



ENVIRONMENT & PLANNING CHAIR'S REPORT

TO: Environment & Planning Committee

FROM: Michael Higgins, Environment & Planning Committee Chair

REFERENCE: S611

SUBJECT: **CHAIR'S REPORT - REPORT REP10-09-08-** Report prepared for meeting of 24 September 2010

It is with reflection that I write this Chair's report, the final one for this Council. Three years ago, we had experienced a decade of exceptional growth in urban expansion and investment generally. There were ominous signs that some investments were turning bad, and so it proved to be. Nevertheless, there were some 844 building consents issued in the three year term of this Council.

Peak oil was a popular topic leading to a call for significant development of Council policy regarding the use of energy for transport and everyday life. Motor vehicle technology has developed quickly to address this threat with improved fuel economy and the provision of new sources of petroleum energy. It has become clear that liquid petroleum gas (LPG) or liquid natural gas (LNG) exists in such vast quantities, that abundant fuel will exist for some decades yet.

In my opinion, the love of the private motorcar, and the freedom that comes with it, will continue to increase traffic movement and roading requirements on a steady growth projection. That effects our planning.

This leads to another key issue three years ago, the matter of carbon emissions, greenhouse gas and the threat of global warming. As a committee, we have talked about this issue on occasions, to gain a perception of the things that are real, and those that are basically hype. It is an ongoing issue with a meaningful level of debate as to how the world should address it. We now have an emissions trading scheme, applied with trepidation, and I think there is a common acceptance that policy leading to the sustainable use of carbon (at least) is do-able and in many ways makes good sense.

The Environment & Planning Committee has dealt with some big issues, none more so than the hearing submissions on the Richmond West development area, and the work required to put substance into that plan. We picked up the Mapua development plan and have taken it through to adoption and notification today.

Motueka West development policy, technical reports for Motueka Central Plains ground water allocation and Eastern Golden Bay development are among the plan changes we have worked through.

The Committee has established the Pt IV; Rivers and Lakes chapter of the TRMP and Notified the change. Consideration of submissions on that change will occur with the new Council.

The E&P staff and Committee have worked with the Ministry for the Environment to achieve a successful cleanup of the FCC site in Mapua.

Given the constraints that the Council has been under, it is in my opinion a job well done and I want commend the staff responsible for getting through it and achieving a good end result.

I wish to thank Councillors for diligence in the hearing and consideration of Resource Consents. The numbers have been less in this term, but the complexity of applications has increased.


One of the more pleasant tasks was the Heritage assessment and record establishment of Hop Kilns in the district before they fade from history. And the list goes on.

I wish to thank Mayor Kempthorne and the Council for giving me the opportunity to chair this committee. It has been a pleasure to do.

Sincere appreciation from us all is due to Dennis Bush-King for outstanding leadership in managing this section of Council. His ability to make good decisions, and to communicate with Councillors makes Council life easy to do. There are many staff who report to us each year, with much depth in their statements and reasoning. Their willingness to contribute and to take the district forward is valued.

The next term of Council will be "business as usual", for the E&P committee. We have lived within our budgets and do the things that matter most within budget constraints.

I wish all Councillors well as we move through the election process.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Michael Higgins". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Michael Higgins
Chair, Environment & Planning Committee