

Pourerere Community and Character Preservation Society

My name is Tracy Gay and I am a permanent resident and business owner at Pourerere Beach. My husband Andrew and I have lived here for 23 years. We are very active members of the community and have a strong affinity with the beach having raised our children here and now our grandchildren.

Today I am speaking on behalf of the community and more specifically the Pourerere Community and Character Preservation Society. This group is a diverse collection of individuals that love the Pourerere Community and have formed this society to ensure that the character and appeal of the area is protected and enhanced.

There have been 140 people put their names towards our submission to oppose the applicants proposed subdivision. These people represent permanent residents, bach owners, campers, daytrippers, business owners and farmers. The list of names is not exhaustive but are simply the people that heard about the proposed subdivision and wanted to raise valid concerns about the proposal to protect the special character of Pourerere.

Our objectives are to :

- Protect and enhance the character of Pourerere which we define as a serene rural coastal community.
- The area is characterised by the original large sheep stations and a small cluster of beach houses tucked in the base of the coastal hills.
- The isolated rural feel of the beach due to the unbuilt environment has great appeal to visitors and the smaller number of residents.
- As a community we work hard to enhance the coastal environment and to protect the native bird life.

In our submission we raised a number of concerns regarding the proposed subdivision.

We are concerned that this subdivision will have multiple negative impacts around **Traffic**:

- Pourerere Road from the Tamamu bridge was in poor condition when we wrote the first submission. This has deteriorated further with multiple slips and subsidence. The additional heavy vehicles that this development will bring are a concern to the reliance of our only access to town.
- We are concerned by the increase in traffic from Punawaitai Road to the beach as new bach owners drive from the subdivision to beach. This will be all forms of vehicles including cars, tractors motorbikes etc.
- We feel there is not sufficient parking at the beach to accommodate all the cars that will drive from this subdivision to the beach during the day.
- Increase in vehicles on the beach.
- We fear for the safety of pedestrians along Pourerere road and Punawaitai Road to the beach. There is no footpath. The side of the road is overgrown apart from where some local farmers mow in front of their property. If this is discontinued then there is even less protection for pedestrians.
- There is no pedestrian access on the two bridges along this route and there are corners leading into them .
- The 100 year old oak trees make the light difficult on sunny days to see pedestrians.

- We note that the traffic reports that have been produced have focussed on the intersection with Punawaitai Road and vehicles within the subdivision. We are concerned that some of our points raised have not been adequately considered.

We are greatly concerned by the **Cumulative effects of septic tanks** on the estuary and the **Estuary water quality** generally.

- We are concerned by the thought of 68 additional septic tanks (including the stage one and two houses that have not been built yet). These will ultimately flow into the Pourerere Stream estuary. In a winter like this year and last the water table is very high in this soil and we fear this will easily leach into the waterways.
- This may impact the groundwater and the estuary water quality.
- The estuary is most commonly used by native birds (some endangered) and by toddlers and babies for safe swimming.
- We are aware from experience with holiday homes it is highly likely that over the peak summer period there will likely be abnormally larger populations in each house and septic systems should be designed with this in mind. We are concerned that the reports that have been provided have not dealt with this peak demand.
- We also note that this has been a key concern of other submitters as well.

Native Birds are something that this community protects.

- As a community we have actively been protecting this area for a long time.
- A local member of the community acknowledged the arrival of a New Zealand Dotterel in 2011 and has been keeping records since this time.
- The estuary area is home to NZ Dotterel, Oyster Catchers, Royal Spoonbills, Caspian Terns, Pied Stilts, Reef Herons and numerous Terns. This is all documented in journals of one of our members.
- Since 2011 the community has been actively trying to protect these birds with the involvement of DOC. We have been erecting fences to keep the public and dogs away from the site. We also complete regular pest control.
- As a community we have been offended by the applicants statements that he has been responsible for this work. It is also disappointing that the ecology report states that pest control is not being completed. The ecology report also only focuses on the dotterel and it is unclear what the effects will be on these other birds.
- The applicant has put a track from the stage one subdivision to the beach. It is unclear how this is to be used but we have concern as this exits near the dotterel breeding area.
- As a group our understanding was that this track was to be a walking track and that no vehicles were to cross the sand dunes to the beach. We would like to get clarification from the applicant how this is to be used as part of the current stage and also the proposed stages. We would also like to know if this and other proposed walkways are going to be private or public.
- We understand that the Council is to construct a bird watching hide across the stream. We worry that this track will detract from the experience for birdwatchers. It also seems counter intuitive to have a hide when people will potentially be zooming past the sanctuary on the other side.

Effect on existing businesses- The local businesses are part of the fabric of our community and we are concerned about the impact on them.

- The community has always included farmers and fishing businesses.
- These people have long supported the community and have been generous in their support of the character of the community.
- We are concerned that this subdivision will have an impact on their safety to carry out their business activities.
- One of the farms also has a camp and venue hire business that has been used by the community over the years for weddings, meetings, school camps etc. and the increased traffic at this venue site will detract from the aesthetic of this.

Fishing

- The fisheries at Pourerere have been under pressure recently with rahui on beaches to the north. These additional houses will undoubtedly add to this pressure.
- The channel that provides safe passage to launch boats is already under huge pressure during the summer.
- Parking of tractors and trailers at the channel is an issue. As these houses will be a significant distance to the boat launching (3 km) they will need to park here. There is no room for this and this means that tractors and trailers will cover a large part of the beach.
- The applicant has again defaulted to the council to solve this but could equally have come up with solutions to reduce the number of launching vehicles coming from this subdivision.

