

Summary submission form

Instructions

You may send us your submission...

Please read before completing your submission

It will help us process your submission if you clearly state the issue you want the Council to consider, what specific action you think the Council should take, and why that should be done.

If you wish, you can present your submission at a hearing. (If that is the case, please tick the box). The hearings will be held between Thursday 25 May and Wednesday 7 June 2006. Generally, 10 minutes are allocated for hearing each submission, including time for questions.

It will help us if your submission also refers to the page of either the full version or the summary version.

Please note: we are legally required to make all written or electronic submissions available to Councillors and to the public. This includes the name and address of the submitter. All submissions will be published on the Council's website from 10 May 2006.

No anonymous submissions will be accepted.

By mail

Please mail your submission (no stamp is required) to:

Freeport 178
Our Community Plan
Christchurch City Council
PO Box 237
Christchurch 8003

By email

Please email your submission to:
ccc-plan@ccc.govt.nz
Please make sure that your full name and address is included with your submission.

On the internet

You may enter your submission using the form provided on the Council's web site at:
<http://www.ccc.govt.nz>
Please follow all the instructions on the web site.

Please remember to indicate if you wish to present your submission in person at one of the hearings.

Please ensure your submission arrives no later than Friday 5 May 2006.

Your submission

You may use this form for your submission on the draft Our Community Plan if you wish. Whether you use this form or not, please include your name, address and contact telephone number with your submission.

Tick one I do NOT wish to present my submission at the hearing, and ask that this written submission be considered OR I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Thursday 25 May and Wednesday 7 June 2006

Are you completing this submission: For yourself On behalf of a group or organisation

If you are representing a group or organisation, how many people do you represent? 260

My submission refers to: Full version Page No. Summary version Page No.

Do you also want to respond to: Development Contributions Aquatic Facilities Other

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Signature [Signature] Date 4/5/06

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Working to enhance, preserve and protect the natural environment, beauty and open character of the Port Hills of Banks Peninsula for people to enjoy.

3 May 2006

Our Community Plan,
Christchurch City Council,
PO Box 237,
Christchurch.

Dear Sir/Madam,

Many thanks for the opportunity to comment on the Council's Community Plan. The Society's comments are set out below. A submission form is attached with contact details etc.

As you are aware, the Society was formed in 1948, and since then has worked continuously to ensure preservation and enhancement of the Port Hills through both advocacy and practical work on parks and reserves.

As indicated in our original submission in April 2004, the Society's primary focus is the Port Hills. We do, however, have an interest in the harbour basin and Banks Peninsula as a whole. At the time, we felt that the lack of specific references to the Port Hills did not do justice to the significance of this asset to the city. We appreciate that the Plan has a 'high level' of reporting, and were pleased to have confirmation that the Council does appreciate the importance of our local hills, but we are still of the view that it is appropriate to make specific reference to the Port Hills.

General comments:

1. We still have some concerns about the apparent level of priority given to the Port Hills. There seems to be a general thrust in the Plan to improving the 'garden city' image of Christchurch. This is laudable, and clearly the Society does not wish to oppose this. However, we would not want this to be at the expense of protecting and enhancing the reserves and open spaces on the Port Hills. The protection and management of areas such as this will become increasingly critical to the long-term sustainability of the city. The Society, in line with our original submission, seeks additional references in both the Community Outcomes and Council Goals and Objectives sections of the recognition of the Port Hills as an icon landscape and of the need for preservation and the extension of recreational activities.



We believe that the Plan as drafted does not reflect the Community's concerns and interests with regard to the Port Hills, and places insufficient emphasis on their iconic nature, the distinctive features that exist, the importance to the city of their ecological, landscape and recreational values, and the significance for tourism, particularly as a gateway to Banks Peninsula. As we have argued many times in the past, it is the Port Hills that give Christchurch its unique character. We further believe that this could be addressed in the Plan in a relatively simple way, and one that would ensure that appropriate emphasis is given to the Port Hills, for example:

- On page 38, at the first bullet point, reference could be made to the parks, reserves, regenerating forest and open spaces of the Port Hills.
 - On page 50, under 8, we feel that the final bullet point, (or an additional one) could draw attention to the opportunities for the more 'wilderness style' activities offered by the Port Hills and open spaces of Banks Peninsula.
 - On page 52, under 6, we would like a further bullet point adding which refers to "Ensuring sustainable management of the open spaces surrounding the city adjoining the Waimakiri River, the coastal fringe of Pegasus Bay and the Port Hills.
2. We note that the amalgamation of Banks Peninsula District Council provides for services on the peninsula to be ring fenced for five years. The Society has great admiration for the work that has been carried out on the Port Hills on recent years, the acquisition by the Council of significant areas of land, and for the work of the Port Hills Rangers. Our concern here is that there may be missed opportunities for council staff to work with landowners, agencies and voluntary groups in the same way on Banks Peninsula. It is no secret that the services in the general area of parks, reserves and recreation have not matched the level of service enjoyed by Christchurch residents. The Banks Peninsula District Plan will not be finalised for some time, and in the meantime, pressure for development will continue to increase.

