

Memo to: Marion Satherley, chairperson, Māpua and District Community Assoc.
Subject: Proposed housing subdivision on the 23.41ha property at 166 Māpua Drive.
From: David and Judy Mitchell
Date: 20 April 2021

Further to your request for a memo from us about our remaining concerns re the proposed 23.41ha housing subdivision on land at 166 Māpua Drive. Our concerns are:

- 1. The council has not planned sufficient measures that would avoid the risks of adverse effects of flooding on the site of low-lying flood prone land and natural wetland.** These areas were identified in a map prepared in 2010 for the council on then new lidar technology surveys of the site. We raised these issues in a council hearing on October 11 2012. Our final sentence of our submission read: *“The end result of residential zoning on flood-prone land, hard up against a forest reserve seems to us to be a formula for future problems for the housing development, for the Māpua Wetland and also possibly for parts of Aranui Park.”*
- 2. In its zoning maps, the TDC has not provided adequate setbacks and protection for the Māpua Wetland.** We understand the council may be considering a setback for the boundary for native planting we have undertaken along the long boundary of the 166 Māpua Drive property with Aranui Park. However, we do not know what this setback might be. We are also unclear about the council’s plan for the section of the 166 Māpua Drive property that adjoins the 1ha Māpua Wetland and are seeking clarification from the TDC planning department.
The setbacks are necessary to protect new and sensitive native plantings from the impact of development of the 166 Māpua Drive site, in particular, earthworks, drainage and other stormwater effects, and also to reduce reverse sensitivity effects in terms of shading from the wetland. Predominant tree plantings in the top triangle area of the Māpua Wetland, the area closest to the proposed housing zone, are 17-20-year old kahikatea and rimu trees. These will be big trees, not compatible with nearby houses.
- 3. We believe the council should protect the remaining cluster of five mature native trees planted by the late pioneer orchardist Arnold Wells.** The five trees are two rimu, a tōtara, a tanekaha and a miro or matai, all believed to be about 100-years old. They are on land formerly part of the Wells orchard and are situated close to the stand of six approximately 60-year-old native kahikatea in the Aranui Park plantings beside the fenceline and the Pā Harakeke (flax weavers’ garden). Arnold Wells was a notable pioneer orchardist. The five surviving native trees he planted are part of a legacy from the Wells family, the donors of the Aranui Park land to “the people of New Zealand”. Kahikatea trees are also important for our district because the former historic 320ha Kōrepo native forest in nearby Seaton Valley was reportedly predominantly kahikatea and pukatea trees.
- 4. We believe the council should be planning to abide by the required setbacks for natural wetland areas, as set out in the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management.** The new wetland regulations were promulgated in September 2020 *“to avoid the loss of natural inland wetlands, protect their values and promote their restoration”*. From our understanding, abiding by the regulations would require a minimum **10-metre setback of residential areas from natural wetland areas.**
- 5. We are disappointed that the council is not planning for a walking and cycle pathway linking the proposed housing subdivision with the very good pathway network in Aranui Park.** We understand this pathway was proposed by council staff to go from the southern corner of Aranui Park, up the slopes of the 166 Māpua Drive property to link with roading in the subdivision and to Higgs Rd. This pathway would be used by residents of the subdivision, particularly school children, and the wider community.