

IN THE MATTER

of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER

of an application by **THAMES COROMANDEL DISTRICT COUNCIL** for a comprehensive resource consent for festivals and events at Williamson Park, Whangamata

**Statement of Evidence of RICHARD GEORGE GREEN on behalf of the
Friends of Williamson Park Society**

Dated 25 October 2018

Solicitor for the Society:

Ingrid Squire
Gifford Devine, Solicitors
PO Box 148, Hastings
Phone: (06) 873 0420
Fax: (06) 876 0043
Email: ingrid@gifforddevine.co.nz

Counsel for the Society:

Mr Martin Williams – Barrister
Shakespeare Chambers
PO Box 754, Napier 4140
Phone: 835 0665
Fax: 835 6269
Email: martin@shch.nz

SUMMARY

1. My Name is Richard George Green.
2. I oppose this application on three key grounds:
 - i) Restriction of Public Access to the land;
 - ii) Adverse Visual Impact to the surrounding area; and
 - iii) the nature of the intended large-scale Commercialization of a Highly Prominent Public Space with its attendant detrimental impact issues.

OBJECTIONS

3. My full name is Richard George Green and I reside in Takapuna, Auckland. I am an interested party on the basis that I regularly stay in Whangamata with long-time friends who permanently reside there. Regular trips are made in both summer and winter, and include attending events such as "Market Days", "Brits at the Beach" and the "Beach Hop" etc. At all times we enjoy the beach and the vibrancy of Whangamata as an attractive destination.
4. For this reason, I oppose the fencing off of the park for the purposes of holding an event at which attendance requires payment. Such restrictions to public access to the reserve are inconsistent with the Reserve Management Plan.
5. Boffa Miskell Limited's report for the Thames-Coromandel District Council prepared under section 42A of the Resource Management Act 1991 ("the report") notes that some closure of the park is permitted under the general policy of the Reserve Management plan, however no such policy providing for the closure of over half of the Park is set out specifically for the Williamson Reserve Management Plan.
6. The applicants consent application to permit this level of closure of the park and the restriction for the public to enjoy the amenities of the park and access to the beach far exceeds the intended policy of the Reserve Management Plan.
7. The temporary crude fencing erected to exclude the free access creates an offensive visual eyesore to an area that is otherwise an extremely pleasant vista. The erection of such an unsightly structure

is not an activity that maintains and enhances the amenity of the adjacent residential zone.

8. Two summers ago, a similar setup with ugly black polythene covered temporary fencing was erected to exclude general access to the Takapuna Beach Reserve for a commercial event. There were significant protests from local residents, and negative feedback from overseas guests who were staying with us at the time. It has not been repeated.
9. I totally oppose the proposed large-scale commercialization of Williamson Park. No events should be permitted where the use of the reserve is to generate revenue for a concert promoter and/or Council.
10. The park and its location within a residential housing area is totally unsuitable for any large-scale, enclosed commercial event with the attendant negative impacts: restriction of public access, unsightly temporary fencing, noise, excess traffic, rubbish and litter disposal and associated alcohol consumption and anti-social behaviour both before and after the event. Commercial events/concerts of this size should be restricted to outlying land or locations where negative factors do not have the same high-level impact to surrounding residents.
11. The report notes that there are general provisions in the Reserve Management Plan for the council to permit appropriate commercial activities in reserves, however there is no detailed commercial policy set out specifically for the Williamson Reserve Management Plan. Previous attempts to include this were clearly demonstrated to be against the wishes of the Williamson family and firmly rejected in 2001.
12. The use of the park for public events with unrestricted access create more social and economic benefits for Whangamata, than the number of commercial events and their anti-social impact proposed by the applicant.
13. Although the applicant contends that public assets will protected and, where necessary, repaired or replaced by the licensed concert promoters with no cost to ratepayers, temporary loss of use of amenities or access may not be prevented.

Richard George Green
25 October 2018