



# Te Raekaihau Point Restoration

feedback on draft landscape plan:  
Oct-Nov 2009

## **Background**

In December 2008, Council agreed that up to \$350,000 from the Plimmer Bequest could be spent on restoration work at Te Raekaihau Point. To identify what this work might include, Officers undertook to get community feedback on how people use the area and what they value about it in March-April 2009. People were also asked about some issues and any ideas on what they would like to see at Te Raekaihau Point. Respondents valued the views, the rugged and wild coastal environment, the Point's accessibility, and the undeveloped and un-built landscape. Many respondents didn't like that the Point has been turned into a big car park. 107 responses were received. These values were incorporated into a design brief. Also refer to

1. Te Raekaihau Point Restoration: Preliminary feedback on values, issues & ideas. April 2009
2. Design brief for Te Raekaihau Point

A draft landscape plan was consulted on in October-November 2009. An ecological restoration plan is also being prepared for the site. 75 responses were received. 10 were from groups. 48% were from individuals or groups that gave feedback in March-April.

This report summarises the responses to the draft landscape plan and recaps feedback received earlier this year. There were 4 main areas we asked for feedback on:

- 1) vehicle access and safety
- 2) recreation facilities and walking access
- 3) coastal views
- 4) coastal ecology

## **Vehicle access and safety**

### **INITIAL FEEDBACK ON VEHICLE ACCESS IN MARCH-APRIL**

Most had no problem with reducing parking (72%). Would make this a more pedestrian/cycle friendly place. Vehicle controls should use natural materials.

12% opposed restrictions on parking. The car park also gets full on busy days.

Access is needed for disabled, the aged, young families & divers and kayakers (with lots of gear).

Some concerned about safety of current access points to reserve (7%).



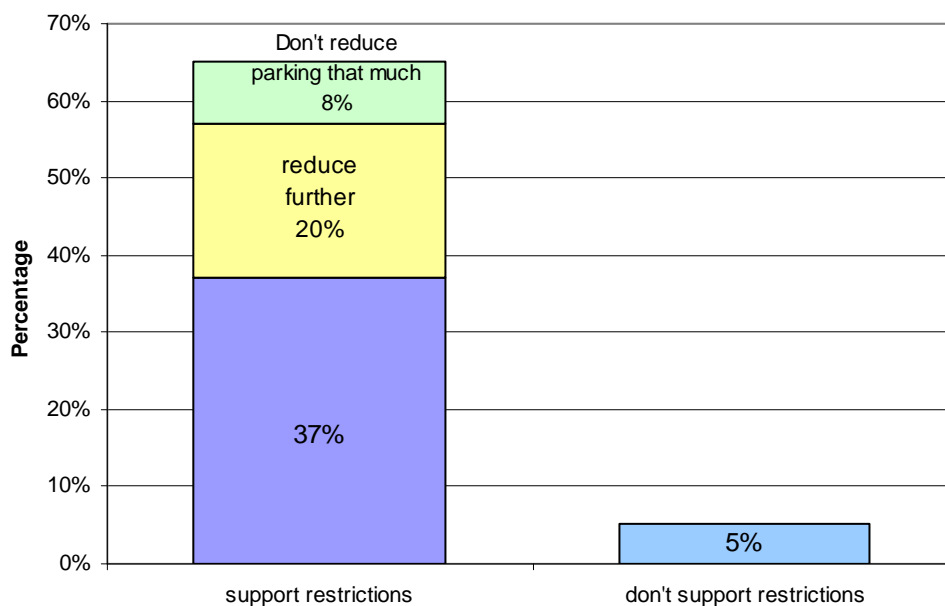
## Question on vehicle access and safety (Oct-Nov)

The draft plan proposes to reduce the area for car parking and improve traffic safety through changes to the entry and exit points and speed controls to slow traffic. A seaward footpath is included to improve pedestrian safety around the point. *Do you have any comments on vehicle access and safety?*

The majority of people supported the plans to reduce car-parking at this site. This will remove vehicles and assist ecological restoration. It will also make a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists (28%).

A large portion wants to see the car-parking area reduced further (20%) as there is ample parking.

Car restrictions - Te Raekaihau Point draft landscape plan



Others said this was the wrong thing to do. Viewing the coastal environment from cars is the main reason many people visit this site and this is an important feature of the south coast experience. Restricting car access will mean this experience will not be the same e.g. parking at tip of point not possible so can not get best views, carrying diving gear.

