

# **The Maitai Valley's significance for Community Health and Wellbeing**

**Save the Maitai Campaign  
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Before I start on the content of my submission I want to state that I have reviewed the indicative layout plan provided as part of the applicant's rebuttal evidence. So, although I have not read all the evidence I have an overall understanding of the development proposed.

Urbanisation in Kākā  
Valley would have serious  
detrimental community  
health impacts

Over 1000 research studies have shown:

Nature is not only a nice-to-have, but a **have-to-have** for physical health and cognitive function.

- What do the studies show about nature access and community health?
- Who is particularly affected?
- Why is the Maitai Valley so important for the health and wellbeing of the Nelson community?
- What would be the detrimental effects of urbanization?
- How does this fit into the bigger picture?

## **Overview**

“According to the best available evidence, nature contact offers considerable promise in addressing a range of health challenges, including many, such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, depression, and anxiety, that are public health priorities.”

Frumkin H, Bratman GN, Breslow SJ, et al. Nature Contact and Human Health: A Research Agenda. *Environ Health Perspect.* 2017;125(7):075001. Published 2017 Jul 31. doi:10.1289/EHP1663



Loosing the recreational amenity of the the Maitai Valley to urbanization would have a particularly negative effect on:

- children and young people
- seniors and disabled people
- people who have limited financial resources





**Children are increasingly suffering from "nature deficit disorder"**

**(Richard Louv)**

“Children are spending more time indoors while paediatric mental and behavioural health problems are increasing”



McCormick, R. (2017). Does access to green space impact the mental well-being of children: A systematic review. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 37(2017), 3-7.

- 20% children have mental health issues
- 1 in 5 has depression by the age of 18
- Nearly 1 in 5 has anxiety disorder by the age of 19
- According to the WHO: COVID pandemic has increased mental health issues by another 25%
- 13% of NZ children are obese

## **Health Status statistics of children and young people in NZ**

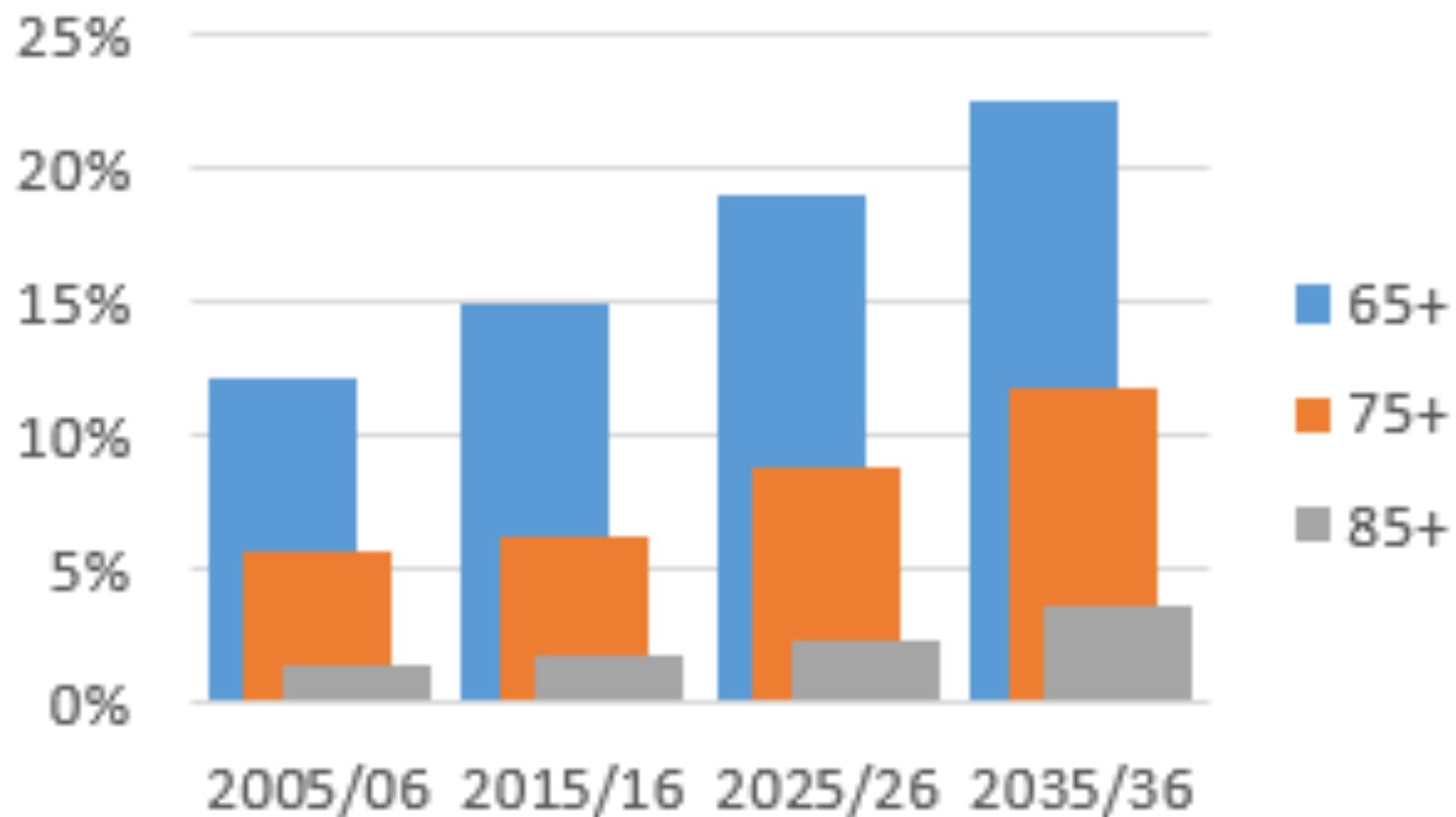
**“Access to green space was associated with improved mental well-being, overall health and cognitive development of children.**