We love the Character of Pourerere

- The character that we feel defines Pourerere is it is an isolated rural/coastal landscape characterised by a large sandy beach.
- We did not agree with the Hudson landscape report that this proposal has little effect on the character of our community. We feel that the landscape assessment provided by Boffa Miskell more correctly aligns with the views of our community.

Power supply

- As we are the end of the line for power and can have variable power it is not clear whether the power supply will cope with additional connections. Since Cyclone Gabrielle the fragility of the power network has become obvious. We note that no further information has been provided on this and as a community this is a concern.

Community

- Pourerere is characterised by two areas being the southern end and the houses around the estuary. There has been a split community out there over the years and this has been something that we have been working on bringing together.
- This new subdivision becomes another community and is not contiguous with the existing community.
- It identifies itself as a separate subdivision having its own name (Paoanui Point).
- It is a Private Road and is distinctly separate to the community.
- As a community it was very disappointing that the Esplanade Reserve that is part of the operative district plan was taken away through the stage one part of this subdivision. This was an opportunity to improve access to the estuary for the public but was removed in

favour of private access for this subdivision. We would like this to be considered as part of this application.

- This subdivision provides no additional community access to the beach or any other recreation with it being a private community.
- As a community we will suffer the additional population at the beach and pressure on the limited services available now with no additional benefits from the subdivision.

Existing facilities are currently already overwhelmed.

- The existing toilets are overwhelmed and it is not uncommon to see people defecating in the sand dunes as a result. These new homes will be located over 2 km from the beach so it is unlikely that they will use their own facilities but will put additional pressure on the public facilities. Existing toilets are located within a few hundred meters at most and these owners use their own facilities.
- Parking is a major problem at the beach and there is already insufficient parking. Due to the large distance that this subdivision is from the beach these people will likely drive to the beach adding to this problem. The only option for parking is to park on the beach and this greatly detracts from the enjoyment of beach users. It also creates a safety issues for children and sun bathers.
- Rubbish is currently a problem at the beach with not enough bins already. This will add to this considerably.
- Vehicles on the beach are already a danger and the increase will be significant from this.
- There is no fire service at the beach and limited first aid. There is no coast guard or lifesaving. The subdivision does nothing to help this.
- We note that the applicant has made no attempt to address these issues and instead has simply said that this is up to the council to address. As a minimum we believe that a significant reserve contribution could be made for this instead of the proposal having private open spaces as reserve that do not benefit the existing community.
- The community currently carries out a lot of volunteer work at the beach to protect the dunes and beautify the area. This has included fencing off sand dunes and creating walkways and planting thousands of plants. Many of which members of the community have grown from seeds. As a community we don't rely on the council or expect them to do everything.

Tsunami risk.

- The existing houses at the beach are generally located at the base of the hill providing a safe escape route in the event of a tsunami with almost all houses having elevated back yards. This subdivision is in a large flat area that is some distance and across a creek from safe high ground. All houses will need to evacuate through the one road leading into the subdivision and across a creek.
- As a community we have been evacuated twice in recent years due to tsunami risk so feel that there is some risk here.
- Following recent climate events it has become obvious that areas that are considered low risk can be seriously impacted and greater consideration should be given to this.
- We have concern that this very real risk is being ignored. A society member recently went to the national aquarium and these photos show this risk is greater than we thought. What is the return period for tsunami? I will let you read this in your own time but it shows that the risk is not insignificant.

Tsunami

- 1855 – A 10 metre tsunami was triggered by fault movement in Cook Strait during the Wairarapa earthquake.
- 1868 – A tsunami from an earthquake in Chile took 15 hours to reach New Zealand, building to a height of 8 metres.
- 1947 – Two tsunami up to 10 metres high within a few months, caused by seafloor movements in Poverty Bay. They destroyed houses, bridges and roads in the Gisborne region.
- 1960 – On 23 May, a tsunami from a huge magnitude 9.5 earthquake in Chile caused damage in many New Zealand coastal areas. Some Gisborne residents unwisely went to the shore to watch it, and were lucky that the low tide lessened the tsunami's effects. A footbridge and a gas-line were damaged in the Ahuriri Basin at Napier by 3-4 metre tsunami surges.

It's happened before

The 1960 tsunami was the most powerful ever recorded in the world. It caused damage in many New Zealand coastal areas. Some Gisborne residents unwisely went to the shore to watch it, and were lucky that the low tide lessened the tsunami's effects. A footbridge and a gas-line were damaged in the Ahuriri Basin at Napier by 3-4 metre tsunami surges.



Productive land.

- The land that the area occupies is a highly fertile basin.
- This land has been used for growing squash, tamarillos, fejoas, citrus, figs, Avocados etc over the years and is a great microclimate.
- It also provides valuable fodder cropping and supplements for the farms and seems a shame to lose it for future food production.

It was disappointing to read the Hawkes Bay Historical Society report and also Kairakau Lands Trusts summary that the access track to the beach and also the large scar that has been dug into the face of "Nairn Hill" has potentially destroyed culturally significant sites. At the time that these were being constructed many of our members tried to question the applicant on these actions but were all told that it was nothing to do with them. We are concerned that more sites could be damaged as part of this development.

We have been disappointed that the applicant has actively chosen to not engage with the community when planning this development. When members of our group have enquired about his plans on expansion we have been repetitively told that he is not doing anymore. This is a missed opportunity for the applicant as had he have engaged with the community we could have potentially mitigated some of these concerns.

As a group we are aware of the Proposed Central Hawkes Bay District Plan and have been supportive of this. We believe that the policies and objectives of this plan more accurately reflect the desires of our community. We believe that this proposal does not meet the standards set by the community in this new plan and as a result believe that the application should be declined.

Tracey Gay on behalf of the Pourerere Community and Character Preservation Society

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