

# Controversial helipad on hold

A resource consent for a helipad at Onetangi winery Obsidian is on hold after an Auckland Council request for further information.

After the council's consultant planner, Dominique Cornford, reviewed the application submitted by Isle Land Planning and visited the proposed site, she went back to Isle Land Planning asking for further information within 15 working days.

Included in the request seen by *Gulf News*, Ms Cornford notes that a property north of the proposed helipad site, 123 Sea View Road, will be affected by noise levels that exceed what's allowed under the District Plan.

She writes that although the property is owned by the applicant, exceeding the noise level is still an issue as it's not on the same site as the proposed helipad, nor is it held on the same record of title. Because of this, the noise levels from the proposed helipad will infringe the District Plan noise standards making it a discretionary activity rather than a restricted discretionary activity.

She also notes that a house used for visitor accommodation at 109 Sea View Road was not considered in relation to adverse noise effects. It appears that the holiday house was left off the application for resource consent as it doesn't appear on Geomaps, Auckland Council's online mapping tool.

Ms Cornford says this is another reason for the application to become a discretionary activity, unless the proposal is modified so that any chopper noise is below a level of 50dB LDN at the 109 Sea

## Petition calls for choppers crackdown

A new petition asking Auckland Council and the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to control helicopter noise and safety risks over Waiheke launched this week.

"Helicopters are out of control on the island," says Vicki Jayne of Quiet Sky Waiheke, whose 40 members want stricter regulations around the helipad consent process and helicopter rules.

"It's time the council stepped up to deal with the problem they've created. The CAA needs to help since it has wide authority over helicopter behaviour."

Quiet Sky Waiheke's petition, which can be accessed via the group's website, calls for a moratorium on new consents and a review of the 48 existing helipads.

The group wants stricter rules for flying over Waiheke, including higher altitudes, lower speeds, staying over water as long as possible and the use

of onboard tracking systems.

"These systems exist," says Ms Jayne. "It's just a matter of requiring the helicopters to turn them on."

Quiet Sky Waiheke sprang to life six weeks ago when residents learned of Obsidian Wines' application for a helipad just off Sea View Road.

"We've learned that residents all over the island are angry at the conduct of helicopter pilots who fly low over their homes and ignore the flight paths they are supposed to follow," said Ms Jayne.

"We've even heard of helicopters meandering low over the island for sight-seeing and helicopters landing illegally on front lawns to take tourists to a birthday party."

Quiet Sky Waiheke says that the island's 48 helipads make up the greatest concentration of helipads anywhere in New Zealand.

View Road property.

If such a change to the activity status occurs, there will be a significant change in how the helipad proposal can be processed and it could mean that some form of public notification is required.

Some applications for restricted discretionary activities, under which Waiheke helipads typically fall, are specifically identified in the district plan

to be considered without public notification or the need for written approvals from affected members of the public. But if an application changes to discretionary, the council is then required to further consider any adverse effects on the wider environment and on adjacent persons. Should the adverse effects on

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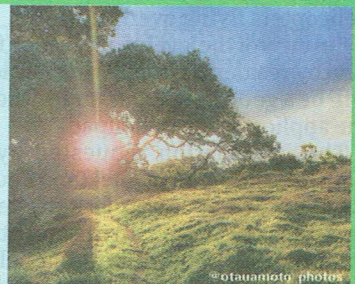
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## WAIHEKE WEATHER 5 - 11 JULY 2021

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	WEEKLY TOTAL	MONTH TO DATE	MONTH HISTORIC
☁ WAI AUCK	2.0 0.0	9.0 29.0	0.8 1.0	2.5 5.0	1.5 1.5	0.0 0.0	0.0 0.0	15.8 36.5	15.8 36.5	129.8 160.5
☀ WAI AUCK	16.5° 13.4°	16.3° 16.0°	14.8° 15.0°	14.5° 13.4°	15.0° 15.6°	16.0° 16.7°	12.8° 14.3°	15.1° 14.9°	15.4° 14.8°	15.4° 15.2°
❄ WAI AUCK	10.1° 10.9°	11.5° 11.8°	8.9° 9.7°	9.9° 10.0°	9.4° 8.7°	9.5° 8.8°	10.3° 8.3°	9.9° 9.7°	9.1° 8.2°	8.5° 8.1°

Data by WeatherWise Auckland: 020-4023-0106



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the wider environment be deemed more than minor, the application will need to be publicly notified. If this were the case, it would mean that anyone could lodge a submission with council for or against the application.

Should the adverse effects on the wider environment be deemed minor, then the application will not be fully notified. However, the council must then turn their mind to the adverse effects on adjacent persons. If adverse effects are deemed to be minor (or more than minor) on adjacent parties, then the written approval of these parties will be required. If written approval from all adversely affected persons cannot be provided, then the application will be limited notified to adjacent persons only.