Some worried there was not enough parking and that this could result in congestion on busy summer days (9%). This could result in unsafe parking at the site and on the adjacent road – which is narrow and already considered unsafe.

Some wanted the car-parking area extended a bit to south of the 'island' to take advantage of the views.

Around 30% made no comment on restrictions on cars.

Over 30% made comments on the entry and exits and one-way system. Many related to the current road being unsafe – especially for cyclists.

Some comments are provided below:

*"I am very positive that you are restricting vehicle access from the point. The movement of vehicles is now right down on the foreshore of the point and is worse than it was 6 months ago."*

*"vehicle access seems good BUT I think too much space allocated for car parking."*

*"There is adequate carparking available in the area and revitalisation of the point depends on getting traffic of the Point."*

*“parking should be restricted to the existing large car park west of the point. This would provide the opportunity for a "sea-shore to summits" programme to rehabilitate and protect Te Raekaihau Point, and restore and protect "Waitaha Peninsula"/View Road South Headland Reserve”*

*“Limit vehicular access - it's time people got out and walked.”*

*“I like this proposal if there's enough parking otherwise people could park dangerously on the roadside”*

*“This corner (Lyal Bay side) has poor site lines and currently poor accessibility when accessing the site. Could not the access point be close to the Lyall Bay side on the point for safety purposes?”*

*“Please ensure that the proposed entry/exit points achieve a traffic calming effect that reduces overall speed along the coast road.”*

*“The one way traffic flow is unnecessary which will only congest this open space due to restricted road way, I feel that traffic should be free to move about.”*

*“the inclusion of 'marked car parks' & the inclusion of planter areas 14 is in my view changing substantially the nature of the 'rough/wild' nature of the area”*

*“Vehicle barriers should be solid but not so high as to impose on views from people sitting in cars. Some cars are lower than others and the high barriers impede the view.”*

*“I like being able to drive on to the shingle and watch the waves in stormy weather. We rarely park in the asphalted area because it does not have the same views as the point itself.”*

*“to enjoy the view from Cook Strait around towards the airport, cars need to be able to park towards the tip of the Point”*

## **Recreation facilities and walking access**

### **INITIAL FEEDBACK ON RECREATION FACILITIES IN MARCH-APRIL**

29% said no more facilities were needed. Only informal recreation occurred here and many don't want structures as they will undermine the naturalness of the area.

Others suggested rubbish bins, seating & picnic tables would be welcome – 20%.

If there are any additions, they should be minimal impact, kept simple and use natural materials (over 20%).

Walking (74%) and sightseeing (66%) were the most common activities undertaken by respondents to the questionnaire during March-April. Aquatic activities are also popular for 37% saying they went diving, fishing, kayaking and/or swimming at Te Raekaihau Point. Taking time out (20%) and connecting with nature – 20% (e.g. exploring marine environment) are also important activities.

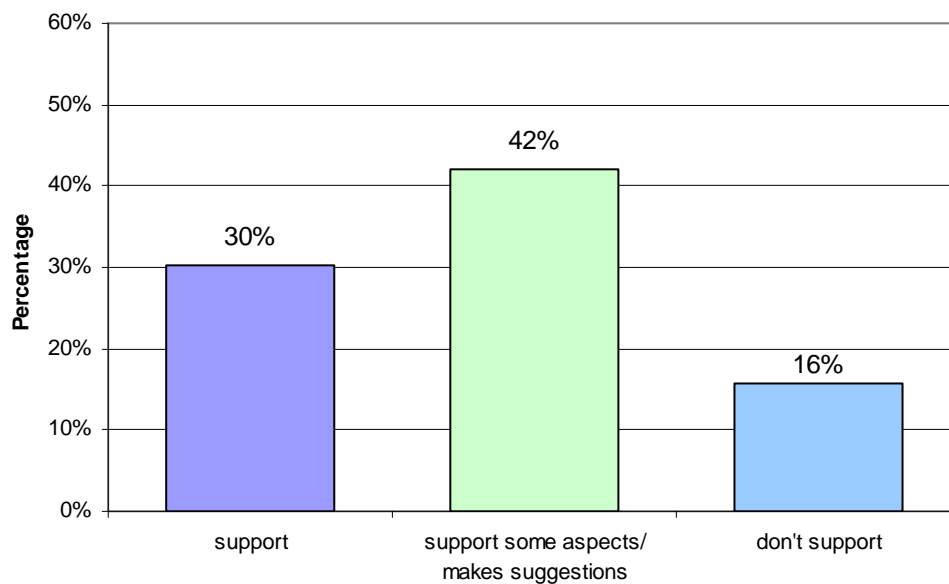


### **Question on recreation facilities and walking access (Oct-Nov)**

The draft plan proposes improved links to the coast and headland as well as safer access around the Point. Seating is also proposed. No lighting is recommended. *Do you have any comments on recreation facilities and walking access?*

30% supported the plans for recreation facilities. Over 40% supported some aspects of the draft plan or made suggestions.

