

SUBMISSION IN SUPPORT OF “REQUEST TO PAUSE” PC78 HEARINGS - Flooding and Cyclone Gabrielle:

Submitter details

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See Submission 411 and Further Submission 256 for submitter’s initial concerns

Submission

This submission takes up the invitation to support (or oppose) the request to pause Plan Change 78 Topic 013 – Qualifying Matters – Additional, to which our original PC 78 submission (S411) and further submission (FS256) was allocated.

The reasons for our support of a pause for at least a year is that the severe impacts of recent flooding and Cyclone Gabrielle need careful appraisal in order to reduce/ eliminate the risks of a repeat of the damage suffered to Auckland’s environment (natural and urban), livability and economy.

The extent of recent flooding and other weather impact events reinforce that if Auckland Council (and Government) is to set a Plan with supporting (short- and long-term) Strategy to successfully fix Auckland (for the better), there is some basic issues they need to decide to work on that will take at least a year to address.

The work programme required includes:

1. Preparation of updated MAPS showing *flood* prone areas (and streams) across Auckland – showing where the water went (and could go again – next summer and long-term);

2. Details of *cliff* faces (and slopes) under risk – and set a 100-year pull back area for no building above or below;
3. A *harbour's edge* (waterside) profile of risk from coastal threats - STORMS as well as gradual higher sea levels, over the next 100 years;
4. The *road building & maintenance* programme needs an updated drainage plan to cope with the increased quantities rain water;
5. Decisions on where the (new) SWAMP and vegetation 'water absorption' areas will be – The Domain worked well as did some other green spaces (golf courses e.g.), but other areas didn't e.g. The Strand; there is no (obvious) green space to absorb the volume of water and drainage is inadequate (too low and blocked by buildings and poor drains) to reach the harbour. Other low-lying suburbs in west and east Auckland clearly need a redesigned urban development plan that has increased weather risk mitigation planning.

Of particular concern: in our further submission (FS256), opposing Kainga Ora (S873) seeking removal of the 'single house' precinct created under the Auckland Unitary Plan, we noted that Kainga Ora has a statutory duty to contribute to sustainable & affordable housing. We said: "Climate-responsive design (and location) for new developments should be a requirement to cater for present and future predicted weather patterns like heat waves and rainfall variability including flooding." They clearly failed in that some 19 recently built dwellings are reportedly to be removed as a result of recent flooding.

The sustainable development concern applies generally, not just to Kainga Ora.

The required programme is at least a year's work, and needs to be tested against the scientific evidence indicating whether Auckland's (New Zealand and global) weather patterns have changed and will (likely?) continue to intensify for the foreseeable future?

This submission recommends that Council should assume that the weather/climate will continue to be seriously impacted year-on-year from the still rising levels of global CO₂ emission – there is no sign of any reduction in global CO₂ levels occurring for at least the next few years (it will take a huge global leadership initiative, and there is no sign of that happening).

So, Auckland is left with 'no choice', we say, but to look after its self, as best it can.

Relief sought

Auckland's current and future development capacity, as set out in the Auckland Unitary Plan, needs to be (reaffirmed and) strengthened against the findings of the work programme set out above.

We could not gain an advantage in trade competition through this submission.

Signed

Tony Garnier (for the group of submitters)

Date: 27 April 2023