

To: The Paekakariki Community Board

Re: A Precinct Plan for the Future of Perkins Farm

The biggest opportunities and challenges for Paekakariki after the Transmission Gully road is built will come from the re-development of the Perkins Farm. Sometime in the next three or four years, NZTA will sell what it does not need of the farm. The remaining land will no longer be a viable farm so it will be bought and developed by someone for non-farm uses.

Developed in a way that fits with the existing character and attractions of the village, it will contribute to the viability of businesses, services and events in the village. It offers opportunities for walkways, cycle trails, heritage attractions, rejuvenated streams, re-vegetated bush, wetlands that can reduce flooding risks, community gardens, etcetera. It also offers room for some new housing that could meet needs in the community for smaller, lower-cost housing and for places suitable for retired people.

Development shaped by the profit margin for a commercial developer could result in clashes with the character of the village and detract from its economic and cultural viability: housing that is designed to link with the motorway not the village; that is aimed at a market completely different from that which has attracted people to the village so far; reserve boundaries that make sense for new life-style blocks, but not for the environment; access ways to streams and bush that serve the new houses but not the village.

To overcome these threats and ensure that future development will complement and assist the village, the Council in consultation with the village community should draw up a 'Perkins Precinct Structure Plan' as has been done for other parts of the District: e.g.: the Tasman Lakes, and the Ngarara Precinct. Such a plan would set out 'best practice' land uses for different parts of the farm, along with preferred boundaries for reserves, paths, roads etcetera.

After a discussion with them, the Council's planners have responded that this would be an appropriate and sensible thing to do, but it would need to be included in next year's annual plan so that staff resources will be available to do it. A precinct structure plan would probably require the equivalent of half a planner/year.

The Transmission Gully road has the potential to undermine the viability of the very special place that is Paekakariki, but sympathetic development of the Perkins Farm offers opportunities to support its viability and reinforce its character.

We would urge the Community Board to advocate for a precinct plan and the allocation of resources to complete it.