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# Te Henga Quarry Restoration

File No.:

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## Purpose

1. To consult with and provide information to the Waitakere Ranges Local Board (“WRLB”) on a proposal to restore the Te Henga Quarry to its natural state (to the extent possible) and provide for recreational uses on the site.

## Executive summary

2. Te Henga Quarry is due to close in March 2015 and revegetation of the site will be undertaken by the quarry operator.
3. Auckland Council Properties Ltd (“ACPL”) is Auckland Council’s delegated representative for the quarry site and is consulting with the Waitakere Ranges Local Board over a proposal to restore the quarry through the importation of fill and the provision of recreational uses on site.
4. Clean-fill consists predominantly of clay and topsoil. There is a shortage of clean-fill sites in Auckland and West Auckland in particular and considerable demand for such a facility. The current shortage is imposing adverse environmental and economic costs on the community.
5. A filling operation will take approximately ten years to restore the property to its original shape (to the extent possible) and include the restoration of in excess of 300m of stream. Recreational areas and activities and employment generating activities will also be provided on site during the first two years.
6. The restoration of the Te Henga Quarry provides many direct and indirect benefits and less than minor effects.

## Recommendation/s

7. It is recommended that:
  - WRLB endorses the proposed Te Henga Quarry restoration.

## Comments

8. Te Henga Quarry is due to close in March 2015.
9. ACPL agreed in principle with the quarry operator, Perry Resources (2008) Limited (“Perry’s”) in September 2014 to a Revegetation Plan for the Te Henga Quarry. The revegetation of the site is required under the operating contract between Waitakere City Council and Perry’s.
10. The key features of the Revegetation Plan are:
  - Perry’s will import sufficient fill to provide a minimum 500mm (50cm) depth over the site to provide a planting medium. The fill will not be charged for. There is very little suitable clay/topsoil material on site at present,
  - Plant spacing will be 1.35m,
  - Plant types are natural colonizers, for example, *Leptospermum scoparium* (manuka),
  - Plant sizes are PB¾ grade,
  - Plants will be eco-sourced provided they are available locally,

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- Perry's will be responsible for weed control and replacement of failed plants. The weed control and maintenance obligation will continue until canopy closure which is likely to be several years after planting commences,
11. Perry's is responsible for the entire cost of the revegetation including fill importation, fill placement, plants, planting and ongoing maintenance which are estimated to cost approximately [Confidential Attachment 3, Point 1]. The intention was for ACPL to transfer responsibility for the site to Auckland Council Parks & Recreation ("Parks") once the quarrying operations cease and the Revegetation Plan commences.
  12. Community Development Arts & Culture ("CDAC") has also recently undertaken consultation with the community and established possible uses for the site including recreational activities, and employment opportunities. CDAC sought funding for the preparation of a Concept Plan although no funding was available at the time. The Local Board also questioned the value in preparing a Concept Plan, particularly in the existing financial environment, as there was no obvious funding source for either the Concept Plan or the substantial recreationally based works that would be required.
  13. Through CDAC's consultation the prospect of the site being used as a clean-fill had been raised. ACPL suggested that a clean-fill operation on the site could be established thereby receiving a royalty from the fill that is required to be imported under the Perry's Revegetation Plan and from additional fill in order to provide funding for the Local Board, Parks and CDAC to develop the site. The Local Board requested a report back (Resolution number WTK/2014/162) on the acceptance of clean-fill to provide revenue. As described further below ACPL reports back to the Local Board by way of consultation.

### **Asset Owner and Delegation**

14. Auckland Council is the asset owner of the Te Henga Quarry and ACPL is the delegated representative. The Waitakere Ranges Local Board is being consulted with on proposed site uses. The ACPL controlled area is highlighted in the Te Henga Quarry Map below. Parks has responsibility for the land adjoining the quarry site.



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## Te Henga Quarry Restoration

15. Clean-fill material is inert, odourless substances including rock, clay, top-soil, concrete and bricks. Clean-fill is often created during construction activity including roading development, road maintenance, land development and subdivision, storm-water and drainage works, excavating house footings, demolition and so forth.



