and receive feedback on the proposal to establish a Coromandel Heritage Region (CHR). **Schedule 1** includes details of the seven meetings and their invitees.

At each meeting the Mayor welcomed the invited guests, introduced the proposal with a high-level overview of the intent and vision of the CHR proposal noting in particular the emphasis on intertwining conservation with sustainable economic outcomes to be delivered through a voluntary collaborative mechanism involving all sectors engaged in the future well-being of the Peninsula.

In outline the Mayor noted the following:

- CHR is a working title only.
- The Miles Marketing Destinations report is a draft discussion document released solely for the purposes of encouraging discussion.
- There is no intention to introduce another level of bureaucracy.
- The aspect of the proposal to possibly seek an International Union of Conservation in Nature (IUCN) designation has been dropped.
- Focus currently at a high level with detail to be painted in as the proposal develops.
- Sustainability also means enhancing those values that exemplify the Coromandel.
- Motivation for the CHR is to take a proactive, rather than a reactive stance to the social, environmental and economic future of the Peninsula and all stakeholders are encouraged to adopt a similar approach.
- Any collaborative mechanism - whether it be termed an accord, collaboration or partnership - will be voluntary with a focus on enhancing future sustainability.
- Touched on the impending settlement of Hauraki Treaty of Waitangi claims and significant social and economic contribution that iwi will make.

The Mayor then introduced Mr Brent Page, Chairman of the Council's Economic Development Committee (EDC).

Mr Page presented his credentials to the meeting including his long association with the Peninsula.

In outline Mr Paged traversed the following matters:

- The undertaking of the series of current consultative meetings has a mandate from Council (albeit by a narrow margin). Nevertheless, applauds Council for having the courage to embark on a process of community and sector consultation around the future direction of the Peninsula.
- The genesis for the CHR have deep roots and lie in such antecedent projects as the 1991 Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) Taskforce's 20:20 report on the future direction of the Peninsula's tourism sector and the later Coromandel Peninsula Blueprint Project.
- All sectors face change around ensuring sustainable prosperity - how then to drive, encourage, foster future prosperity?
- Engaged with other NZ EDC initiatives. It became apparent that the Coromandel is a unique circumstance (being a Peninsula with significant landscape values, numerous small communities, surrounded by water and set within the development triangle represented by Auckland, Hamilton and Tauranga and the pressures that result).
- The Peninsula, despite its proximity to the three large urban centres, and by virtue of its locational separation and social and natural attributes, is something of a haven to residents and visitors alike with the country's highest proportion of absentee ratepayers.
- As an example of tourist pressures noted Auckland International Airport growth projections of 5 million visitors per annum in the near future. Tourism is an example but the CHR includes all sectors.
- How best then to leverage and enhance the Peninsula's natural and social capital to secure prosperous communities without killing the "goose that laid the golden egg"?

Mr Page then invited discussion from the floor which then ensued. The observations of the discussions are ordered by theme rather than chronology.

On the Vision:

In general this was wholeheartedly supported with consensus for a community led process with an inter-generational focus based on identified values (e.g. social and economic sustainability and enhancement, resilience, kaitiakitanga).

Comments included:

- Appropriateness of inclusion of sustainability to protect and enhance values.
- Iwi values need to be incorporated up-front with further discussion and engagement with iwi needed.
- Need to balance sustainability with prosperity and innovation: need to move beyond the status quo.
- Vision needs to be inclusive: locals as well as visitors: bring everyone along together.
- Develop guiding principles against which proposals can be tested.

On the meaning of "heritage":

A consensus emerged that heritage included both the natural world (ecology and geology) as well as social and cultural aspects that included both Māori and Pakeha histories. Several commentators noted that while heritage was important the focus should be very much on the future.

Comments included:

- Peninsula's industrial/engineering heritage is being promoted via Auckland Engineering Heritage Committee website.
- The Thames School of Mines, The Treasury and Thames Prospector's Stamper Battery are all noted as shining examples of local social and industrial heritage.
- Visitors often extol the character and quality of naturalness that is the Coromandel.
- Mr Page noted that the use of the word "heritage" in the project title was for discussion purposes only and an alternative might be, for example: Coromandel Special Economic Zone. Ultimately, it was for the process to determine the final nomenclature.

