

**Submission of the Korokoro Environmental Group
On the Hutt City Long Term Plan 2012-2018**



May 2018

Thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on this plan.

1. Korokoro Environmental Group is a community based environmental group, which undertakes a range of environmental activities, including community information and advocacy activities (eg on waste reduction, emergency preparedness and pest eradication); physical environmental activities (plantings, pest monitoring and clean ups; school based activities; and advocacy on any matter relating to our valley and to the wider Hutt Valley.
2. We congratulate the Council on some aspects of the plan, specifically the cycleway and shared path projects. We also congratulate the Council on its rejuvenation project, particularly in the heart of Lower Hutt which has encouraged family and community events in the heart of the city.
3. The focus of the Korokoro Environmental Group is primarily on environmental issues. So for us the important strategic areas of focus for the Hutt City Council must be:
 - biodiversity and environmental resilience
 - actively reducing current or future negative environmental impacts
 - active promotion of environmental awareness and protection
4. We think that the long-term plan avoids responsibility for environmental protection and that avoidance will mean that our Hutt environment will suffer further environmental degradation. The goals reflected in other strategies such as the environmental sustainability strategy are completely undermined without resourcing, goals or measurements. Moreover the overall focus on growth across the Council's strategic documents is not matched by plans to mitigate or reduce the negative environmental impacts of growth.
5. We challenge the Council, for example, to set a target of actively reducing the need to use cars across Lower Hutt City and to promote alternative transport options. Any focus on road building without consideration of environmental effects is deeply flawed. For that reason we ask the Council to oppose the Petone to Grenada link road.
6. We also challenge the Council to enhance the foreshore of our city by protecting its flora and fauna and improving water quality flow into it; to renew the bush to sea connection; and to invest in the Cross Valley link as a direct means of taking transport pressure off the Esplanade.
7. We challenge the Council on the minimal focus on biodiversity in its long-term plan, despite it being listed as an area of focus. Key strategic areas such as water management and parks management barely touch on biodiversity, and environmental 'assets' are directed towards human use rather than other species. In addition since the Long-Term Plan is the document

that sets in place actual activity through goals and budget allocation, we would expect a lot more allocation of resource and activity to ensure the Environmental Sustainability strategy is fully met. With respect, we challenge the Council to put its money where its mouth is.

8. Bearing in mind the growth strategy of the council, without an aligned focus on biodiversity any actions are likely to have a negative impact on biodiversity. We challenge the Council to undertake more joined up thinking. It is our position that all of the Council's strategic documents should have KPIs focusing on the enhancement of the environmental and biodiversity assets of the Valley.
9. Specific actions that could be resourced and would have impact include:
 - active research to understand and monitor the ecological health of the Hutt Valley so that the major risks are understood and publicised.
 - projects to recover and enhance native fish spawning and water ecology;
 - support for more education on the ecology of the Valley, including health of streams, understanding about bush corridors
 - more active pest control across Hutt reserves working with volunteer groups;
 - active reduction of phosphate use across the Hutt;
 - active reduction of fossil fuel use across the Valley;
 - much more activity around waste minimisation including closer work with and pressure on industries that are using or generating non-recyclables;
 - environmental business incentives and awards for businesses that are reducing their environmental footprint
 - Active promotion of alternative energy use across the Valley.
 - active reduction of herbicide use across the Valley through a range of regulatory and promotional activity.
 - Much closer work with local iwi to promote to the broader public understanding of the te ao Maori life elements of our environment, such as the awa and pukāki and rerenga rauropi of Awakairangi.
 - Council promoted environmental collaboratives involving iwi, business, farming and environmental groups, to work on solutions that will recover some of the environmental loss, and ensure that growth does not increase environmental degradation.
 - Providing incentives for homeowners to reduce their environmental footprint.

For further information contact

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