

MURIWAI BEACH VEHICLE ACCESS PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES AND FEEDBACK

Thursday 15th April 2021
Waimauku War Memorial Hall

Minutes		
Time	Topic	Presenter(s)
7:00pm	<p>Welcome and Introduction</p> <p>RK thanks the public for attending and went through housekeeping and introduced Auckland Council Staff.</p> <p>RK describes the purpose of the public meeting – to receive constructive feedback on the future management of vehicles on Muriwai Beach. Feedback and discussion at the public meeting will be captured and submitted as part of the feedback process.</p> <p>RK explains that any decisions are made by the Parks, Arts, Community and Events Committee. The committee is made up of regional appointed Councillors.</p> <p>Members of the public wanted to know who the Councillor were and asked why they were not present, they also asked why a representative from the NZ Police was not present to answer questions about beach policing.</p> <p>RK outlines how feedback can be submitted by either hardcopy survey or online survey.</p> <p>RK runs through order of events including a contextual presentation followed by a breakout session, where feedback can be submitted via post it notes on topic boards (Recreation, Conservation, Public Safety).</p>	<p>Rachel Kelleher (RK)</p> <p>Various members of the Public</p>
7:15pm	<p>Members of the public voice that they do not want a breakout session and would prefer to remain in one group to speak and hear across all topics.</p>	
7:15pm	<p>Presentation</p> <p>SB begins presentation. The presentation outlines Recreational values, Conservational Values, Public Safety, access ways, vehicle counts tracked by vehicle counters on access ways, increasing visitation, rules for driving on the beach, road rules apply, current permit systems, suggestions in relation to public safety collated from the Regional Parks Management Plan, dune damage, fire risks, options for future management, pros cons and constraints of each</p>	<p>Stephen Bell (SB)</p> <p>Scott De Silva (SD)</p> <p>Rachel Kelleher (RK)</p> <p>Various Members of the Public</p>

7:50pm	<p>option. It is explained that the status-quo vehicle management at Muriwai is not an option as issues around public safety, conservation and recreation are still present.</p> <p>SB speaks about survey submission volumes - 700 feedback submissions were made during the Regional Parks Management Plan Consultation. Currently there are 1100 feedback submissions to the Muriwai Beach Vehicles on Beach survey. Submissions close 7th May.</p> <p>Members of the public again voice that they do not want a breakout session and would prefer to remain in one group to speak and hear across all topics. Feedback and questions are received steadily throughout the remainder of the presentation. Feedback is recorded.</p> <p>Questions are answered by SB, RK and SD.</p>	
7:50pm 9:00pm	<p>Verbal feedback received and recorded</p> <p>Feedback from members of the public was given verbally for the remainder of the meeting and notes were taken (refer to feedback table below).</p>	All
9:00pm	<p>Meeting Conclusion</p> <p>Auckland Council staff were available after the meeting to hear questions or feedback from those who did not have a chance to speak during the meeting.</p>	All
	<p>Next Public Meetings:</p> <p>South Head Golf Club, 22nd April, 7:00pm – 9:00pm.</p> <p>Muriwai Surf Club, 27th April, 7:00pm – 9:00pm.</p>	

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Feedback

Feedback from members of the Public

- The majority of the attendees strongly objected to the full closure of Muriwai Beach.
- Multiple attendees voiced that they are not happy with the three suggested management options (seasonal closure, controlled access, full closure). Attendees would like the opportunity to suggest alternative modes of management.
- Many attendees have said police need to be more actively engaged on Muriwai Beach. Members have suggested better Policing of the beach should be one of the future management options available for selection. The need for better enforcement and policing were themes conveyed strongly throughout the meeting.
- Members of the public have asked that Police are present at the next public meetings to answer questions around patrols and policing the beach.
- Multiple members of the public voiced that they were unhappy with being split into topic groups for a breakout session - preferring to remain as one group in order to speak and hear across all topics (Recreation, Conservation, Public Safety).
- Members of the public have made comments about the current permit system – which is currently not managed well and could work if better managed. Answering the current questionnaire survey online to obtain a permit is said to be too basic. Beach driving competency tests, education and training should be required before a permit is granted.
- Members of the public have said that signage needs to be updated and additional signs are required. Speed limit signs need to be added along the beach. Currently there are three speed limit signs along the beach which is not enough. Signage at access points also needs to be improved in the interest of Public Safety.
- A member of the public voiced concerns around public safety. It was mentioned that vehicles are sometimes seen doing donuts near horses. Some vehicles do not keep left whilst driving down the beach – signage should communicate safety messages such as which side to pass on and to use indicators. Rubbish left on the beach was a concern raised. Suggestions were made in relation to improving safety of the beach for vehicles through additional speed limit signage and access way signage. An alternative access way was suggested for vehicles that is not near horse riders and people.
- Multiple attendees mentioned that members of the 4WD clubs are not the people who have malicious intent or are driving dangerously along the beach. Some locals have mentioned that ‘out of towners’ and inexperienced 4WD drivers are often the ones who cause trouble or drive dangerously on the beach.
- A member of the public has said current ‘keep off the dunes’ signage has been ignored and there are vehicle tracks going up into the dunes next to these signs. It was also

