

From: noreply@gurudigital.nz
Sent: Friday, May 21, 2021 12:00 PM
To: haveyoursay
Subject: The Form 'Submission Form - Waitomo District Council draft 10YP 2021-2031 Consultation' was submitted

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Website Form

Form Results

Full Name

JOHN ASH

Organisation

Phone

[REDACTED]

Address

[REDACTED]

Waitomo Caves, Waitomo

Postcode

3988

Email

[REDACTED]

Requirements

I wish to speak to Council about my submission

No

Proposal

Option 1

True

Option 2

False

My comment on this proposal

There are several planning initiatives in the pipeline - Three Waters Reform Program Introduction of a new Water Services Regulator, and the Local Government Review. All of these necessitate the Council take careful and prudent action with regards to future planning decisions. Deferring the completion of harmonisation of water rates might provide the opportunity for Waitomo water rates to be "normalised" with regards to others.

What do you think about our plans for our projects and activities?

The bulleted list on page 11 of the consultation document provides a clear rationale for WDC's plan for the next 10 years. Waste Water and Water Treatment as well as Waste Management and Disposal are future imperatives. With regards to the former - whilst pressure on these services may have lessened due to Covid-19, this event has exposed the risk that unplanned outcomes can have on a community such as ours, which provides tourist services and attractions to a largely international clientele. "Waitomo Caves" has no mention by name on the "Upcoming Infrastructure Projects" chart. Time and money has been spent on assessing our Waste Water and Water operations, evaluating risk and looking for solutions. There are impediments due to the present private ownership of the infrastructure and private land tenure, but there is no indication, or "flagging", of any intention to effect a positive outcome for our community in the next 10 years. This does not acknowledge that, when things settle down, Waitomo Caves could once again host 500,000 "temporary residents" each day or the fact that in April 2020 THL put in an application for a "Shovel Ready Project" that was supported by the Council. Out of sight - Out of mind!! Where does this leave us if another entity takes over the 'reins'? Road and Footpath projects enhancing connectivity and

pedestrian safety would be a "shot in the arm" that our community would welcome. Work seemed to be in the pipeline months ago with some preliminary consultation, spray painting on paths and carriageways and then everything stopped and vanished. Covid-19 forced local businesses to think strategically and apply for MBIE STAPP funding grants to try to manage employment and just survive. In recognising the importance of Tourism to our economy, MBIE has also implemented TIF funding, which is available for Council infrastructure projects. Operators within the community are disappointed that little or no initiative has been taken with regards to accessing this funding. Parts of the "Waitomo Caves Village Town Concept Plan" (based on the Structure Plan undertaken by the Tere Waitomo Community Trust in 2014!) would be strong contenders for this funding, which is available for projects on Council, Iwi and DOC land. (Even the Waipa District Council received \$250,000 for public toilet facilities in Pirongia "near Waitomo Caves". Wow!!). Access to public toilets in Waitomo has been "flagged" and would be great to resolve. The present arrangement of using the Museum toilets gets people into the facility but might not be ideal from a visitor perspective. Is a synergetic solution possible? Development of a Marketing Strategy presses a "Caution Consultants \$\$s" button. The important question that visitors ask is "Why should I care?" \$50,000 has been flagged for a Motakiora/Brook Park Development Plan. What happened to the one done by Mansergh Graham back in 2005?

What do you think about our plans for finances and rates?

As has been noted, national planning initiatives and reform programs in the pipeline would caution that a prudent approach would be appropriate. The Plan appears to do this. required.

Any other comments?

*Signage leading into Waitomo Village, and within the village itself, has been an issue for a number of years. It would be great to have this tidied up. *Waitomo has been described by some as "weed heaven". Weed eradication on the "million dollar corner" below Waitomo Hotel would be a wonderful start. This land is all road reserve. Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Local

government is acknowledged as a challenging role and your efforts are appreciated.