On Brand Coromandel:

Both the Mayor and Mr Page presented the Brand Coromandel concept for consideration alluding to other iconic regions such as [Provence](#) where locational and historical associations combined with high quality products, services and experiences earned both international recognition, brand cachet and a premium pricing advantage. Employment benefits flow from enjoying this status.

Other examples included adding value and points of difference to existing goods and services that do not place demands on further exploitation of the Peninsula's resource base, e.g organic dairy production, tourism based on natural and social heritage and history aimed at high net worth segment of the market with expansion into the shoulder season and all year round visitor arrivals - less is more approach.

This topic generated some discussion with comments that included:

- Branding creates expectations which must be underpinned by capacity to deliver which raises the concept of [resilience](#) - i.e. the ability to successfully adapt and respond to change.
- A brand is how others perceive us; a vision is how we perceive ourselves and our common future.

On Future Governance and Linkages with other Strategies:

Some attendees queried how the CHR would mesh with the existing planning and governance regime, in particular, the Resource Management Act with its hierarchy of documents (which all ultimately feed into Council's district plan); and the Local Government Act. The conveners readily admitted that this was an issue that required further thought and investigation but would of course need to be addressed particularly in terms of ultimately requiring a mandate from the Crown for any governance and management regime for the Peninsula that required change to current legislative regimes.

Also raised was the likely impact of the current Seachange Project which has yet to deliver a spatial plan to the Waikato and Auckland communities for the waters of the Hauraki Gulf. It was noted by several attendees that the plan would have consequent implications for the Gulf's catchments and current land-use practises. This was acknowledged and attention was drawn to

the non-statutory nature of the plan and how the Auckland and Waikato Regional councils might draw the plan's conclusions and recommendations into their respective RMA and LGA planning frameworks and instruments. This is expected to be apparent within the space of the next local government triennium.

Comments and observations included:

- The issue of future governance for the Coromandel and management of its key social and economic resources was critical for the CHR. Some commentators saw this as a challenge that could be accommodated so long as the Peninsula spoke with a single voice; others saw the challenge as being beyond the scope and capability of the project.
- Even if a unitary authority was established for the Peninsula it was noted that this would not obviate the need to comply with existing (and future) statutory requirements and regulations. Notwithstanding this, a unitary authority would represent local governance for and by the local community (within the context of a national legislative framework).

On Collaboration

A key element of the CHR is the development of a cross-sector, community endorsed collaboration instrument that would be voluntary in nature. While the use of the term accord was being advanced to elicit discussion any other suitable term could be used and would not be opposed, e.g. partnership or collaboration.

Comments included:

- Ideally would need both multi-sector and community support and be recognised by other Crown and local government agencies.
- Process would need to clarify how an accord would mesh with existing governance (LGA) and regulatory (RMA) regimes, especially the latter with its hierarchy of planning rules and regulations.
- Inter-connectedness between sectors needs to be recognised and accommodated.
- Common ground needed to determine benchmarks, i.e. are current states (e.g. water quality, harbour amenity) acceptable or is there an as yet to be determined and agreed to previous standard?

On future economy:

Arising from general support for the vision many attendees shared their thoughts on aspects of the future economic environment of the Peninsula.

Comments and observations included:

- Future should be about enhancing quality of life for residents as well as visitors and tourists.
- In response to a question that it was hoped that the future economy of the Peninsula would be based on more than just tourism and real estate, Mr Page indicated that a broad based sectorial approach would need to be followed. He noted, as an example,

that full time equivalent (FTEs) position in forestry & farming at 8.4 % of the Peninsula's total were declining while education and health at 18% were increasing.

- The Coromandel climate is conducive to year round activities such as tramping, walking and cycling. This is evidenced by the numbers of urbanites flowing to the Peninsula in increasing numbers in "off-season" times to participate in such activities. An implication of this is the necessity to have the necessary public and private, hard and soft infrastructure in place.
- Concept of forest park network: employment for youth - pest-control, silviculture leading to high value utilisation of timber, e.g. in furniture manufacture and arts and crafts.
- Utilisation of marginal (steep) forestry land for permanent cover high value timber extraction - silviculture, water and soil benefits, nature tourism - walks/tramping; employment and skill acquisition by young people.
- Provision to be made (via RMA planning instruments) for secondary rural and on-farm economic activities that accord with the CHR vision. This was seen as important especially to enable the long-term sustainability and resilience of rural communities.
- A collaborative strategy was seen as a tool that could encompass a vision and action plans for stakeholders to work towards without being a further level of binding bureaucracy.