Specific Comments:

1. Parks, Open spaces and Waterways:

We **support** the proposal to increase the area of regional parks. However, we have some concerns that the total increase in area of 560ha is too modest, given that much of the land adjoining regional parks is relatively low in value compared to urban areas. A small number of strategic purchases (see below) could easily and quickly add up to 560ha. We would therefore ask the Council to ensure that the proposed increase in area is not 'set in concrete' and that within the budget allocation, a greater area can be acquired if the opportunities arise.

The Society believes that a major activity has been excluded from this section, and that is on plant and animal pest control, which is of particular relevance to the Port Hills reserves. This could perhaps be included on page 124 under 'Negative effects/Mitigation options. (See our comments below, on the Biodiversity Strategy).



2. Strategic Purchases:

We support the inclusion of “strategic land purchases” in the discretionary projects. We are, however, a little confused by the same reference in the list of projects excluded from the Plan. Our assumption is that the latter refers primarily to purchases of land with high conservation values. We are concerned that this has been excluded. The figure of \$10m over 10 years seems to be a relatively modest amount, but one that could achieve the public ownership of a significant amount of land with high conservation values. This is particularly relevant to Banks Peninsula (see 2, above, in our general comments). We believe that the public is supportive of efforts by agencies and groups to secure conservation values, and that this is a significant factor in attracting visitors to Banks Peninsula. We therefore urge the Council to consider including this element of strategic land purchases in the Plan.

In addition, we are aware of the efforts in the recent past of the Port Hills Park Trust Board to secure the acquisition of land in upper Cashmere for the proposed Port Hills Forest Park. In terms of recreation and conservation, if this proceeds, it will arguably be the most significant acquisition of land for public use in recent years. We understand that the acquisition is intended to be funded by a mix of public and private monies, and that the hope is that the Council will make a contribution. At the very least, given the significance of the proposal, we believe that the Plan should explicitly make reference to support for the project.

3. Biodiversity Strategy:

The Society was very supportive of the Council’s Biodiversity Strategy, and we are disappointed that this has been left out of the Plan. We believe that the strategy is fundamental in many aspects of development in the city, and would be an exceptionally powerful marketing tool. With the future growth of the city, the natural environment and open spaces will assume increased importance, and be a critical factor in the wellbeing of residents. Further, it would provide a valuable opportunity for the Council to enter into partnerships with voluntary groups to further local biodiversity initiatives. However, we note that around 75% of the cost is already provided for in other budgets. The Society believes that the “ecological restoration of significant sites” is very important for the city. We would urge the Council to reconsider the inclusion of the Strategy, or at the very least to frame this in a way that makes explicit the funding in other budgets that contribute to it.

4. Walkways Development:

As indicated in the Plan, walking is the most popular recreational activity, and as such, we believe that the Council should support and foster this. We are therefore disappointed that the modest amount of \$2.1m has been excluded from the Plan. A secondary concern is that this may preclude development of any land acquired under the strategic purchase head. We would ask the Council to reconsider this item.



5. Community Support:

The Society **supports** the proposals in the Plan for Community Support. A robust and active voluntary sector is very important in the life of the city. We, in common with many other local voluntary organisations, rely in part, on the Council for our financial viability and on the support and encouragement we receive from Council staff, in our case, the Port Hills Rangers. We are pleased that the amount of Community Grant and Community Support shows a projected increase over the life of the Plan.

6. Awaroa/Godley Head:

The Society notes that the development of the Coastal Park has been excluded from the Plan. Whilst we supported the principle of this, we recognise that in the current climate it would be difficult to justify expenditure of \$15m. We still believe, however, that Awaroa/Godley Head is an important asset, and one that justifies integrated management, and would urge the Council to explore what can be achieved by partnerships with the private sector and by harnessing the energies of voluntary groups. The Little River Railtrail is a good current example of what can be achieved with public/local body/private partnerships.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "J. Goodrich", written over a light blue horizontal line.

John Goodrich
(Executive Secretary)