

30 November 2017

The Honourable Phil Goff

Mayor of Auckland

Auckland Council

Private Bag 92300 Victoria Street West

**Auckland 1142**

Dear Sir

**Re: Cat Cull In Council's Pest Plan**

Further to the front page article in the East & Bays Courier of 22 November I have the following concerns and questions to ask you:-

- When your colleague, Phil Brow, said cats were dangers to numerous threatened species including black petrel, Cook's petrel, dotterels and kiwi where do these birds live? Not in any suburb in Auckland, so where are they?
- The Unitary Plan that you endorse is about to build apartments and intensive housing on land that is full of trees and bushes, so why is that acceptable when you know that land has various bird life living on it?
- We also have upcoming and ongoing tunnels, roads, stadiums, supermarkets etc being built on land that has trees and bushes with birds on that land so is that going to be restricted?
- When you say that cats who aren't microchipped will be killed how are you going to kill those cats? Are you going to have Gareth Morgan's Fan Club partnered with Animal Management Control going around all of Auckland trapping cats and then checking if they have a microchip and if they don't then ... what? Hit them on the head a few times with a stick? How are they trapped, checked and killed? And who is paying for a humane kill and who is involved with this project?
- These sensitive environmental areas that you talk about, where are they? If they're islands out in the Hauraki Gulf then you've already killed any 'pest' on those islands so what areas are you talking about? I ask because if they're in Auckland that means no human could be anywhere near them. You can't have a bike track or walkway in them because if they're that sensitive we can't be there.
- Do you have a panel who is discussing this so called "Cat Cull"? If so, who is on this panel?
- Where do you get your statistics regarding cats being the murderers of all birds?
- Apart from the animal welfare aspect of all of this the fact is our basic needs are roading, rubbish and rates and yet this is your priority? Add to that the fact that thousands of our public parks and reserves aren't being mowed and have grass up to our thighs and yet ratepayers are supposedly paying for such services.

Sir, there are far too many questions for this to be a topic that is discussed in an Auckland Council meeting room by faceless and nameless Auckland Council employees.

As an update, I now see in the East & Bays Courier of 29 November the front page article "City Sprawl Clips Wings" and that's nothing to do with cats (or dogs). It's all about various bird sanctuaries being chopped up for housing and a marae. In Pt England the Forest & Bird Auckland Manager, Nick Beveridge, said he's very concerned and working with iwi Ngati Paoa to try and ensure there would be some areas for dotterel in Pt England but and I quote, "Whether it's possible, I don't know". How can you possibly approve a cull of cats when you have such obvious problems with humans and their various groups within our city?

I would appreciate answers and also to be part of the process of discussion. I'm an animal advocate in my community and my Councillor, Desley Simpson, knows me well and knows what I did with regard to the dog registration issue and how much time and effort I put into my submissions during your predecessor Mayor Len Brown's tenure.

Yours sincerely

**Julie Clayton-West (Mrs)**

**CC**

- **Desley Simpson, Councillor Orakei Ward**
- **Various cat owners and/or lovers in the Orakei Ward and other suburbs in Auckland**

13 December 2017

Dear Mrs Clayton-West,

### **Cat management in proposed Regional Pest Management Plan**

On behalf of the Mayor, I have been asked to respond to your letter regarding media coverage of cat management in council's proposed Regional Pest Management Plan.

The proposed plan has a focus on managing cat impacts in areas that have been identified by Council's Biodiversity team as being priority native areas for protection. Note that cat control would only ever be undertaken at sites that also receive integrated pest control for other species such as rats and possums, which immediately limits the number of locations at which cat control would be undertaken to a sub-set of the high biodiversity value areas in the region. If we don't manage pests the lives of our native species are at risk instead – we know this from extensive New Zealand-based research. However, we absolutely acknowledge that cats are only one small component of the numerous threats to our region's wildlife, even though this may not always be reflected in the extent of media coverage that they attract.

Please be assured that Council acknowledges the great value of cats as companion animals and is also committed to the humane treatment of cats and support for responsible pet ownership while at the same time keeping pests under control to protect our region's biodiversity. The proposed plan would see council invest more in positive advocacy relating to responsible pet ownership, with the potential to work with community partners on projects such as subsidised de-sexing and micro-chipping, especially in communities living near priority native ecosystems to help cat owners and native biodiversity to live harmoniously alongside each other in these areas.

The proposed plan will be consulted on 28 February-28 March 2018, alongside the Long-term Plan. This will provide Aucklanders an opportunity to provide feedback on how cats should be managed for the purposes of biodiversity protection in the region, as well as any other pest management issues of interest.

Yours sincerely



Dr Imogen Bassett  
Biosecurity Principal Advisor  
Auckland Council