### Recreation facilities - Te Raekaihau Point draft landscape plan



16% did not support the plans. The main reason provided was structures are not needed in this natural setting and are a waste of money.

Over 10% had no comment on proposed recreation facilities.

Many liked the proposal to restrict vehicles because it would create a more pedestrian/cyclist friendly environment (28%) – get people out of cars to enjoy real nature experience. Some requested bike stands (7%).

There is some support for the track to the headland (16%), but residents note there are safety issues around crossing the busy road at a blind corner.

There was concern about the defined tracks around the point and that material would be introduced e.g. edging. 23% said there wasn't a need for a defined walkway south of the 'island'. A few said the track surface would need to be accessible for a number of users e.g. prams, wheelchairs.

Other proposals:

- Seats- mixed views on these (19% for and 16% against). There is a group opposed to any built structures and a group saying these facilities will help them enjoy the views.
- Lighting - 17% were happy no lighting was proposed. 8% said there could be low impact lighting at the toilets.
- Interpretation and signs - 11% said this would be good
- Ramp – there was little comment on the ramp proposed from the car-park to Princess Bay.

Around 40% said that structures or formalising features (e.g. marked car-parks) were not appropriate at the site. The recent battle over the proposed Marine Education Centre and subsequent unique landscape ruling from the Environment Court were mentioned. People felt that the natural environment should be the centrepiece and not interrupted by built structures like planters, seats, edging on walkways, boulders, speed bumps.

The design needed to retain the “naturalness” of the area with minimal additions (32%) or it would become too much like a city park.

The materials being proposed for the site were not seen as natural to the environment (25%).

Some considered these features a “waste of money” (15%) and there were other priorities e.g. track to headland, restoring headland, WRAC.

A few people said the place was fine as it was.

Some comments are provided below:

*“we believe that the main recreational value of the area Is the natural environment itself and that additional recreation facilities are not necessary.”*

*“You don't need picnic tables, sand ladders, paths along carparking areas, and raised planter areas in the carpark. You would save money this way and get something that looked far more natural.”*

*“Agree no lighting as this would cause more light pollution disrupting viewing sea and sky at night, better to remain more natural in this area.”*

*“agree with no lighting. like the idea of low key seating as lots of people like to read there on fine days.”*

*“Some seating - particularly where there are good views”*

*“This is a naturally beautiful spot so "interference" must be minimal. Some defined parking areas and some seating is all that is required.”*

*“one of the best things about the point is the ruggedness, and the sense that you get that you are far away from the city. Adding various constructions will make it just seem like another park. If people want a park, there are plenty of other parks to choose from, but this place is unique.”*

*“Tracks formed should be as natural as possible and need not to be foed in concrete or any other paving material other than rocks and gravel from the area.”*

*“Consideration needs to be given to disabled and elderly access therefore hard surfaces may be appropriate for pathways.”*

*“The proposed compacted, gravel pathway winding through the site is unnecessary. This is a wild area on the South Coast and any attempt to urbanise it should be reduced.”*

*“open up the walk up the headland would be great”*

*“Te Raekaihau Point does not need 'saving' it is just fine the way that it is.”*

*“I especially support extending the timber deck”*

*“We think improved access to the lookout is a great idea. Our concern is safety in obtaining access at 9 as the corner is very close and east bound traffic, downhill, moves very quickly. maybe warning notices could be placed appropriately and a speed restriction of 30kmh could be applied throughout the area”*

## **Coastal views**

### **INITIAL FEEDBACK ON VIEWS IN MARCH-APRIL**

Respondents most liked the views from Te Raekaihau Point: includes South Coast, Cook Strait, Kaikoura mountains & the night sky (over 50%).

The views added to feelings of open space and why retaining views is important for two thirds of respondents.

Any addition should not be an eyesore OR block the view OR be prone to vandalism. Natural materials preferred.

Low plantings were preferred by some.