16. The West Auckland area, like other areas of Auckland, continues to see strong growth in residential and other development. There are currently no known significant consented clean-fill operations in West Auckland, while there is a strong demand for such a facility. A clean-fill facility, while a commercial operation, provides public and community benefit in providing a solution for the disposal of fill.
17. The photograph below is provided to the Local Board as an example of a clean-fill facility in operation. The photograph was taken at the former Schippers clean-fill in East Coast Bays Rd, North Shore.
18. Perry Resources has recently become aware of the Te Henga restoration proposal and has asked current users of the Te Henga Quarry, also members of the community, their perspective on a clean-fill located at the quarry. A copy of the letters that have been received to date are **attached** and more replies are expected. A representative sample of the content of the letters received has been reproduced below:

*“If this site was turned into a managed landfill it would hopefully put an end to all the illegal tips that are present around greater West Auckland.”* Rainbow Haulage, Titirangi

*“Fulton Hogan wish to convey support to establish a clean-fill operation in the Te Henga Quarry once the quarrying operations cease. Currently, there are a limited number of sites in the West Auckland area available for clean-fill. Off those sites, access is often problematic during wet weather.”* Fulton Hogan, Auckland

*With a shortage of fill sites in the Auckland region, and continue growth around the Westgate. Hobsonville area, a well managed fill site geographically located close to these areas would have advantages in terms of reduced truck movements.”* Dempsey Wood Civil Ltd

*“Given the shortage of cleanfill sites in Auckland we would support in principle the conversion of the quarry to a cleanfill site, subject to appropriate consent conditions given the location of the quarry.”* Transfield Services (New Zealand) Ltd, Auckland

*“With the development happening in West Auckland, an addition to the current limited tipping options would enable more accurate and economic costing and an ability to work*

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*more efficiently in the knowledge that tipping was available relatively long term.”*  
Whangaparoa Earthmovers Ltd, Whangaparoa

*“We are a drainage and earthwork company based out of West Auckland. As housing and development in our area is in full swing, we are finding it harder and harder to find any cleanfill tip sites without having to transport material large distances across town. This does not benefit anybody. If Te Henga Quarry was to become a clean fill site we would be certain to use it.”* HT Drainage & Earthworks

*“We are writing in support of converting the Waitakere Quarry into a clean fill site once its aggregate production closes down. Good well managed cleanfill sites are desperately needed in the Auckland region. This old quarry site is ideally located to service the West & North Auckland area and we feel there is good justification for it. It is also an excellent way of making the quarry site safe.”* Giles Civil Ltd, Dairy Flat

*“We are a small civil engineering company based in West Auckland. We fully encourage and support the idea of a cleanfill facility at Perry’s Quarry.”* Cathcart Engineering Contractors Ltd, Taupaki

*“The West Auckland area is in short supply of tipping facilities. With all the development happening in Riverhead, Huapai, Kumeu, Westgate, and Hobsonville areas we are restricted for the disposal of cleanfill. This would surely help eliminate the illegal tipping going on in these areas and will restrict the need for contractors to cart the material as far as South Auckland, Bombay, which is currently the nearest tipping facility that we can rely on to be open over the Winter months.”* Burnetts Transport, Kumeu

*“Cleanfill sites in West Auckland are few and far between and this site would be a real benefit to the building industry. We are certain that this would be well-managed and a great asset to the community by providing employment and a much needed site for tipping in the area”* Brian Hoffman Ltd, Glen Eden.

*“Should Waitakere Perry Resources be turned into a clean-fill site it would be used by Rainbow Haulage Ltd. West Auckland lacks managed and controlled clean-fill sites.”*  
Rainbow Haulage, Titirangi

*“To have a local managed cleanfill would also benefit people in the local community as costs to dispose of the cleanfill would be more cost effective than travelling to South Auckland or further, to dispose of the clean fill.”* Yelavich Transport, Riverhead.

*“With the expansion of land development in norwest area of Auckland and relevant to the contract services we provide, we envisage the need for facilities that provide for the disposal of clean fill from construction works within the area.”* Hopper Construction, Silverdale.

*“There is a major lack of managed cleanfill tipsites in the local area and with extensive housing developments now taking place in the area it would be beneficial for all involved if the quarry was utilized and turned into a cleanfill tip site.”* Active Contracting (ACL), Kumeu.

## **Funding for Creation of Recreation Based Activities**

19. The filling and restoration is expected to occur over an approximate ten year period.
20. The clean-fill operation could provide a royalty stream of some [Confidential Attachment 3, Point 2.] to Auckland Council. ACPL transfers all net income received each month to Auckland Council. ACPL and Auckland Council Finance have agreed that the majority of any royalty generated could be allocated to Parks and the WRLB (in addition to all existing funding)

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to be used for onsite recreation type activities or possibly the development of recreational activities in the local area.

## **Quarry Model and Plan**

21. A model and concept plan for the Te Henga Restoration has been developed showing the filling that will occur and also a range of other recreation based activities that will be created on site. The filling operation intends to restore as much of the property as possible into its nature contour and natural state. A feature of the restoration is the reinstatement of an approximately 320m length of stream that was removed by the quarrying operation.
22. The concept plan is attached and will be provided to the WRLB. The model will be shown to the WRLB.

