



**7 March 2023**

**Memo to the Hearing Panel on the Proposed Porirua City District Plan Variation 1 and Plan Change 19**

**Joint Statement on Stormwater and Sediment Management Provisions**

**Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour and Catchments Community Trust and Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet**

The essence of our joint submission on Variation 1 and Plan Change 19 to the Porirua City Proposed District Plan is to protect Te Awarua-o-Porirua and its catchments from increased sediment and pollutants caused by stormwater run-off, including risks from slippage on steep slopes. The harbour already suffers from too much land-based pollution and unsustainable increases in sediment and mud. This must be arrested and reversed. The District Plan is a crucial means for helping achieve this.

The Variation proposes a substantial increase in density as required by the Government and increases in higher density are also proposed by Kainga Ora. We would ideally like to see much less medium and a lot less higher density development. We doubt whether the water infrastructure can cope with the extra loadings caused by these density increases.

That said, and if the current proposals proceed, these density increases will inevitably lead to more hard surfaces from roofs and access ways to properties - both footpaths and driveways/parking spaces. With no requirements for off street parking, contaminants from vehicles will be deposited on streets and wash into the stormwater system. We consider the requirement to have no mandated off-street parking is totally inappropriate for the Porirua urban area. It has developed as a low-density car-based environment. Any city-wide walking and cycling alternatives will take years to achieve.

For these reasons we urge the Hearing Panel to consider imposing tough requirements and related measures to reduce the damage caused by excess stormwater and related pollution entering watercourses and the harbour.

We currently consider that for the Medium Density Residential Zone (MRZ) the landscaped area should be increased to 40% of any site - 10% more than in our submission. Further, we consider this area should be planted, wherever practicable, in native species, not grass.

For the High-Density Residential Zone, (HRZ S4), we consider that a site coverage requirement of no more than 75% should be imposed and the landscaped area needs to be as much of the remaining 25% as possible - preferably 20% of the site planted, wherever practicable, in native species, not grass.

We also consider that permeable surfaces must be used for any driveways and parking spaces around properties. Strict controls need to be put on cutting and benching.

We strongly support the practice of Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) and related hydraulic neutrality and urge that this be required as standard practice with no exceptions for all new developments and, critically, mandated for all site re-developments. Detailed requirements need to be set out for WSUD practices. These involve such mechanisms as the use of on-site water retention tanks, the use of vegetated swales, bioretention systems such as rain gardens, constructed wetlands, no or minimal culverts, and the use of existing watercourses and wetlands. Further, effective monitoring and enforcement must accompany any mandated practices.

We also propose that all zones include **inappropriate activities** which would be defined along the following lines:

*Avoiding any activities that risk causing adverse effects on natural resources including:*

- 1. The adverse effects of sediment, contaminants and nutrients entering water bodies*
- 2. The adverse effects caused by excess and contaminated run off from stormwater and sewerage systems, and*
- 3. The adverse and potentially irreversible effects on the harbour and coastal environment from sediment, contaminants and nutrients.*

The effects of recent storm events and their impacts on Northland, Auckland, Tairāwhiti and Hawkes Bay underpin the critical importance of ensuring effective and sustainable provisions are in place to limit, if not avoid such events from impacting Porirua in the future.

Michael Player, Chair, Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour and Catchments Community trust

Lindsay Gow - Chair Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet