



## Hahei Stakeholders Group

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24 August 2015

Coromandel Great Walks Governance Directors  
Thames Coromandel District Council  
515 Mackay Street,  
Thames

Subject: Proposed Cathedral Coast Walkway  
Coromandel Great Walks Governance Board Meeting  
Hahei Stakeholders Position

Dear Sir/Madam

Thank you for inviting us to attend a meeting of the Coromandel Great Walks Governance Board on August 27, 2015. Since this is our first meeting, we felt would be useful to set out our position on a number of matters relating to the proposed Cathedral Coast Walk (the "Walk") so that the Board could address our issues properly at the meeting.

### 1. Background

For some time, tourist walks in the Coromandel has been promoted by the Mayor and others. Conceptually, the people of Hahei support the concept of world class walks and so we were all interested to hear exactly what was proposed for Hahei when Garry Towler and his colleagues gave a presentation to the people of Hahei on 29 November 2014. However when people at the meeting understood what was proposed, most were opposed as they felt that that scarce Council money should first be spent improving parking and other infrastructure in Hahei before new attractions were built in our area..

Following the meeting, the Hahei Stakeholders Group was formed. The first action of the Group was to seek the views of the more than 700 Hahei residents and ratepayers as was we felt that for the Stakeholders Group to have any credibility, we should truly understand the views of our people. So in January 2015, we conducted a survey and found that most did not want a new walk built until local parking and other congestion related matters were dealt with. Attached is a copy of the results of the survey.

In spite of the views of the people of Hahei, TCDC proceeded with a Lotteries Commission funding application. Reluctantly, we provided a letter offering conditional support– see attached copy.

Following the publication of various upbeat press releases by TCDC, confidently stating the Walk was proceeding quickly, we issued a position paper setting out our concerns about the proposed Walk as these appeared to have been ignored by TCDC. See attached copy.

Apart from a commitment to prepare a traffic study, to date we have had no responses to any of our concerns. On the contrary, TCDC has proceeded to develop the proposed Walk

and seek additional funding, in spite of the fact that the local community is opposed to the proposed Walk. This has been very disappointing.

We would like to quote from the introduction to TCDC 2012 – 2022 Ten Year Plan

*“A priority of this Council is to ensure greater engagement of local communities in decision making. In April 2012 we adopted a Community Empowerment framework and over the course of the next year we will be making some changes to align the organisation better to that framework. The strategy brings decision-making on local services, facilities and assets closer to local communities, and empowers growth strategies to be developed and quickly implemented in our Peninsula's growth hubs”*

We strongly support this strategy, but in the case of the proposed Cathedral Coast Walk, you have wilfully ignored your own policies.

If the proposed Walk is to succeed, you must adopt a completely different approach and engage with the local community honestly and sincerely.

Specifically, we would like the following

- **Public Community Meeting** – Once there is more definition of the proposed Walk, we would like all Governance Board Directors to come to a public community meeting in Hahei where each Director explain, as a minimum
  - Their position on Walk,
  - Benefits to the people of Hahei,
  - Mitigation strategies to deal with any local concerns, and
  - How they plan to manage the Walk in the long term.

We suggest the meeting take place at Labour Weekend, when more non-permanent residents are more likely to attend

- **Realistic Accurate Publicity** – Ever since the Walk was conceived, there has been a constant stream of unrealistic, inaccurate publicity issued by TCDC, generally ignoring or worse, contradicting the wishes of the local Hahei Community A good example is the recent article in Wilderness Magazine in which Garry Towler claims that visitors to Cathedral Cove do not have a quality experience and promotes the construction of the Blowhole walk with the building the castle of Cair Paravel at the Blowhole. See attached copy. Since Garry Towler is an officer of TCDC, we assume it is TCDC's views he is promoting, again ignoring the wishes of the Hahei Community.

In future, we would like any statement concerning the Walk to be approved by all organisations i.e. TCDC, DoC and Ngati Hei. Our community will then know that what they are reading in the press is accurate and is supported by all participants in the Walk.

We hope the Governance Directors will follow your own guidelines, listen to the Hahei Community, and implement our very reasonable wishes.

## **2. Issues to be addressed at Meeting August 27 2015.**

At the meeting on August 27, 2015, we would like following matters addressed.

### **2.1. No Walk Construction before Hahei Community Plan is updated and Hahei Infrastructure built**

Please confirm that you will not undertake any significant construction work on the Walk until Hahei residents have completed the updating of the Hahei Community plan and TCDC has

built new parking and other traffic management facilities specified in the Community plan or other relevant documents, such as the recently commissioned traffic study. This requirement as stated a condition of our support of the Walk in our letter that you sent to the Lotteries Commission. Should you fail to comply with this condition, we shall inform the Lotteries Commission of your non-compliance.

## **2.2. Walk Route**

We have clearly stated our position on the Walk route – the only acceptable route is one around the coast from Cathedral Cove to Purangi. Yet minutes of your last meeting suggest you are considering implementing a number of routes which we have specifically rejected i.e. a walk to the Blowhole and a footpath alongside Lees Road. Please explain why you have chosen to ignore the Communities wishes.

## **2.3. Walking Routes, Parking and Transportation**

Please elaborate as to whether the Walk is a continuous walk or a number of walk options—by distance, average walk time, start and finish points. Also identify where the vehicles associated for each section will park. Are shuttle buses required for any of the walk options?

## **2.4. Destination Coromandel / Department of Conservation.**

A key focus of Destination Coromandel is to reduce peak visitor numbers and increase visitor numbers during the off peak (shoulder season.)

The Coromandel Great Walk is forecast to increase visitor numbers by 160,000pa within 3 years of operation (Miles Davis Report). Inevitably the increased numbers will follow the same seasonal trend.

What strategy is proposed by the Governance Body to ensure that the Coromandel Great Walk will comply with the Coromandel Tourism Objective of spreading tourist numbers more evenly throughout the year?

The Department Of Conservation indicate that visitor numbers to Cathedral Cove will increase by 14% pa. How will this be mitigated?

## **2.5. Traffic Management Plan**

We will not be in a position to comment on this at the meeting as we have not received a copy. Our understanding was that as a Key Stakeholder we would receive copies of the Report and then participate in a Workshop presentation to the Hahei Stakeholders Group. Once we receive a copy, it will be reviewed by a Hahei resident who is a traffic management expert and our views delivered to TCDC.

## **2.6. Programme**

There have been several press releases indicating the Walk was proceeding with various start and end dates. At your last meeting, there was a presentation with various stages described, but no definition of each stage. Please provide an implementation programme bar chart or network diagram showing the proposed implementation plan and identify all hold points/consultation period. Please provide this as MS Project document so review it efficiently.

## **2.7. Cost Control and Project Management**

Please provide a detailed construction cost budget and explain who is responsible for the cost control? How will the project construction be managed? What happens if there are cost overruns? Are any cost overruns shared amongst TCDC, DoC and IWI?

## **2.8. Overall Legal Structure**

Please explain legal ownership structure of the Walk. For instance, will DoC or TCDC own the Walk or will it be split?

### **2.9. Long Term Operations**

To date, there has been much discussion about Walk routes but, as we have seen in Hauraki Rail Trail, the long term operations and maintenance of the Walk must be carefully considered. As residents, we would like you to address the following

- Who will operate and maintain the Walk?
- If there is an accident or safety incident, who is responsible – the owner or the operator?
- If DoC is going to have a role in the long term operations, we would like to see a serious commitment and appropriate budget to turn the area into a truly beautiful attraction for visitors. For instance, noxious plants, both at Cathedral Cove and on the Walk should be removed and an aggressive native planting programme implemented. Ideally, we would like to see the Cathedral Cove area turned into a pest free zone or at least implement a program to eliminate possums, stoats and rats etc.
- How can we be sure the Walk will not create additional cost to TCDC ratepayers such as has occurred in the case in Hauraki Rail Trail?

### **2.10. Long Term Role of Stakeholders Group**

The Draft Stakeholders Terms of Reference states that the group will disband once the project is completed, estimated to December 2016. We strongly disagree with this and believe the Group should continue to oversee the operation of Walk indefinitely. For this reason, we would like to understand your long term plan for the Walk.

### **2.11. Health and Safety**

Please provide a copy of your Health and Safety Plan both for construction and operations. Hahei has a number of St John's volunteers and they would like to review the project risks to make sure they will be able take care of any accidents on the Walk.

## **3. Draft Terms of Reference for Stakeholder Group**

We reviewed this document and strongly recommend it is given to TCDC legal department for review as currently it is so vague and poorly written, that it is unworkable. As a minimum it should include a names of the Parties to the Agreement, provide some clear definition of the terms used, appropriate indemnification clauses, etc.

In the meantime, we would like to following concepts incorporated in the next draft.

### **3.1. Organisation Structure and reporting**

The Stakeholders group is a policy making group and should therefore report directly to the Governance Directors, not the Project Manager or the Project Executive who are operations staff.

### **3.2. Obligation to Acknowledge Advice from Stakeholders**

There should be a requirement for Stakeholders suggestions to be submitted in writing and for the Governance Board to acknowledge receipt, then either accept the suggestion or reject it. If the suggestion is rejected, a written explanation should be provided. We think this is very important as to do date, we have made numerous suggestions, many in writing, but most have been ignored.

### **3.3. Obligation to Represent Organisation Positions not Individuals Views**

Each delegate must undertake to ensure that any views they express have the support of the organisations they represent. If appropriate, they should be prepared to deliver the Governance Director meetings copies of minutes of meetings of their organisation, demonstrating support for the views they express at any meeting.

### **3.4. Conflict Resolution**

We totally reject that the concept that the Project Executive shall be empowered to resolve disputes. The current Project Executive clearly not an impartial party, as demonstrated by the recent Wilderness Magazine report and so we have no confidence in his ability to rule on any disputes. There should be an objective dispute resolution procedure where matters that cannot be resolved at the project level are referred to the ultimate Boards of each organisation i.e. TCDC Council, DoC CEO and IWI leadership.

We look forward to meeting with you on August 27.

Yours faithfully

John North  
Deputy Chairman of Hahei Ratepayers and  
Walkway Stakeholders Group



William J Stead  
Chairman of Hahei Ratepayers and Walkway  
Stakeholders Group

### **Attachments:**

Wilderness Magazine Great Walk Article

Hahei Stakeholders Letter of Support for Application to Lotteries Commission

Hahei Community Position Paper

Hahei Community Walk Survey

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## Big plans for new Coromandel tracks

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Friday, 7th August 2015

Written by Matthew Pike

Big changes are afoot in the Coromandel peninsula for walkers and trampers. Thames–Coromandel District Council plans to have completed 10 trails over the next decade, including a track linking the east and west coasts and one resurrecting an old trail across the spine of the peninsula.

The Coromandel Great Walks Project has just been given \$1m by the Lotteries Significant Project Fund to help fund track construction for the first phase – completing a link between Hot Water Beach and Whitianga on the east coast.



Project manager Garry Towler believes this track will be completed within the next 12 months and is much needed for such a stunning area. "We want to provide an international quality experience for visitors – at the moment we don't provide that quality experience," he said.

Towler would like the walk to include access to The Blowhole, and a site close by where the ruins of castle Cair Paravel were located in the Narnia movie – a set that could be rebuilt in the not-too-distant future.

To overcome the influx of visitors to the Hahei area, the council plans to build a new car park at the eastern end of town with access to the walk and the Ngati Hei pa site.

