

Submission Addendum for Plan change 28 - Maitahi/Kaka from Anne Kolless SH45

Tēnā koutou – good afternoon to you all.

- Firstly, thank you for your time in allowing ordinary caring citizens of Nelson, especially Maitai Nelson East area like me, to present their concerns related to the Maitahi/Kaka development.
- My name is Anne Patricia Kolless. Although not born in the area, since 5 years of age, the Maitai Valley has been part of my life – having attended local schools, raised my children and undertaken some tertiary studies. A Diploma of Comprehensive Nursing, Bachelor of Nursing Science and Diploma in Midwifery were later completed. At 83 years, I am well retired!
- Having travelled, lived and worked abroad extensively in both earlier and recent years, I returned in 1973 with my partner and small family to purchase a family heritage home built in 1936 by my uncle, the Hon Harry Atmore and my aunt Dorothy Annie.
- The house sits on a knoll with commanding views over Maitai & Kaka Valleys & is aptly named Te Maunga
- This is where I, my children, grandchildren, their friends, extended family and friends have gathered a fantasmagoria of memories – playing, swimming, picnicking, walking, relaxing and simply enjoying the peace and tranquility of shady, green spaces by swimming holes. I still remember my first swim and picnic at 5 years of age when, armed with picnic basket and thermos of tea, my aunt, accompanied by two friends, took me to the river, an enjoyable walk away.
- Although many changes have taken place, the green shady spaces, bird song and tranquillity, especially on a hot summer's evening, still exist. Not everyone enjoys a sandy beach picnic and saltwater stinging the eyes! Maitahi/Kaka is unique to Nelson city and must be protected and treasured.
- My past tertiary qualifications have enabled me to work in foreign countries giving me the realisation of how concrete jungles of crammed inner city living – high or low – without green space can affect human mental, physical and spiritual wellbeing.
- Dr Maria Forrester, the scientific developer for the WHO, based in Barcelona, very recently released her pioneering studies showing how traffic noise, especially outside schools, can affect children's cognitive development by 5 to 7% over one year.

Johann Hari, investigative journalist and author, in his book "Stolen Focus" released this year, points out Dr Jason Hickels, an economic anthropologist, based at the University of London – quote – "at the moment we are working ourselves 'ragged' to buy things that don't even make us happy! If we could redefine prosperity as being able to experience time in nature, walk, dream, contemplate and be with our children, how much better our health and wellbeing would be! P. 274

Inspiring NZ author Dr Catherine Knight in her recent book "Nature and Wellbeing in Aotearoa New Zealand" points out clearly the benefits of green space, forest parks and forest schools. What an incredible advantage to the peoples of Nelson City and environs to allow Kaka Valley above Dennes Hole where Kaka Stream flows through and into the Maitai River to become a beautiful native forest park and forest school so close to our city. To hear native bird song, breath refreshing forest air, perhaps sit and contemplate, hear the ripple of Kaka Stream, this is a dream to behold!

The Oxford Dictionary defines nature as "the phenomena of the physical world, collectively, including the landscape, plants, animals and other products of the earth – as opposed to human creations". So what is science telling us about the connection between nature and wellbeing? Many recent studies have found contact with nature has positive effects on mood, cognitive function and recovery from stress.

I would now like to introduce you to the natural world of forest therapy – especially native to our country.

Forest therapy or Shinrin-Yoku meaning Forest Bathing has its roots in Japan. The term was coined in 1982 at the height of Japan's economic boom. At the time Japan had already felled thousands of hectares of native forest to plant fast-growing cedar and by the mid-1980s, these plantation forests made up 44% of Japan's convert. The first research into the physiological benefits of Shinrin-Yoku took place in 1990.

Since the 2000s, research has benefited from significant advances in how stress levels can be measured in the human body, especially related to the autonomic nervous system. Forest therapy has gradually grown in Japan and, from the mid-2000s, more than 60 forest therapy routes have been successfully established. Yes, you can literally jump on a bullet-style train from most major cities and access your chosen forest park in no time at all.

Forest therapy has now extended across Asia, Europe to the USA, and even to New Zealand. In the UK there are now 300 registered forest schools and many not yet registered. Their popularity is growing rapidly and the idea is now being included in school curricula in some countries. Forest therapy or Shinrin-Yoku can be used as a classroom too, so why not in Nelson's Kaka Valley?

- Inner city living in our busy demanding modern world has become an acceptable norm and well planned, using available land around city limits, it can work well, but this needs green space close by. Many of the oldest famous cities of the world included green spaces in their original planning and are still there and very well protected and cared for.

Some Nelson City councillors seem to support inner city living with easy access to green spaces, so why not the Maitahi/Kaka area? What a unique green space with easy access in minutes by walking, bicycle, mobile chair, skateboard or e-scooter, for example.

Contrary to some beliefs, there is plenty of land available within the city limits, including an incredible number of car yards plus old questionable buildings not in use.

What a sensible use of ratepayers' money it would be to purchase some of the Kaka area above Dennes Hole that links with the Centre of NZ walkways and allow it to regenerate into a wonderful forest park, so securing the area for future generations to enjoy.

In Conclusion

The history of the Maitai Valley goes back to the late 1800s. A recorded event in 1899 sets out an alteration to the road from Sharlands when bridges were erected over the river.

In the Colonist 12 Nov 1914, quote, "Mr H Atmore, member for Nelson, pointed out that the only way to end the many difficulties facing the use of the valley by local citizens was for Government to purchase the Maitai Run – but property rights must be respected. To restore these for locals to enjoy facilities for health and recreation was to purchase some property and create reserves.

Although a very long process over many, many years and over many obstacles plus councillor disagreements, finally some land was secured. Now the valley boasts a golf course, a campground, a cricket ground and archery ground, several lovely swimming-holes with picnic areas and Waahi Taakaro, plus access to mountain bike trails.

But many supporters of the Save the Maitai including more than 12,000 petition signers fear for the future of this unique area. I simply cringed when I read some of the developers' proposals.

I dream of being a thoughtful caring ancestor and leaving a legacy as a responsible caring citizen for my grandchildren, other people's grandchildren and all peoples of the area's future.

I do not support any housing development in this beautiful unique valley.

Thank you for your time.

Nga mihi nui

Anne Kolless

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