

*Minutes of a meeting of the Maungatautari Reserve Committee held in the Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre, 23 Wilson Street, Cambridge on Wednesday, 12 December 2007 commencing at 9.00am.*

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**1 PRESENT**

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Councillor GRP Webber - Chairperson

**Members**

His Worship the Mayor, A Livingston, Councillor LWE Hoverd (Waipa District Council), JB Mylchreest (Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust), P Tairi (Maungatautari Marae) [from 9.16am], B Townend (Landowner representative)

**In Attendance**

Tony Roxburgh, Project Manager – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning  
Noelene Barr, Committee Secretary

**2 APOLOGIES**

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**RESOLVED**

10/07/38

*That apologies for absence from Committee Members S Mackinder and R Smith be received.*

Livingston/Mylchreest

**3 LATE ITEMS**

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Nil

**4 CONFIRMATION OF ORDER OF MEETING**

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File: 01-85-26

**RESOLVED**

10/07/39

*That the order of the meeting be confirmed.*

Mylchreest/Townend

**5 VISITORS**

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Nil

## **6 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS**

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File: 01-85-26

**Minutes of meeting held on 3 October 2007 were included in the agenda.**

**RESOLVED**

10/07/40

*That the minutes of the meeting held 3 October 2007, as circulated with the agenda, be confirmed as a true and correct record of proceedings.*

Townsend/Mylchreest

## **7 MAUNGATAUTARI RESERVE COMMITTEE – OFFICER’S REPORT**

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File: 01-85-26

**Report of Project Manager – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning dated 27 November 2007 was included in the agenda.**

**RESOLVED**

10/07/41

*That the report of Project Manager – Heritage Development and Reserves Planning, dated 27 November 2007 be received.*

Webber/Townend

Mr Roxburgh reported that the bylaw had been signed off by the Minister of Conservation (MOC) and is currently working on a report for the Policy Committee to consider for the appointment of rangers, the format based on the Department of Conservation’s (DOC) practice. Committee Member Mylchreest is to provide a list of suitable staff of Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust (MEIT) and consideration will be given to appointing three or four others. DOC and Ministry of Fisheries honorary programmes provide an opportunity for training any honorary ranger appointed. The rangers will be warranted by Council and reviewed on a regular basis.

The bylaw states that public access must be through one of the three identified gateways and prohibits people taking animals/pests onto the reserve. Public access poses a risk to the project, particularly on private land as there are no means to control public access. However, if private land was to be vested with Council and classified as Reserve, the Bylaws would apply. Gateways have been located where landowners want them as a large number have either their water supply on the mountain or simply wish to continue to access the forest. There are 42 gateways. If landowners wish to use their gateways for commercial purposes they could, however a concession would be required if that commercial use involved the Reserve land.

[Committee Member Tairi from 9.16am]

It is proposed that a kiosk or similar will be constructed at the top of Tari Road to enable the public and their bags, to be monitored by Trust staff or others.

Council intends progressing a plan change to the Environmental Protection Lot (EPL) provisions to recognise the contribution made by landowners. To date, the progress has been slow, however it is now to be pursued with greater urgency. Landowners will receive an explanation of the plan change and advised of their obligations should they wish to realise an entitlement. They will also have the opportunity to meet with Council staff for an explanation in greater detail. Over 110 EPLs could result and this alone justifies a plan change to ensure fairness and consistency.

An alternative option available to land owners is to vest their private land in Council as a Local Purpose Reserve or Scenic Reserve. This would benefit landowners for rating purposes. The existing EPL provisions could accommodate this option.

The fence was built on the understanding that contributions of private land owners would be recognised as is provided for in the Management Plan. As the fence was finished 12 months ago, it is time to get these legal issues finalised. It is anticipated that the letters to the landowners will be sent early in the new year by Council's consultants.

The ongoing management of the reserve was considered by the Policy Committee with preference that Council's responsibility is to contract MEIT to fulfil Council's statutory obligations. A cost is involved with any contract for service agreement. It has been estimated that a minimum of \$130,000 would be required to meet basic management obligations for a regionally significant forest habitat.