The Environment Court turned down the proposal for an aquarium in 2008, ruling the Marine Education Centre ‘*proposal would have significant adverse effects on the landscape and the natural features with special amenity values*’; views and open space values.

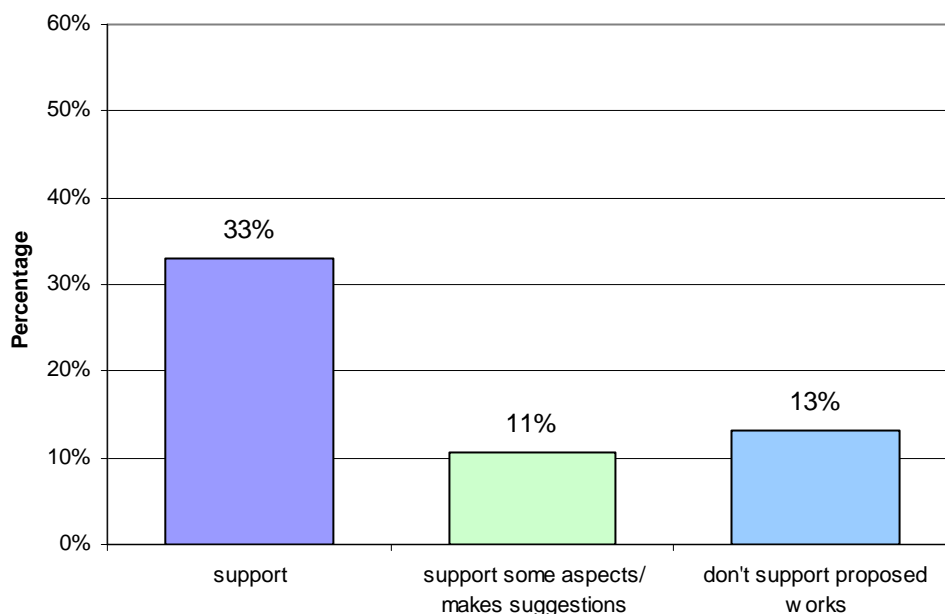
### Question on coastal views (Oct-Nov)

The draft plan proposes low-growing coastal plants. It also recommends raising the eastern car parking area slightly to improve coastal views. *Do you have any comments on views?*

Over 30% supported the proposal for retaining coastal views. That is because it is important to retain the views from the point (11%) and especially views from cars (17%). That is why is important that no structures (19%) or plants (20%) block these coastal views.

Around 45% made no comment.

Coastal views - Te Raekaihau Point draft landscape plan



There were mixed views about the raised area with 12% support, 12% opposed.

Some comments are provided below:

*“I strongly support keeping unobstructed views. They are essential for the appreciation of the rugged wild coastal environment, a primary reason that the area is so valued.”*

*“the views are the best in town. To obstruct the Cook Strait and South Island views would be criminal. This is why we fought the M.E.C”*

*“agree - low growing coastal plants so that the wonderful views are not hindered.”*

*“I would suggest that the angular parking in area 6 to 14 is the wrong direction to take advantage of the views”*

*“The long asphalted carparking area has nowhere near the same views as the shingled area on the point, so I strongly oppose confinement of parking to this area. Even if you raise it up, the views will not be nearly as awesome as the view from the point on a stormy day.”*

*“We are not very supportive of raising the level of the carpark to improve view. We believe this encourages to passive an interaction with the environment. We want visitors to get out of their cars and that the view are a reward for engaging with the environment”*

*“To improve coastal views for people sitting in their cars to lazy to get out and take in the South Coast Culture. Waste of money push play I say.”*

## **Coastal ecology**

### **INITIAL FEEDBACK ON RESTORATION PLANTING IN MARCH-APRIL**

55% said they supported restoration planting. It would benefit wildlife, control the weeds & restrict vehicles.