There are also plans to make the current Cathedral Cove car park a pick-up and drop-off only zone, with a new car park with walking track to Cathedral Cove planned off nearby Lees Road, keeping traffic out of the town.

Longer term, trampers can look forward to a host of trails being built over the peninsula. A track from Tairua to Pauanui, also on the east coast, is under construction. Plans are to link this with a track south to Whangamata which, in turn, will link to the Wentworth Valley and over the Maratoto range to Hikutaia and the Hauraki Rail Trail.

An east-to-west trail is also planned, linking Whitianga north to Coromandel town, and the council also hopes to resurrect the tramping trail over the spine of the peninsula from Kaimarama Road south to Tapu Coroglen Road, linking to Te Puru Track which heads towards the likes of Crosbies Hut, the Kauaeranga Valley and The Pinnacles.

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## **Hahei Walkway Stakeholders Group**

27 February 2015

Thames Coromandel District Council  
515 Mackay Street,  
Thames

Attention: Garry Towler

Subject: Proposed Cathedral Coast Walkway

Dear Garry,

As Chair of the above group I can confirm that following a public meeting in Hahei on the 29th November 2014 at which the Cathedral Coast Walks project was presented and discussed, a Stakeholders Group was formed on the 11th December.

The membership of this group (attached) represents a wide and encompassing range of interests, professions, residential and non-residential.

The Stakeholders Group has a mandate from the Hahei Community to discuss and address concerns raised at the Public Meeting in relation to the Great Walks and in particular the Cathedral Coast Walk (the "Walk").

Based on preliminary feedback from the community, the Stakeholders Group supports the concept of a the Walk but has great concerns over the ability of existing infrastructure to deal with the not only the existing visitor numbers but also forecast increase in visitors due to the Proposed Walkway. .

As minimum these concerns are

- Hahei is a quiet Coromandel village, not a tourist destination, and residents strongly feel this should be preserved.
- Before any work commences on the Proposed Walkway, the current problems relating to management of traffic and provision of suitable parking must be resolved
- The ability of Hahei/Lees Rd area to deal with additional visitor capacity,
- Additional pressure on Cathedral Cove, one of New Zealand's iconic tourist destinations.
- The original concept of the Proposed Walk was a coastal walk going from Whitianga to Hot Water Beach with Hahei and Cathedral Cove as stopovers. For various reasons, it seems that it is not possible to build the complete walk and it proposed that it will be built in stages. The Stakeholders group supports in principle the complete Walk and will require the Walk developer to implement a strategy to complete the entire Walk.

The Group has met with and will continue to meet with representatives from Thames Coromandel District Council (TCDC), Department of Conservation (DoC), Iwi and other relevant Parties on a regular basis for as long as necessary to contribute ideas and solutions toward mitigating as many community concerns as possible through a Community Plan. The Group's understanding is that TCDC is prepared to invest in our area to mitigate any issues that may be caused by the Walk before any construction of the Walk will occur.

The Stakeholders Group's continued support of the Walk in principle is conditional on:

1. TCDC, DoC and relevant Parties continued agreement to implement mitigation strategies specified in our Community Plan.
2. Representation on the Walkway Governance Body.

Yours faithfully



William J Stead  
Chairman of Hahei Walkway Stakeholders Group

#### List of Members of Hahei Walkway Stakeholders Group

Person	Representing
Phil Costello	Coastal Walkways Trust.
Peter Hawley	Coastal Walkways Trust.
Graham Harsant	Hahei Rural Landowners.
Ian Chalmers	Absentee ratepayers.
Peter Harrison	Hahei Business Association
Shane Harnett	Hahei Business Association
Brian Keucke	Hahei Beach Resident and Ratepayers Association.
Wendy Lawrence	Hahei Beach Resident and Ratepayers Association.
Alastair Sims	Lees Rd residents
Michael Wilkinson	Lees Rd residents
John Dallimore	Lees Rd residents
Jeremy Lomas	Pa Rd residents.
Bill Stead	Grange Rd residents
Shelley Osborne	Grange Rd residents
Brian Green	Coastal Walkways Trust.
Karen Blair	Reserves and Parks
Kirsten Russell	Hahei

