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9 April 2018

Tēnā koe

Submission on the Mackenzie District Long Term Plan 2018-2028

Please find attached a submission lodged by Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Limited to the Mackenzie Long Term Plan

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We wish to be heard at a hearing.

Naku noa,

Nā



Alex Macdonald

Environmental Planner

Introduction

1. Ngāti Huirapa and their ancestors are mana whenua in the Mackenzie District and are represented today by Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua.
2. Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua is one of 18 papatipu rūnanga which together comprise the iwi authority of Te Rūnanga O Ngāi Tahu as set out in the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996.
3. The takiwā of Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua is described in the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu (Declaration of Membership) Order 2001 as “...centres on Arowhenua and extends from Rakaia to Waitaki, sharing interests with Ngāi Tūāhuriri ki Kaiapoi between Hakatere and Rakaia, and thence inland to Aoraki and the Main Divide.”
4. Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua has a shared interest in part of its takiwā with Te Rūnanga o Waihao whose takiwā is described in the Order as “...centres on Wainono, sharing interests with Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua to Waitaki, and extends inland to Omarama and the Main Divide.” This submission is made by Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Ltd in accordance with the mandate it has from Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua.
5. As local authorities are Crown agencies, Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua considers its relationship with Mackenzie District Council should be one of partnership - reflecting at the district level the partnership between the Crown and Ngāi Tahu.
6. Aoraki Environmental Consultancy Ltd is an environmental company owned by Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua, which acts to support Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua in engagement with local government processes, and to support local authorities in discharging their statutory duties to Ngāi Tahu in the takiwā of Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua.
7. This submission recognizes that there are a number of projects of significance to mana whenua being consulted on in this Long Term Plan (LTP), including significant investment in infrastructure and community facility upgrades, and several community planning processes, such as the Lake Tekapo Lakefront Master Plan, the Waste Management Plan and strategic growth plans for some townships, as well as the district plan review. As arguably one of the council’s foundation documents, the LTP is an important vehicle for articulating the basis of the partnership between the Council and Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua and establishing the platform for ensuring that partnership is fostered in council projects and processes.
8. We wish to be heard in support of our submission.

Vision

9. The LTP should recognize the significance of the Treaty relationship and the partnership that this represents. The philosophy of partnership should be embedded in all council policy, plans and projects; and working with Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua or its mandated representative a core business function that is reflected throughout the council’s operations.
10. We understand that the LTP will include a section that acknowledges mana whenua of the Mackenzie District. We ask that this section also acknowledges the Council’s statutory duties to Ngāi Tahu as mana whenua and the Crown’s Treaty Partner under the Local Government Act 2002 (LGA 2002) and the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA 1991); and include the vision and strategy for how those duties can be discharged in a spirit of partnership across the council’s governance, regulatory and asset management functions and operations. We have had some preliminary exchanges with council staff about this part of the LTP and look forward to finalizing the text of this through the remainder of the submission process.
11. We acknowledge that building a successful and enduring partnership will require proactive, on-going effort on the part of both the council and Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua or its mandated

representatives. Consequently, we would expect to work with council staff early and often, and for this work to be an expected part of council processes.

12. The extent and nature of rūnanga engagement in any project or process may well vary depending on the nature of the project and the priorities of and resources available to Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua. However the foundation of partnership - which manifests itself in a commitment to early engagement with and providing meaningful opportunity for Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua to participate in the planning and decision-making on core council policy, projects, plans and processes, should be incorporated into the strategic objectives of the council. We suggest the timeframes and resources needed to facilitate Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua engagement as a partner should be built into project planning for all Council's major projects.
13. To that end we do not make comments in this submission about preferred options or alternatives for core projects based on cost. We suggest this is a matter for ratepayers, including rūnanga members to decide. Rather we ask the council to ensure that within its budget for projects it includes sufficient time and resourcing to provide the opportunity for early and meaningful engagement with Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua on core projects.
14. We also seek to ensure that where cost estimates and cost comparisons are provided to the community on various projects, that the cost assessments are full and include the environmental costs of different options and the costs of delay if works are deferred.

Big issues

Key Challenge – Growing Pains

15. At p.4 the LTP Consultation document states that 'the benefits of tourism are significant.' We suggest a more accurate statement may be to say '*the economic benefits of tourism can be significant.*' When tourists come to places and spend money on local accommodation, hospitality, experiences and goods the economic benefits can be significant. However, tourists who free travel, freedom camp and tour on thrifty budgets can pose a significant cost in terms of the burden on local infrastructure, public services and space, without contributing very much economically. International economic downturns, conflicts and natural disasters can all impact quickly on tourism numbers and as such the economic benefits can fluctuate, as will the issue of carbon emissions once the need to tackle emissions from international air travel move on to the agenda.
16. We understand the significant impact that tourism and growth in tourism has in the Mackenzie District and that funding infrastructure to keep pace with that demand is a significant challenge for the Council. However we think the issues with tourism are broader than infrastructure funding, and a more holistic assessment of the costs and benefits of tourism to the District may be valuable in guiding Council policy. Page 4 includes some statistics of visitor numbers, nights spent and overall economic growth at 13% but it does not include estimates of the actual financial benefits in dollar terms to the District or the costs to the District.
17. Tourism above capacity numbers not only impacts on the District's infrastructure, it impacts on the natural and physical environment generally, the recreational experiences for locals and visitors alike, and the amenity values of the area.
18. Aoraki and Te Manahuna, especially Pūkaki and Takapo, form arguably one of the most culturally significant of all areas to Ngāi Tahu whānui and their ancestors; and is recognized accordingly through the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998. The remoteness, tranquility and relative lack of modification of those areas and the cultural appropriateness of activities in these areas, is vital to give real meaning to the recognition given to them through the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.
19. The number of tourists accessing Aoraki National Park and Te Manahuna and the experiences and activities they want to partake in, and how those practices impact on the cultural significance of the area, is of increasing concern to Ngāi Tahu whānui. Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua has reports

of whānau being unable to access the nohoanga at Pūkaki due to it being unlawfully occupied by freedom campers. We are not suggesting Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua does not support tourism; it is an activity Ngāi Tāhū whānui both individually and as a tribe are actively engaged in. However, we suggest it needs to be managed to ensure it is a pleasant and prosperous experience for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

20. We request that council continue to work with us when developing and upgrading infrastructure and policy initiatives to manage tourism – including major new facilities (eg, the ongoing Alps2 Ocean cycleway upgrades), freedom camping bylaws, and new projects or policies especially relating to the Districts water bodies and other sensitive environments. We also request that Council take a pro-active approach at managing areas that are particularly susceptible to the pressures of tourism. As well as the general duties relating to mana whenua under the LGA 2002 and the RMA 1991, both Pūkaki and Tākapo are areas of Statutory Acknowledgement under the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.
21. We are concerned that the approach and analysis in the consultation draft focuses primarily on the economic benefits to the District from tourism but doesn't analyse or quantify what those benefits are in dollar terms, or the key tourist markets that provide them. The LTP poses a 7-8% rates increase each year for the next 10 years to fund infrastructure largely for tourism without any analysis given of the total costs and benefits to the District from that tourism.
22. Similarly, p.5 cites an increase in QV property values of 53% over the last 3 years and 79% for residential land values, which the document suggests is a good thing. Rapidly and steeply increasing land and priority values benefit people seeking to sell their properties or to borrow against the equity but are hard for people struggling to pay rates on fixed or low incomes, those seeking rental accommodation or trying to buy a first home. We agree the Council cannot control property values, but it can control the impact on ratepayers to some degree by controlling rates increases and the proportion of funding for services from general rates versus targeted rates, user charges or other funding. We support initiatives by the Council to secure more central government assistance to fund infrastructure which is primarily to protect oru environment from or for the benefit of visitors rather than local residents.

Key Challenges– Service Levels and Risk, and Business and usual.

23. Again, we recognize that Mackenzie District has a limited ratepayer base, and operates under significant funding pressure. As noted above, we ask that the Council ensures any projects are sufficiently timed and resourced to ensure early and meaningful engagement with Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua to ensure the Council discharges its obligations under both the LGA 2002 and the RMA 1991.
24. We submit that the relationship with mana whenua must be a priority for the council and that the council has sufficient resources to commit to and foster this relationship; having the resources (including staff time) and processes in place to engage early and meaningfully on matters of concern to mana whenua, and recognizing that rapid growth often means that more resources are needed to address issues, rather than less.

