

Preservation of the Vista

This submission is quite simple, it is a submission to preserve one of Whitianga's major attractions. Its accessible and easily viewed vistas of Mercury Bay that are currently available to walkers, joggers, beach lovers, touring motorists, tourists and residents.

These vistas are under attack and our view is this attack should be fought.

Present Situation

The foreshore south of the Taputapuatea bridge is pristine in that members of the public, walking, jogging, driving, parking etc, have virtually unobstructed views of the jewel that is Mercury Bay. Residents on the inland side of Buffalo Beach Road also enjoy these views.

North of the Taputapuatea Bridge the situation is not as good. Private residences form a wall between the (walking, jogging, driving) public and the Mercury Bay. This situation is regrettable but is not really possible to reverse at this stage.

In the middle ground sits the Taputapuatea Spit, a piece of land that in its natural state was beach tussock grass. This piece of land is being taken over by wild sown weeds such as Pohutakawa, Privet, Wattle, Blackberry and many others.

What We Seek To Prevent

On a recent trip to Queensland we took some photos to show what we wish to prevent in Whitianga. These photos were taken on the Gold Coast, a location that is focussed on the beach, surf and sun. This is what a visit to the beach and a walk was like.



A very similar situation to Whitianga with a road alongside the beach supposedly giving access.

A bit of park and a footpath for those of us who like to promenade.

But due to the hedge we had to trust the signs which said we were at the seaside.



A view of the promenade.

The hedge between the beach and the walkers/joggers mean there was no viewing of the beach or ocean.



A view down the promenade showing the effect of the hedge, and the absence of people.

Not many people go to the seaside to have a walk alongside a hedge.



But the view is always there for those who are patient and can find a gap.

It would be easy to suggest that people can always walk on the beach if they want a view. But that does not consider the elderly or infirm, joggers, drivers, tourist vehicles etc, nor does it consider residents who are not on the fourth level or higher.

What We Recommend

We understand there is interest in developing the Taputapuatea Spit and our understanding is it has been agreed that no further Pohutakawa were to be planted and the area was to be planted as a tussock park / walkway.

If our understanding is correct we do not really have too much problem with this plan. What we would like to see is that it is enforced by removing wild sown Pohutakawa along with Wattle, Privet etc as the rapid proliferation of these weeds is forming a hedge between the road and the Bay. It is best this work is done as soon as possible while these plants are smaller as the job gets more difficult once the hedge is established.