

# Fixing Matiatia madness local board's top issue

ROSE DAVIS

Traffic and parking woes near the passenger ferry terminal at Matiatia have been put in the urgent box.

Waiheke Local Board has told Auckland Council that funding for improvements at Matiatia is its top priority.

Local board chairperson Paul Walden said parking at Matiatia needs to be increased and changes made so people can move safely and easily from the wharf to public transport and car parking areas.

"It's our top priority because of the scale of the issues and because everyone on the island is impacted in some way by the level of dysfunction at Matiatia," Walden said.

The board wants \$36.85 million to take over land controlled by Panuku Development Auckland, complete a strategic plan for Matiatia, and sort out transport and stormwater problems in the bay.

The funding would also allow the development of a visitor and cultural centre and commercial services in the bay.

**"Everyone on the island is impacted in some way by the level of dysfunction at Matiatia"**  
Paul Walden

The council will decide whether the board gets this funding before it finalises its long term plan in July.

Auckland Transport could also set aside funds to deal with traffic and parking problems at Matiatia.

The car park at Owhanake could be bought by Auckland Transport (AT) and designs are being drawn up to maximise parking there, said AT spokesperson Melanie Dale.

A bus stop allowing people to catch a bus to the ferry from Owhanake is being considered, Dale said.

Changes could include the development of a loop road in the congested ferry terminal area, Walden said.

The local board wants the power to decide what happens to land at Matiatia that is under



Waiheke Local Board chairperson Paul Walden at Matiatia, an area the board urgently wants sorted out. ROSE DAVIS/STUFF

threat of sale by the council.

Last Thursday, the board called on the council to hand over the power to make decisions over council land at Matiatia.

The council agency, Panuku Development Auckland, is considering selling about eight hectares of land, because it is deemed surplus to council requirements.

The former Auckland City Council bought the land for \$12.5 million in 2005, with some thorny conditions. *Continued on page 5...*



# Local board seeks power over Matiatia

ROSE DAVIS

*Continued from page 4...* These include considering selling a finger of bush-covered council land behind Forest and Bird's Te Atawhai Whenua Reserve.

The council also suggested the long-term lease of at least 8000 square metres of land should be considered, to return \$7 million of the money used to buy the land.

The expectation of a financial return on the council's investment in the land and the conditions imposed in 2005 still stand, so the local board is trying to find ways to bring in cash without destroying the bay.

The board has asked for the power to decide what happens to the Panuku controlled land and other undeveloped council-owned land at Matiatia. It also wants the power to decide on leases of the old Harbourmaster's building and on the foreshore.

The changes at Matiatia will be based on a plan being developed by Direction Matiatia, which has surveyed the community about what people want to see happen in the bay.

A visitor levy of \$1 or \$2 from the 1.4 million visitors who arrive on the island each year is being investigated as a possible source of funding for the Matiatia improvements.

The levy could also help fund facilities such as toilets, signs and



walking tracks, Walden said.

Ancient Māori urupa (burial sites) have been recorded in large areas of the Panuku land in front of the old Harbourmaster's house and in the car park on the foreshore at Matiatia, he said.

Ngati Paoa Iwi Trust is writing a report on its wishes for the bay

and these could include 'no go' zones, Walden said.

Parking could be removed from some areas because human remains are buried there.

People can give feedback on the local board's plans for 2018 to 2019 at a Have Your Say meeting at the local board office in Ostend

on Tuesday, March 6, from 5.30pm to 7.30pm.

The board is planning to progress plans for a community swimming pool and to work with the community towards achieving a pest-free Waiheke.

Improvements at Little Oneroa are planned and the board aims to

help meet community housing needs.

The board plans to work with school and youth representatives to create a youth space.

Making sure Essentially Waiheke is recognised as a core document for planning is another local board goal.

Some car parking at Matiatia might need to be removed because it has been built over Māori burial sites.

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