Overall, as a result of this initial round of meetings with community and sector group influentials, there is strong demonstrable level of support for the CHR concept albeit with many questions remaining unanswered (and currently unanswerable) as to the detail. The conveners signalled their awareness of this and noted that the CHR process will necessarily need to address such concerns and develop substantive answers. They also noted that it was their expectation that the community would be instrumental in formulating the vision and governance framework and structure most appropriate to the future of the Coromandel.

It must be noted that two groups have signalled in writing that they do not see the efficacy of the project and that it is, in effect, unworkable.

The Mayor and Mr Page concluded the meetings with a warm thank you to the attendees for their participation and valuable input noting that the current consultative round was just a start. The next steps included reporting back to the EDC and the Council.

Schedule 1

	Meeting	Meeting Date	Attendance numbers (approximate)
1	Mercury Bay	19 May	7
2	Thames	23 May	8
3	Coromandel Property Owners Alliance	23 May	2
4	Coromandel	24 May	30
5	Whangamata	26 May	16
6	Environmental/heritage groups	27 May	30
7	Industry sector representatives	27 May	23

Coromandel Heritage Region Proposal - Stakeholder Invitees

Note: Not all invitees attended

Location	Meeting Details	Organisation
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Thames After 5 Business Network
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Thames Community Board
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Kopu Business Group
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Grahamstown Business Assn.
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Thames High School
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Ngāti Maru
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Ngāti Tamaterā
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 7.45am	Ngāti Pāoa
Thames, TCDC Office	23 May at 1pm	Coromandel Property Owners Alliance
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Coromandel Business Assn.
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Coromandel-Colville Community Board
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Te Kouma Resident & Ratepayers Assn.
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Coromandel Independent Living Trust
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Little Bay Resident & Ratepayers Assn.
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Port Charles Resident & Ratepayers Assn.
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Coromandel Area School
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Ngāti Pūkenga
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Te Patukirikiri
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Ngāti Whanaunga
Coromandel, TCDC Office	24 May at 2pm	Ngāti Porou ki Hauraki - Hauraki Maori Trust Board 25/5/16

Coromandel, TCDC Office 24 May at 2pm
Coromandel, TCDC Office 24 May at 2pm
Coromandel, TCDC Office 24 May at 2pm

Ngāti Huarere ki Whangapoua Trust
Upper Coromandel Landcare Association
Waikawau Bay Guardians Committee

Whangamata, TCDC
Office Whangamata, TCDC 26 May at 9am
Office Whangamata, TCDC 26 May at 9am
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Office Whangamata, TCDC 26 May at 9am

Enterprise Whangamata
Whangamata Community Board
Opoutere Ratepayers & Residents Assn.
Whangamata Ratepayers Assn.
Onemana Ratepayers Assn.
Whangamata Area School
Tairua/Pauanui Community Board
Tairua Residents & Ratepayers Assn.
Hikuaui Community Hall Committee
Pauanui Ratepayers Assn.
Ngāti Hako

Thames, TCDC Office 27 May at 11am
Thames, TCDC Office 27 May at 11am
Thames, TCDC Office 27 May at 11am
Thames, TCDC Office 27 May at 11am
Thames, TCDC Office 27 May at 11am
Thames, TCDC Office 27 May at 11am

Thames, TCDC Office 27 May at 11am

Cra-2 Rock Lobster President
Waikato Regional Council
Dairy NZ
Beef & Lamb NZ
Fonterra
Landcare Research
Tourism/Accommodation Sector
Alan Saunders

Mercury Bay, TCDC office 19 May at 1pm
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Mercury Bay Community Board
Matarangi Ratepayers Assn.
Kuaotunu Ratepayers Assn.
Mercury Bay Business Assn.
Wharekaho Residents & Ratepayers Assn.
Hahei Beach Ratepayers Assn.
Whangapoua Beach Ratepayers Assn.
Mercury Bay Area School
Opito Bay Ratepayers Assn.
Hot Water Beach Ratepayers Assn.
Mercury Bay South Ratepayers Assn.
Ngāti Hei
Matarangi Beach Paper
The Informer