25. Key Issue – Roading & Infrastructure

26. All infrastructure upgrades are potentially of interest to mana whenua; and infrastructure involving water, wastewater and stormwater are usually areas of high interest and priority. The LTP proposes investigations and/or upgrades to several key pieces of infrastructure, including new sewerage treatment plants, the implementation of stormwater management plans (and associated consents) and installation of new water treatment plants. While some of the upgrades relate to meeting water safety standards, there is discussion included for infrastructure projects including relocation of supply points (in Fairlie), potential development of new sources (Pukaki Airport), and new wastewater disposal (Tekapo).

27. Some of these projects will be of greater priority to Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua than others, but we submit it is a crucial part of the Council's duties under the LGA 2002 and the RMA 1991 to enable Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua to determine which if any of these projects it has an interests in and the extent to which it wishes to be involved in the decision-making.
28. On page 8 of the consultation document the council states that it has anticipated it can renew its current consents for water, waste water and stormwater without any additional conditions requiring substantial expenditure. We understand some councils in Canterbury are facing significant regulatory pressure to meet water quality outcomes, particularly for stormwater discharges. We understand Mackenzie District the Council will soon be required to hold network discharge consents for stormwater, and unless existing consents have been analysed in relation to compliance with the new regulatory environment, we suggest there may be a risk in under-scoping the potential for required changes. We are keen to ensure. Te Runanga o Arowhenua has the opportunity for meaningful engagement on this issue.
- 29. Capital Investment - Community Facilities upgrades.**
30. The LTP proposes capital upgrades to community facilities, including parts of the town centers of both Twizel and Lake Tekapo. These upgrades provide opportunities to recognize the role of Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua as mana whenua of the District, through appropriate design, landscaping, information and recognition of the heritage of Ngāi Tahu whānui and their ancestors with places in the Mackenzie District..
31. The discussion document indicates that planning for some of these upgrades is underway while for others consultation will occur this year. Given the significance of Te Manahuna (as a whole) and Lake Tekapo (in particular) to mana whenua, we suggest that there ought to have been discussion with Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua on both the council's plans to undertake these projects and whether and how Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua wish to participate in the process.
- 32. Capital Investment - Strategic Study**
- We see the strategic study as a way to give effect to the discussion above, A strategic study provides an opportunity to ensure that these growth pressures are managed in a way that is appropriate and appropriate involvement of Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua early and at a high level. allows both parties to foster the principle of partnership described above.

Council Activities – Regulatory Services.

33. The council identifies the key role that its regulatory services have in implementing policy. While we note that the discussion document references a commitment of funds to monitoring consents, this is not supported by a level of service in the activity map. Given the complex nature of the council's Plan Change 13, and the expectations of both the community and parties that participated in the litigation surrounding the plan change, and the significance of the environment this plan change protects, we believe that a commitment to monitoring needs to be backed by a target that supports this work.
34. We also note that there is limited discussion within the LTP about a district plan review. The council is required, under the Resource Management Act, to review its plans every ten years. Given the MDC District Plan was made operative in 2004, it will soon reach 20 years in effect.
35. While the council has committed \$400,000 to working on this over the next three years, the ongoing pressure on the council plan means that this may not be sufficient as parts of the plan reach their 20th anniversary. We are anxious to avoid expenditure being compressed into the next LTP if it results in significant workload pressures on mana whenua, council, and the community.
36. Additionally, a major project as a district plan review requires a commitment and project management upfront to ensure that the process is smooth and (from the perspective of mana

whenua) sufficient resources are allocated to ensure that they have the ability to exercise their partnership aspirations over this process.

37. Consequently, we seek for the council to strengthen its commitment to the district plan review in this LTP, and ensure that mana whenua have the opportunity to partner in this process in a meaningful way. This discussion also applies to ongoing plan changes, the number of which has increased in recent years, and at times been a result of external pressure on council.

Democracy

38. We support the council's efforts to provide opportunities for mana whenua to participate in council decision-making processes, and the commitment by Council to facilitate access to council staff through formal hui.
39. We suggest that this commitment is realised through the development of a strategy for Rūnanga engagement across the broad ambit of council functions and processes.

Community Outcomes

40. We note the 6 community outcomes identified on p.16 are the result of community consultation. We suggest there needs to be some explicit recognition of the relationship between Mackenzie District Council and mana whenua as represented by their mandated rūnanga, and a commitment to honoring the principles of the Treaty and the concept of partnership as part of those priorities