# Hahei Ratepayers/ Walk Stakeholders Group

## Walk and Traffic Congestion Management Strategy

Date 19 May 2015

At a meeting on Sunday, 17 May 2015, the combined Hahei Beach Ratepayers Association and the Walk Stakeholders Groups agreed that the community's position on the proposed Cathedral Coast Walk, would be as follows:

### 1. Background

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Over the past few months there has been much Community discussion about the proposed Cathedral Coast Walk (the Walk). In the meantime, TCDC has issued press statements stating that they are focussed on raising finance and working with the Hahei Community to mitigate our concerns.

We appreciate TCDC's commitment to work with the Community to mitigate our concerns. To assist in this process, the following is a summary of the issues the Hahei Community has identified, some potential mitigation strategies, and our current preferred outcomes.

At the outset however, it is important to recognise, that Hahei's overriding position is:

- Fix Hahei's current traffic congestion, and then, if successful
- Build a walk or other tourist attractions.

### 2. Hahei Traffic Congestion

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We strongly support the TCDC's decision to appoint a traffic management expert to develop solutions to manage traffic in the area from Hot Water Beach to Ferry Landing. We look forward to working with TCDC and the traffic expert as options are developed and reserve our final position on traffic management until the traffic expert's final report is delivered.

In the meantime, to assist TCDC and the traffic expert in the development of a long term strategy, we offer the following guidelines.

- **Long Term, Mercury Bay South, Holistic Solution** – We would like to see a long term, holistic, traffic management plan for the whole area. Specifically:
  - When visitors enter our area at Dalmeny Corner, it must be very easy for them to understand their parking options.
  - All Ratepayers' rights, both residents and non-residents, should be recognised. Owners have invested beach properties in the Coromandel to enjoy their holidays. Similarly many people choose to live in the Coromandel to enjoy its unique beauty and tranquillity. We all recognise it is increasingly busy during the holiday season, but we must ensure that all ratepayers' rights are preserved.
  - Ratepayers must not be burdened with unnecessary costs. Visitors should pay to enjoy our unique assets.

- All creative, innovative solutions should be considered. For instance, there may be support for making Hahei a pedestrian only area in January. How can GPS based traffic management systems be implemented?
- **Defer Construction of Pa Road Car Park** – Currently, TCDC is planning to build a car park at Pa Rd, alongside the sewage treatment plant before the end of 2015. We are not convinced that this is best solution for Hahei. As part of the District Planning process, options are being considered for the property adjacent to the proposed car park. One option, which we would probably support, is to allow the development of a car park/commercial area at the entrance to Hahei. The District Plan will not be finalised until December, so we would like to postpone any work on the proposed Pa Rd car park until the planning process is complete. We are prepared to continue with the Park and Ride operation while a long term solution is developed.
- **Grange Road Car Pay and Display** – We support the concept of making the Grange Road car park a Pay and Display only. This would apply during the busy holiday season, from December to May, and during holiday weekends, such as Labour weekend. There should be no overnight parking.

### 3. Cathedral Coast Walk Development

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Some years ago, the Mayor promoted the concept of a Great Walk in the Coromandel, possibly going from Whitianga to Hot Water Beach or even Tairua. Like many in the Coromandel, our community supported this concept of a walk. A “Coastal Milford Track” sounded great.

At a meeting in Hahei on November 2014, it was explained that the Great Walk had morphed into a short walk to the Blowhole and a footpath from Cathedral Cove along Lees Road to the Purangi Estuary. The estimated cost was \$4.77m, however funding was uncertain.