## **Quarry Restoration Benefits and Negatives**

23. A local clean-fill site provides a public or community benefit by providing a disposal option for clean-fill.
24. A local West Auckland clean-fill site will immediately help to mitigate against adverse and environmental and other effects currently being incurred, as noted below:
  - Illegal tipping, which results in, for example, clean-fill erosion resulting in sediment runoff into local streams,
  - The transport of fill throughout the West Auckland area, and to other distant locations with associated environmental effects including increased truck emissions,
  - Costs in terms of capital (truck) utilisation, labour, maintenance and fuel to transport fill to external locations, all of which are ultimately borne by the local community.
25. Environmental benefits are as follows:
  - Restoration of the site to its natural form to the extent possible,
  - The reinstatement of a 350m section of destroyed stream,
  - Revegetation of the filled and restored area upon completion and other areas,
26. Recreational activities:
  - The provision on site of recreational opportunities including passive recreation areas, lake access and swimming, walking tracks, rock-climbing, viewpoints, cycling tracks, and dog walking areas,.
27. Public Safety:
  - The quarry face is currently exposed to a height from ground level of approximately 50m. Filling and restoration will result in only a minor drop, if any, from the existing ground level into the restored area.
28. Employment and economic benefits:
  - Employment opportunities, with approximately four full time permanent staff required for the filling operation and restoration,
  - The provision on site of an area for the filming industry (benefits unquantifiable),
  - The provision on site of an area for a nursery operation (benefits unquantifiable),

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29. It is likely that some interest groups within the community will be opposed to any proposal to allow the quarry site to accept fill. A letter from the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society (“WRPS”) is **attached** in Attachment B. WRPS Vision is *“to include protecting and conserving the whole of the Ranges from any environmental impact that threatens the integrity of the area”*.
30. The Waitakere Ranges is an area in excess of 15,000ha. The Te Henga restoration site is some 20ha or just 0.1% of the total Waitakere Ranges area. The Te Henga quarry site is presently degraded and the Te Henga restoration proposal is in fact consistent with WRPS’s Vision. There is no threat to the integrity of the Waitakere Ranges. ACPL look forward to consultation with WRPS in due course.
31. Local residents may also not want the restoration project at the quarry. An issue that will arise is “trucks on the road”. As is clear from contractor’s letters, truck traffic to dispose of fill is only likely to decrease with a well sited fill operation. There will naturally be more trucks on some roads but total truck traffic travel distances throughout West Auckland and the rest of Auckland will be significantly reduced.
32. Like any proposal of this nature, the appropriate forum to determine environmental effect is through the resource consent process. A fill and restoration operation will require resource consent(s). In the resource consent process traffic, planning, visual, noise, dust, engineering, geotechnical engineering and ecological issues will all be considered. The effect of a clean-fill operation is significantly less than that of a quarry operation as there is no requirement for blasting. In addition dust related effects are significantly reduced. On the basis of the information we have ACPL’s view is that the resource consent process is likely to establish effects of the activity are less than minor and filling on the site would be permitted.
33. The proposal provided to the WRLB for your consideration as part of the consultation process seeks to strike a reasonable balance between fill acceptance volume, restoration to natural contour, recreational uses and employment opportunities, and revegetation. It is brought to the WRLB’s attention that ACPL could have pursued a filling only option on the site without other features including recreational type activities. The restoration proposal has wide support including from Parks, CDAC and various other Council parties.

## Consideration

34. The author of this report has consulted within Auckland Council with the following departments:
- Auckland Council Parks, Sport & Recreation, Upper management level support,
  - Auckland Council Community Development Arts & Culture, Upper management level support,
  - Auckland Council Finance (in regards to the distribution of royalty proceeds),
  - Auckland Council Solid Waste (Closed Landfills and Contamination) High level support, [Confidential Attachment 3, Point 3].
  - Councillor Cooper and Deputy Mayor Hulse have each been provided with a project overview.
35. Should the restoration proceed and recreational uses proceed the agreement with Perry Resources will also need to be re-negotiated.

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## Local board views and implications

36. The Local Board requested a report back (Resolution number WTK/2014/162) on the acceptance of clean-fill to provide revenue. The Board's views will be gained during this current consultation.

## Public Consultation

37. There has been no direct consultation undertaken on this proposal as it is still in its preliminary stages. CDAC has been undertaking related consultation through the LAP process and the information received has contributed to the development of the Restoration Plan.

## Maori impact statement

38. There has been no consultation at this time. Consultation will be undertaken.

## Implementation

39. ACPL are in the preliminary stages of the proposed restoration project and will consider the next steps in due course.

## Attachments

| No. | Title                    | Page |
|-----|--------------------------|------|
| A   | Letters in support       |      |
| B   | Letter in opposition     |      |
| C   | Confidential Information |      |

## Signatories

|             |                |  |
|-------------|----------------|--|
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