Committee Member Mylchreest advised that the Trust's operating costs are \$1,200,000 to maintain fence, pest control and reintroducing species with administration costs additional. He suggested \$800,000 is required to look after the mountain and maintain the predator proof fence on an annual basis if kept at the current standard.

\$523,000 has been identified in the Annual Plan for the infrastructure at Hicks and Tari Roads; \$200,00 being used to upgrade the car park and toilet facilities at Tari Road. MEIT registered an interest in undertaking this work on behalf of Council. The Lion Foundation has recently provided additional funding to the MEIT which will cover the Tari Road costs, and also costs for developing further tracks and reintroduction of species. The Lion Foundation are very supportive of the project and would be receptive to further applications and it is considered an important partnership which should be fostered.

An architect has been employed by MEIT to prepare a plan for the location of the toilets, the kiosk and landscaping for which additional private land will be required. The two effected landowners have been approached regarding land purchase. It is intended to use the funds from Lion Foundation to purchase the land. A quote of \$70,000 has been received from Waipa Networks to provide power up Tari Road to the Reserve boundary.

The Business Plan MEIT are working to, shows an income requirement of \$200,000 from visitors. It is crucial that a well managed entrance facility is in place by the end of March to encourage people to make contributions to the maintenance of the project. Public access to the Reserve is free, however a charge can be made for "value added" structures or products. Guided walks, for example can be charged for.

The Trust is improving access over the mountain for pest control and monitoring purposes. This included the Quad track to service lateral connections. The Quad is likely to become the favoured walking track over the mountain, however linkages to the most popular summits (Maungatautari and Pukeatua) is required. This track offers a good gradient and surface for walkers and will meet national standards for a "Day Walk". The existing "route" will still be available for trampers.

## **8 PROGRESS REPORT FROM MAUNGATAUTARI ECOLOGICAL ISLAND TRUST**

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File: 01-85-26

**Verbal Progress Report from the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust was provided at the meeting.**

### **RESOLVED**

10/07/42

*That the verbal progress report from the Maungatautari Ecological Island Trust provided at the meeting be received.*

Webber/Livingston

Committee Member Mylchreest circulated photos of the newly hatched kiwi chick. Both parent birds were only two years old which is early to start breeding. Usually birds are between the ages of 3½ and 4 years. A professional cameraman will provide footage to the media which should create some good publicity. The Trust is appreciative of the community support.

There are large numbers of fledging tui and tomtits on the mountain which are not seen in unprotected areas. There have been two seasons without rats and the increase in insects is providing food for kiwi and other birds.

Pest surveillance has been carried out to ascertain the number of pests outside the fence, with 21 camera nights indicated a total of 66 pests including mouse, rat, rabbit, hare, hedgehog, possum and cat.

A map was circulated indicating the pest status. Monitoring is being carried out around the fenced experimenter and along ridge lines. Additional monitoring lines will bring the total length of track to 230km. and ensure all forest is within 200 metres from a tracking tunnel. One of the two registered predator dogs in the country has been contracted to assist with predator detection. Since December 2006 there has been no sign of pigs or cats and only a small number of rabbits and hares on grassland. Getting rid of the mice is a priority.

Transmitters have been put on castrated goats and will be released before Christmas to encourage the last of the goats to team up with them so they can be shot. If left alone, they multiply very quickly.

Kaka have been released since the last meeting some of which left the mountain for a while with sightings of others still in the area. Whitehead, robin, kokako, tuatara and stitchbirds will be released next year if funding is available. One of the kiwi in the northern enclosure ate grain based Talon bait. Staff noticed the green dye in faeces and the bird was dosed with Vitamin K and no apparent harm was noted.

There are commitments against the \$500,000 grant from Lions Foundation. The challenge is to source funding as the latest application to WEL Energy was declined as some groups like to spread their money around different organisations.

There was general discussion concerning the small number of members attending Committee Meetings. It was considered important to continue with monthly meetings until some of the current issues are resolved. Mr Roxburgh will contact members who have not attended recently and impress upon them that there is an important function to fulfil by being present at the meetings.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 10.55am.

**CHAIRPERSON** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE** \_\_\_\_\_

**CONFIRMED AS A TRUE AND CORRECT RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS**

**Next Meeting:** To be held on Wednesday, 12 March 2008 at 9.00am in the Committee Room, Cambridge Service Centre.