Since the meeting, TCDC have submitted a funding application to the Lotteries Commission for \$1.84m and we understand a decision is expected in June.

The Department of Conservation has committed \$250k towards the project and has now ring-fenced an additional \$200k which will be approved subject to an accepted business case. This takes DoC's contribution to \$450k while our Council will contribute \$1.125M. This means that there could be approximately \$3.4m for the Walk.

If the Lotteries application is unsuccessful (less than \$900,000 secured), we understand the Governance Group will consider the following options

- Withdraw the project in its entirety
- Depending on what external funding is secured, construct from Hahei to the 'Blowhole', or, Lees Road to the Purangi, or, Carter's track to Cathedral Cove track and the Purangi, or, commence exploration from Whitianga north.
- A new Project Definition and Council approval would be required for any variation to the original proposal.
- Any section of work could commence immediately upon approval

To assist the Governance Group in determining their next steps and provide clarity to TCDC as they develop strategies to mitigate to Community's concerns, the following is a summary of the Hahei Community's position related to the Walk.

- ***Support Concept of Walk*** – We continue to support the Mayor’s original concept of the Walk – a world class “Coastal Milford Track” that would run from Whitianga south to Tairua. But we oppose small, underfunded segments with no firm long term plan to complete the Walk.
- ***Support the Development of a Walk North from Whitianga*** – Whitianga is the commercial centre of Mercury Bay with the infrastructure and businesses needed to support a new tourist initiative. It makes far more sense to develop this area of the Coromandel, rather than focus on an already congested, overcrowded area.
- ***Oppose Incomplete Walks South of Hahei*** – There is no support for the walk from Hahei Beach/end of Pa Road to the Blow Hole only. Walks south from Hahei should only be constructed if they are fully funded walk from Hahei to Hot Water Beach. Prior to the commencement of construction, there must be locally agreed mitigation strategies in place to manage, as a minimum, Pa Road parking congestion and walker safety, along with written support from all locally affected residents.
- ***Oppose Lees Road Foot path*** – There is no support for a walk alongside Lees Road from the Purangi Estuary to a walk down through Carter’s farm to Cathedral Cove. There are numerous issues that must be mitigated for this walk to receive our support. As a minimum, the following matters should be addressed.
  - In reality it will simply be a foot path and could never be consider as part of a Great Walk.
  - Without a complete upgrade, Lees Road is incapable of safely handling the increased traffic flows.
  - A walk along the northern boundary of Carter’s farm would create parking congestion on Lees Road.
  - Since there is no reliable way of crossing the Purangi Estuary, it is likely most cars will drive up and down Lees Road. A complete upgrade of Lees Road is therefore essential.
- ***Support a Purangi to Cathedral Cove Coastal Walk*** – We support the concept of a world class walk around the coast from the Purangi Estuary to Cathedral Cove. Initial discussions with key land owners have been positive and so we intend forming of a working group to explore this option in more detail.

## Appendix 2

**Hahei Community Feedback** – At the first meeting of the Hahei Stakeholders Group, representatives were asked to seek input from the constituents. Below is a complete list of all feed received to date.

A summary of key points of the feedback so far is

1. Number of Written Responses – 65
2. Summary of responses as of 5 February 2014 is

Firmly against	Cautiously Against	Cautiously Supportive	Firmly in favour
43 (64%)	5 (8%)	14 (24%)	2 (5%)

3. Main conclusions from feed back
  - a. **Solve the Parking and Infrastructure Problem in Hahei** – Key to any local support is an acceptable solution to parking in Hahei.
  - b. **Overall Plan** – The walkway should be seen one aspect of overall development of the area and residents would like to see it fits in. For instance, there is no point in building a walkway that shifts the parking problem from Hahei to Lees Rd/Cooks Beach etc.
  - c. **More information** – everyone want to understand the much more about the proposed walkway and how it will fit into the Hahei area
4. Detailed Feedback – Below is feedback from all those that have sent in e-mails.