

4. DEPUTATIONS BY APPOINTMENT

4.1 SAND DUNES ACTION GROUP

Dave East, representing the Sand Dunes Action group, was in attendance to request Board support for a review that would enable greater flexibility in the management of New Brighton sand dunes. Mr East advised that the Sand Dune Action Group had identified five areas of main concern. Those areas were:

1. The blanket nature of the resource consent making it non-maintainable.
2. The Regional Council commissioned reports on the sand dunes that created many questions and appeared to be misleading.
3. Aesthetics over whether the sand dunes fitted in with the Garden City image.
4. Scare tactics regarding the potential damage of tsunamis.
5. The use of sand trap fences that promulgate the sand dunes.

Mr East concluded that it was important that some acknowledgement of local opinion was considered and that the sand dunes were lowered to a maximum of 5 metres. Due to other pressing matters Mr East agreed to delay a decision on the Board's support for the Sand Dune Action Group until its next meeting.

4.2 NEW BRIGHTON MALL - NEW BRIGHTON DISTRICT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Roger Hunt and Michael Tisdall, representing the New Brighton District Business Association, were in attendance to support the opening of New Brighton Mall to traffic. Mr Hunt advised that retailers in the Mall had repeatedly approached the Council since 1991 to take action, and in that time the commercial area had faced declining shopping numbers and the closing of many national retail chains. Mr Hunt believed that the shopping centre was the Council's responsibility and its future should be decided now. Mr Hunt also noted that developers were currently openly talking of New Brighton Mall as becoming the backyard of retail in New Brighton and that they were intending to completely isolate the Mall by erecting concrete block walls facing into it. Mr Hunt felt that the Council had the opportunity to affect these decisions now. Mr Hunt also believed that developers, landlords and retailers were prepared to enter into a pact with the Council to establish common trading hours, to upgrade their premises, to increase the range of both goods and services and to bring new and vibrant retailers into the Mall. What the businesses were now in great need of was leadership, decision and direction.

4.3 NEW BRIGHTON MALL - NEW BRIGHTON RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Brian Hill and Karen Kendrick, representing the New Brighton Residents' Association, were in attendance to speak on behalf of residents in the New Brighton area. Mr Hill noted that people in the area were strongly against a road going through the Mall, and it was his opinion that up to 90% opposed the road. He also believed that people in North Beach, Aranui and South New Brighton also opposed the road. Mr Hill advised that the Residents' Association did want to see the Mall upgraded and revitalised. However it could not see a road as providing any benefit to retailers. He believed that it was the local residents of New Brighton who used the Mall and he could not understand why a road was being forced on them. Mr Hill also advised of conflicting information that was given by the Business Association, which included the accuracy of the Onehunga example where it seemed the success of their revitalisation was a Dressmart shop. Mr Hill also noted reports that Farmers was about to leave the Mall were incorrect as he had spoken to the Manager who informed him that it would only leave the Mall if the rent was increased.

Mr Hill believed that the most important design aspect that should be incorporated into a new Mall was protection from the weather and wind. The residents of New Brighton had been saying this throughout the consultation process and Mr Hill felt that they had been ignored. A petition had also been undertaken which currently had around 3,000 signatures, it had not been presented due to the strong interest in it. Finally, Mr Hill noted that 60 businesses in the Mall had been surveyed by the Residents' Association, 20 wanted the road, 21 did not want the road, 13 were undecided and 6 provided no comment. Mr Hill emphasised that all of the business people asked in the survey were either the manager or the owner of the shop.

4.4 NEW BRIGHTON MALL - MAINSTREET NEW BRIGHTON

Malcolm Jones and Mark Munroe, representing the Mainstreet Project of New Brighton, were in attendance to give their support to the installation of a road through New Brighton Mall. Mr Jones advised that Mainstreet had a wide community interest and that a road had been a high priority in the Vision 2005 report. A road would leave one-third of the Mall as passive recreation area and would not adversely affect pedestrian use of the Mall. Mr Jones did have two concerns as to the outcomes of the report. The first concern was leadership in that the Council had procrastinated since 1991 and retailers were suffering because of this, the time to act was now. The second point was that it would be important to move the road into stage one of the project and get traffic into the Mall as soon as possible. This could be done by utilising the existing surface, which Mr Jones believed would be durable enough to allow traffic to move through the Mall.

Mark Munroe expressed his view that the Council owned the road and that if it spent the money to upgrade the Mall with traffic access then property owners would redevelop their interests. Mr Munroe believed that the cost of \$2.2 million was not overly excessive as he had spend over half of that amount to refurbish one of his properties recently. Mr Munroe advised that he had over \$5 million invested in the Mall and believed that if he did not get an adequate return on his investment he would go somewhere else. Mr Munroe believed that the plan had to meet the needs of the property owners, and that if it did not tenants would not open on to the Mall and instead open on to Beresford Street or Hawke Street. Mr Munroe emphasised that the lead time in establishing tenants was long and there was a need to get council commitment to revitalising the Mall now.

4.5 NEW BRIGHTON MALL - PETER DAY

Peter Day was in attendance to express his views on the proposal to revitalise New Brighton Mall. Mr Day advised that four to five years ago the Council commissioned the Vision 2005 document where a number of professionals decided on how best to analyse the New Brighton situation. Mr Day felt that this meeting would be definitive and give the answers to what New Brighton needed, however not much had happened since then. Mr Day criticised the findings of the Vision 2005 document which called New Brighton a depressed area with high unemployment. Mr Day believed that it was important to create an image that the people of New Brighton wanted projected to the city, this included three issues. First, how do we attract people from Christchurch to New Brighton, second, how do we encourage people away from other large malls, and third, New Brighton must promote a uniqueness to its image. Mr Day believed that in the follow-up to the Vision 2005 meetings there had been no answer to these questions given. Mr Day believed that a questionnaire in The Press or Christchurch Star asking the people of Christchurch what would attract them to New Brighton, more than once or twice a year, would be an appropriate first step in finding out what to do with the Mall.

4.6 NEW BRIGHTON MALL - THE MAYOR

The Mayor, Garry Moore, was in attendance to express his views on the New Brighton Mall situation. The Mayor stated that it seemed clear that everybody wanted New Brighton Mall to succeed. The Pier had attracted people to New Brighton and the Pier terminus building had been designed to attract even more people. The Mayor believed that the problem facing the Mall was that it was competing against The Palms and Eastgate, which had the advantage of common ownership. The Mayor felt that it was important that New Brighton provided a shopping centre for locals that complemented The Palms and Eastgate rather than competed against them. Therefore he believed that New Brighton needed something unique to promote it.

The Mayor believed that the Council did not run a Mall very well and that in this situation, and others, the Council found itself caught in the middle. He noted further that there was no money in the Council budget to revitalise the Mall to the extent of \$2.2 million and that it was important that people realised this. The Mayor felt that the issues had to be worked on by the Council, the Board, residents and retailers together to find common solutions. He proposed that prior to progressing the recommendations of the Mall report, the Community Board liaise with the Council's Projects and Property Committee to test the extent of interest in and the implications of a possible sale of the Mall.