It promotes attention restoration, memory, competence, supportive social groups, self-discipline, moderates stress, improves behaviours and symptoms of ADHD and was even associated with higher standardized test scores”

McCormick, R. (2017). Does access to green space impact the mental well-being of children: A systematic review. *Journal of Pediatric Nursing*, 37(2017), 3-7.







## **Percentage of population in older age groups in New Zealand**

“Spending time in natural surroundings encourages physical activity and engagement, increases energy, fights depression, boosts memory, improves physical health, reduces stresses, provides restorative experiences, and encourages social relations”

Older people and nature: the benefits of outdoors, parks and nature in light of COVID-19 and beyond– where to from here?: International Journal of Environmental Health Research: Vol 32, No 6

**Research study on older people**

“Compared with exercising indoors, exercising in natural environments was associated with greater feelings of revitalization and positive engagement, decreases in tension, confusion, anger, and depression, and increased energy.”

Thompson Coon, J., Boddy, K., Stein, K., Whear, R., Barton, J., & Depledge, M. H. (2011). Does participating in physical activity in outdoor natural environments have a greater effect on physical and mental wellbeing than physical activity indoors? A systematic review. *Environmental science & technology*, 45(5), 1761-1772

**Why is a natural environment better?**



- Easily accessible from the city even by foot
- Quiet, safe, peaceful
- Open rural ambience
- Swimmable water holes
- Mostly flat walking tracks among trees and close to the river
- Varied landscape
- Spacious places for picnics and sports

**Why is the Maitai Valley a special recreational amenity in Nelson?**

- Grampians is steep
- Queens Gardens “don’t-touch” environment
- Other reserves limited to grassy patches with only a few trees and playgrounds

**There are no other comparable places in Nelson!**

- Loss of peaceful and spacious rural ambience
- Spoiled nature and recreational experience due to noise pollution from earthworks and traffic
- Spoiled nature and recreational experience from housing activities
- Loss of safety due to increased traffic
- Loss of swimmable water due to storm water run-off

## **Effects of urbanization on the Maitai Valley**

Urbanization in Kākā Valley would lead to the degradation of the Maitai Valley's present recreational value, which would completely go against clear scientific evidence that shows the strong connection between accessibility to natural spaces and community health and wellbeing.

## **The negative social impact of urbanization in the Kākā Valley**

The National Statement on Urban Development 2020 stipulates that a “well functioning urban environment has”:

“good accessibility for all people between housing, jobs, community services, natural spaces, and open spaces, including by way of public and active transport”

Policy 1(c)

**Maitai Valley in the context of the NPSUD 2020**

PPC28 does not address the loss of recreational amenity of the Maitai Valley and the detrimental impact that would have on the health and wellbeing of the community.

This goes contrary to best scientific evidence of what makes a health-promoting environment.

It is also not in line with the latest National Policy Statement on Urban Development.

**Reject the plan change request!**

**Conclusion**



**Thank You!**