There was less support for landscape planting 8%

Some supported natural regeneration incorporating a weed control programme 14%



### **Question on coastal ecology (Oct-Nov)**

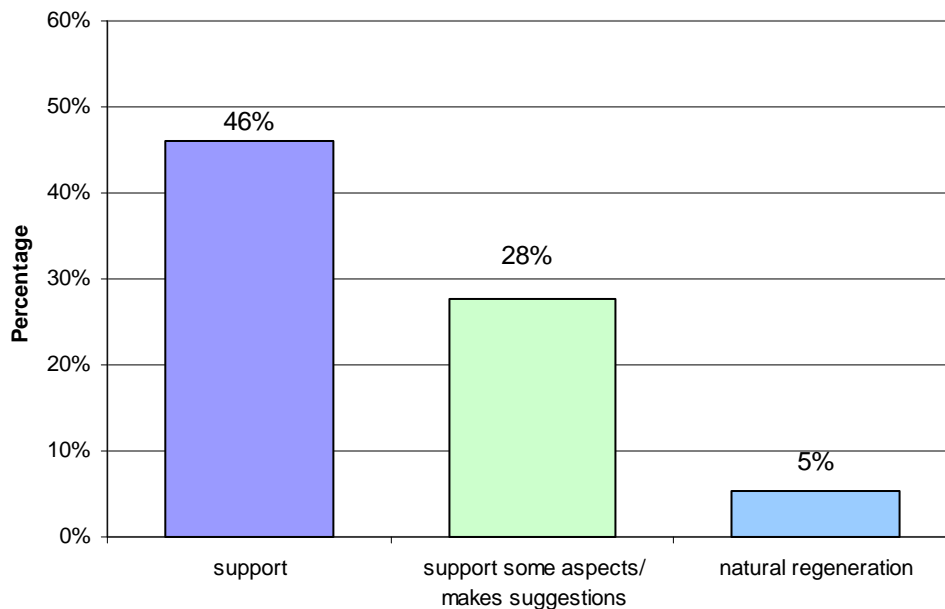
An ecological restoration plan is being developed, including a five-year community planting programme for Te Raekaihau Point. This will include eco-sourced coastal plant species and a pest and weed control programme. *Do you have any comments about ecological restoration at the site?*

There was a lot of support for ecological restoration and many made suggestions including wanting the area being restored to be increased e.g. 20% wanted to reduce parking further to enable more area to be vegetated. Others thought the restoration area should include the headland behind the point (7%) and dunes in Princess Bay (5%). A few said all areas should be restored and there should be no landscape planting.

Some said if vehicles were removed vegetation could return naturally.

Around 20% had no comment to make.

**Ecological restoration - Te Raekaihau Point draft landscape plan**



Other respondents highlight the importance of:

- Using eco-sourced coastal plants (25%)
- Using low growing plants that will not block views (20%)
- Having ongoing pest and weed control (21%)
- This not becoming a 'garden' (16%)

- Incorporating habitat for penguins (13%) and other animals (5%) and reducing the threats from vehicles and pest species
- Involving community in ecological restoration (4%)

Some question what was being restored (5%). Area only emerged in 1855 earthquake. A few questioned if introducing threatened species not known from the south coast was a good idea.

Some comments are provided below:

- “We request that only local species actually historically recorded from the Wellington south coast be planted.”*
- “As long as the plants are as ecosourced and as close to the original vegetation and don't grow so as to block views or look to planned and planted I am happy with the proposal.”*
- “don't over do it. Moa Point is a prime example of the road side view being totally obstructed by landscaping and planting out”*
- “Existing vegetation needs to be respected and no new decorative gardens be created introducing an over-landscaped shoreline.”*
- “The natural ecology has obviously suffered over the years and so I strongly support development of a restoration plan, including pest and weed (all exotics and potentially some non local New Zealand species) control. Cats and dogs are potential pests in the area and their control should be part of the plan”*
- “fully support community planting and weeding programmes”*
- “Let the area evolve naturally - it seems to be doing okay!”*
- “I'd like to know that the little blue penguin population would be taken into consideration so that they're natural nesting rhythm is as undisturbed as possible.”*
- “The headland reserve needs to be part of this coastal restoration plan.”*
- “I am not so sure that spending on planting at such a windswept point would be good value for council money.”*

The consultants completing the ecological restoration plan have worked closely with groups. Not all comments that people have made on ecological restoration during the consultation process are included here – see Ecological Rehabilitation report.

**Conclusion**

	Support all or some aspects that are proposed	Don't support proposed work	No comment
Reduce car parking	65%	5%	30%
Proposed recreation facilities	72%	16%	12%
Retain coastal views	44%	13%	43%
Ecological restoration	75%	5%	20%

- “a great proposal. Will tie in nicely with Marine reserve and make it a special place”*
- “Look forward to the restoration proceeding - a much valued recreational spot with my friends and dive club associates.”*
- “I'm very impressed by the level of thought which has obviously gone into this plan and heartily endorsed all that has been proposed.”*
- “looks a good plan. Well done”*

Megan Duncan  
Recreation Planner, Parks & Gardens

8/12/09