

option4 Alert #15 – Access to the foreshore is under threat now!

27 May 2010

A Rodney District Council scheme to close vehicle access to the Kaipara Harbour is a thinly disguised process to deny the public access to the foreshore. If successful, other councils could duplicate this dodgy process to stop you accessing your favourite fishing, recreation or holiday destination. All New Zealanders need to act now to stop the rot. Submit your objection by 2 June.

There has been no public consultation to close Higham Paper Road on South Head Peninsula - one of three realistic vehicle access points to the Kaipara Harbour, northwest of Auckland.

The South Head Action Group is worried because the main harbour access, at Shelley Beach, struggles to accommodate current usage and demand is increasing annually.

Visionary planners have provided paper roads for free, public access to the waterways since the late 1800s. Now, ratepayers will bear the costs of this deal between one landowner and the Rodney Council, including possible compensation to this owner for a walkway easement that can be closed at any time.

Major concerns are that the Rodney Council has:

- ⇒ Contravened statutory process by not ascertaining if Higham Road will be required for future roading purposes;
- ⇒ Ignored its official's recommendation that the proposed road exchange should not be advanced;
- ⇒ Ignored Department of Conservation advice that this process is contrary to both the NZ Coastal Policy and Regional Coastal Plan;
- ⇒ Failed to recognise and plan for increasing regional population growth and future need for recreational facilities;
- ⇒ Ignored advice that public safety is paramount and adequate access to the land in the vicinity of Higham Road is provided; and
- ⇒ Acted shamefully in not consulting with Nga Uri O Te Taou, tangata whenua of the area, considering the current sensitivity surrounding the foreshore and seabed issue.

There is no significant public benefit to this proposal. This hastily implemented process threatens to undermine public confidence in the Rodney District Council.

We need to be wary of similar shoddy deals to ensure future generations have the opportunity to fish, camp and enjoy our remarkable country.

“The price of freedom is eternal vigilance,” Thomas Jefferson.

Lodge your objection before 2 June to ensure foreshore access remains for all New Zealanders!

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