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Office of the Chairperson

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18 September 1996

The Regional Conservator
Department of Conservation
P O Box 5086
WELLINGTON

Dear Mr Ross

Acquisition of Takapu Block - Belmont Regional Park

I am pleased to advise that the Regional Council has now assessed its position regarding the Takapu Block as it relates to Belmont Regional Park, and that it seeks to have the land transferred at nil consideration to the Department of Conservation as part of the earlier Crown land allocation process. This is further to matters previously discussed between officers of this Council, DOC, DOSLI and Treasury.

Action Sought

I now ask you to progress discussions with Treasury or Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) to establish whether they are willing to transfer the land at nil consideration.

The Council's request is based on the original agreements that occurred at the time of the Crown land allocations whereby it was identified that the land had important landscape and recreational values that related to, and were an integral part of, Belmont Regional Park. However, I understand that at the time of transfer the land was considered to be adequately protected while allocated to Electricorp as long as it was farmed by Landcorp and managed as part of Belmont Regional Park.

Declaring the land surplus to Electricorp's needs now opens the issue of the Crown's commitment towards sustaining Belmont Regional Park in its original concept as was agreed between the different public land owning agencies.

Section 6 19 of the Local Government Act 1974, as inserted by the Local Government Amendment Act 1992, gives to the Wellington Regional Council management responsibility for Belmont Regional Park. The Crown, in taking the initiative to change the Act and in giving the Regional Council powers to manage and maintain Belmont Regional Park, also states the importance of maintaining the Park in perpetuity. The Park as developed in its

original concept relies heavily on multi-public land ownership to which the Crown is a key contributor.

Therefore, I believe the Crown, in originally committing the Takapu Block as part of Belmont Regional Park, has demonstrated a commitment towards ensuring the park's original land bank remains intact while WRC continues to resource the management and maintenance of the Park.

Action Taken By WRC

Staff have recently commissioned a report titled *Takapu Road Block, Belmont Regional Park : An Assessment of The Recreation And Landscape Values*. This report covers the important site values of the Takapu Block as they relate to Belmont Regional Park and as protected through the Draft Belmont Regional Park Management Plan, 1995 and associated previous plans. (The Belmont Regional Park Management Plan, 1996 was formerly approved by the Regional Council's Landcare Committee at its meeting on 3 September 1996. Approval by the full Council is being sought on 24 September.) It should be noted this plan is a requirement of the Local Government Amendment Act 1992 and has had members of the Department of Conservation and Landcorp Farming Ltd on the Advisory Committee.

The Takapu Road Block report very clearly identifies the importance of the recreation, geological, landscape and open space values of the area to Belmont Regional Park and states that the only effective way for these to remain intact is for the land to become reserve land and managed as part of the Park. Staff from your Office have been in close liaison with Recreation Department staff during the preparation of the report. Three copies are enclosed for your information and possible use as backup material for the negotiations with LINZ and Treasury.

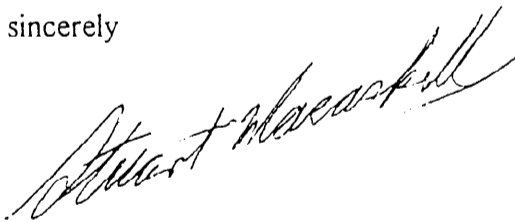
The Takapu Road Block report has been formally approved by the Landcare Committee; see associated Report 96.2 11 and the Landcare Committee's recommendations as attached.

Further Support

I am happy to provide backup through Officers or political representation of this Council to aid you in your discussions or negotiations with other Government Departments or Ministers of the Crown.

Thank you for your support and co-operation to date. I look forward to progressing this matter to a favorable outcome.

Yours sincerely



STUART MACASKILL
Chairman, Wellington Regional Council

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