mentioned that he often sees 4WD vehicles doing donuts near Okiritoto stream before driving down the beach. Concerns were raised about vehicles driving up the dunes as well as exceeding speed limits.

- Some members of the public believe that gates will not work and will be costly to maintain when they are cut through. Another member mentioned that legally installing a gate on a road will be a long and costly legal process.
- The president of the 4WD Associations Northern Zone agreed that signage needs to be improved and additional speed limit signage installed. He had also agreed that gates may not work and will prove costly to maintain. It was mentioned that members of the 4WD clubs are not there to wreck the beach. It was also mentioned that the bombing range should be opened to vehicle access for Recreational purposes.
- A member of the public voiced concerns over the natural environment. Vehicles negatively impacting the dunes in general, as well as damaging the habitat of beetle species. It was mentioned that vehicles run over Toheroa which are scattered around the mid-tide mark. Another member of the public argued that Toheroa are largely unaffected by vehicles driving over them.
- A member of the horse-riding community has said she felt the safety of horse riding is compromised by some vehicles on the beach. It was mentioned that she has felt bullied by people in 4WD vehicles in the past while riding on the beach.
- The president of the Norwest OHV 4WD club mentioned that it is easy for horses and vehicles to co-exist on the beach - however some vehicle owners are less informed or educated. Signage should communicate rules for passing horses in vehicles, also to show courtesy around horses when in a vehicle. It was mentioned that members of the 4WD clubs are skilled and sensible and would be willing to share advice or help educate those who are less informed. He agreed that there should be some form of competency test before driving on the beach and a register noting that 4WD training has been completed. Permit revoking and trespassing unruly drivers was supported. It was also mentioned that the local 4WD clubs had no notification about the vehicles on beach consultation before the start date.
- A member of the public has mentioned that he drives on the beach regularly walking his dogs and going fishing. He sees younger drivers driving dangerously on the beach and has dash cam footage, as well as registrations. It was mentioned that the police do not arrive after they are called. On occasions he has waited for 3 hours and police do not show. He mentioned that community policing should take place – having members of the community taking registrations of dangerous beach drivers or vehicles in the dunes. It was mentioned that dedicated police staff would need to be available for community policing to be effective, responding to incidents promptly as well as to pass registrations on to.
- A member of the public has mentioned horse riders also ride into the dunes. A community effort needs to be made on everyone's part to respect each other on the beach – 4WD's and horse riders alike. Suggestions were made that signage related to horse riding safety should be installed. Examples given were 'are you wearing your helmet' and 'do not bring your horse on the beach if it is not used to cars'. Other signage suggested was 'are your tyres at the correct pressure'. It was mentioned that horses should be trained to become used to vehicles before bringing them onto the beach.

- A member of the public has mentioned that the consultation is occurring in a difficult time (post-Covid) and the beach is often used for mental well-being. There is an opportunity for Kaitiaki of Muriwai beach from the local community.
- Members of the public were unhappy that no one involved in making the final decision-making process was present at the public meeting. Attendees have requested that Councillors involved in the decision-making process are present at the next meetings, as well as Police.
- A member of the public mentioned that manufacturers and car salespersons have a role to play in the safe operation of 4WD vehicles – untrained and inexperienced 4WD drivers should not be allowed to purchase.
- A member of the 4WD community has mentioned that the 4WD clubs have large social media followings – social media being a good platform for 4WD training videos, as well as a tool for community policing.
- A member of the public mentioned that the beach is a relatively safe place for donuts and if the beach is closed, other parks in Auckland would be the alternative space for donuts.
- A member of the public has suggested creating different access ways (geographically separated) for horses and 4WD vehicles. Discussions with Iwi should be happening to find an appropriate space for a new access towards the forest.
- Members of the public were unhappy with visibility of the Regional Parks Management Plan consultation, as well as the current survey. Attendees would have liked more notification to have taken place, such as a mail drop.