According to a noise assessment by Marshall Day Acoustics included in the resource consent application, the topography surrounding the proposed Obsidian helipad, such as an adjacent ridgeline, will assist with noise mitigation. However, Ms Cornford has asked that further evidence of this is provided.

She's also requesting that the applicant provides a more robust assessment of cumulative noise effects, including those of other helicopter movements in the area, and that the applicant provides an assessment of noise effects for all receivers where noise levels are predicted to be greater than 45dB LDN.

"The assessment should subjectively describe the level of noise and its intrusiveness or effect on indoor and outdoor activities during helicopter movements," reads her request.

Meanwhile, recently formed group, Quiet Sky Waiheke is calling for stricter rules and regulations around consenting any non-essential helipads on Waiheke. The island is currently home to 48 approved chopper pads.

One member of the 40-strong group, Gerda Gorgner, says many Onetangi locals have already written emails or letters to council staff about the Obsidian application and she says she doesn't want to hear any more non-essential helicopters flying overhead.

"In view of the level of opposition from nearby residents, I hope that Obsidian will be a good neighbour and withdraw the application for a helipad."

The information requested by Ms Cornford on behalf of Auckland Council is required by 26 July unless an alternative time is arranged. In the meantime, the Obsidian application for a helipad remains on hold. • *Sophie Boladeras*

## Resistance to plan for new hours for alcohol sales in Surfdale

Surfdale Fruit and Vege has met with opposition after lodging an application to extend the hours during which it can sell alcohol.

The shop's licence allows alcohol to be sold between 8am and 7pm Monday to Sunday, but operators want to push those hours out to 7am to 9pm.

The site hit the headlines last year when an application to convert the grocery store into a bottle shop was first passed and then declined by the Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority on appeal following a huge public outcry from residents.

Waiheke Local Board member Kylee Matthews says the board is currently discussing whether to formally oppose the latest application.

"I am personally pushing for that because we know there are several sites of sensitivity around there. I will be writing as a resident of Surfdale about the effects of alcohol in our community."

In the application for the new off-licence filed with Auckland Council by A&N Enterprises, six sites within a 1km radius of Surfdale Fruit and Vege are deemed "Perceived Sensitive Premises":

Waiheke High School, Waiheke Primary School, Waiheke Community Childcare, Living Waters Church, Living Without Violence and Waiheke Youth Centre.

A&N Enterprises director Avon Singh says the grocery store team has been working over the past year to develop the store as a mini supermarket with a wide range of offerings. He says that although the store was struggling for a period, the business has picked up thanks to community support and the team's hard work.

"We are working to become a full-service mini supermarket and trying to build the business up to a certain level and to offer additional sales including meat, which many people request. We have no plans to change this into a liquor store. We are working really hard to develop our business as a grocery store."

Mr Singh notes that other grocery stores on Waiheke such as Four Square in Oneroa and Countdown in Ostend, are licensed to sell alcohol for similar time periods to what he's proposing. Four Square is

licensed to sell alcohol from 7am to 9pm, although it closes at 7.30pm in winter. Meanwhile, Countdown is licensed to sell from 7am to 11pm and currently closes at 9pm.

"People often come to buy groceries and a bottle of wine at Surfdale Fruit and Vege after 7pm," says Mr Singh, "but when they find we're not able to sell them the wine, they sometimes leave the basket at the counter and head to Countdown instead."

Former Waiheke Local Board member Shirin Brown says Surfdale Fruit and Vege has friendly staff and is an asset to the community but says she doesn't want to see the hours of alcohol sales extended.

"Given the vulnerability of the community - deprivation, schools, organisations that support alcohol harm reduction or work with violence, I don't feel it's appropriate to have an extension of alcohol trading hours or for the grocery store to operate for wine tastings."

The application for the new off-licence, lodged with council late last month, states that "during tastings, water will be freely available".

It also says a slightly different layout will be

used when it comes to alcohol, although it will continue to be at the rear alcove of the store.

"There are issues with alcohol in our community already," says Shirin.

"This is not about the business or the owner of the premises. Both are friendly and have the ability to trade. It is just the extension of hours for selling alcohol and the wine tastings that are inappropriate in my view for a residential area."

The applicant previously applied for a bottle store licence at the same premises in 2020. This was granted by the District Licensing Committee and then declined by the Alcohol Regulatory and Licensing Authority on appeal.

The bottle store application received a number of public objections, many of which called for the retention of the existing licensed grocery store, rather than a full bottle store. The applicant then purchased the existing grocery store and has been trading on temporary authority for the past six months. • *Sophie Boladeras*

**"We have no plans to change this into a liquor store. We are working really hard to develop our business as a grocery store." Avon Singh**