

22 December 2014

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From; Glenn Broadbent
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Dear Sir

Inquiry into land for housing

Introduction

I make this submission as a private individual.

As a bit of background I have been involved in the Land Development industry for about 35 years now, having worked in Consultancy's, undertaken private developments, employed in Local Authority infrastructure groups and numerous years working within the Regulatory groups of Takapuna Borough Council, North Shore City Council, Auckland City Council, Papakura District Council and Auckland Council.

I was directly involved in the rapid and large scale greenfield developments of the Albany Basin area and East Coast Bays areas of the North Shore where we provided a comprehensive end to end service from development inception to completion. I moved to Auckland City Council to become involved in brownfield, infill and multi-level developments and creation of the councils first Development Engineering team. More recently I was the Development Control Manager at Papakura District Council during its boom period of 2005 to 2010.

Prior to the amalgamation of Auckland Councils I undertook a study tour to Australia to gain a better understanding of their Land Development practices.

My keen desire to see improvements in the Land Development area has seen me involved in the creation of IPWEA's Land Development Engineering Group (LDEG) since its inception and I am presently the LDEG Chair.

I am presently involved in land development in my role with Auckland Council however as mentioned above, this submission is not from Auckland Council or other councils in anyway and although I have provided input to the IPENZ and IPWEA submission this submission is separate from those groups and also separate from LDEG, it is entirely a private submission.

It is the people that make the difference

I have found the biggest influence on the Land Development process and the achievement of the goal to have more housing stock available is the people involved.

They must have a thorough understanding of the processes, agree the goals and be prepared to work together to achieve the desired outcomes. They also need to have the necessary authorities to make decisions. So often developers run into difficulties when these elements are not present. Conversely I have witnessed great development outcomes when these ingredients are present.

The Resource Management Act and underlying processes work extremely well. There is certainly no need for further amendment to that document. Plan changes, consents and development can progress very quickly if the will is there and the right people are involved. It is the people that make the difference. Auckland Councils Unitary Plan with a lack of real community involvement is not the answer and is already leading to confusion and issues for regulatory teams and developers. Clarity and certainty is important.

I commend you for undertaking this inquiry as there are many and varied processes and practices used across New Zealand that we can learn from and practices undertaken in Australia and other regions we can also learn from. Indeed I am passionate to see positive outcomes in this regard and this is the key reason I Chair IPWEA (NZ) Land Development Engineering Group.

I wish you and your team all the best.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide this submission and I would be happy to provide any further clarification if required.

Yours sincerely

Glenn Broadbent

Responses to questions follow

Responses to questions:

1. Is it helpful to think of the planning and development system as a means of dealing with externalities associated with land use and coordination problems? What other factors should the Commission consider in evaluating the role of the planning and development system?

The Building Act and Codes and Local authority approach to RMA regulatory processes are often not a holistic approach but very narrowly focused. For instance you may be able to get a building consent on land you may not be able to develop in terms of RMA or District Plan rules. Is there a need to have more overlap between the Building Act and RMA?

2. Can the current land planning and development system be made to work better to benefit cities throughout New Zealand? Is a different type of planning system required to meet the needs for housing in New Zealand's fastest growing cities?

The RMA is an excellent document and planning system and does not need change. Those that manage the systems and processes and those that make applications are typically the cause for delay.

3. What criteria should the Commission consider in evaluating the current land planning and development system in New Zealand?

Further assessment of the reasons behind the number of consents being rejected or placed on hold.

The variances in consideration of the District Plan elements of Building consents and the lack of consideration of a project as a whole, ie; silo's between building approvals and RMA.

4. Would a significantly increased supply of development capacity lead to an increased supply of affordable housing, or would further regulatory or other interventions be required to achieve that outcome?

Increased supply of capacity would only make a limited increase in supply of housing. History shows that developers will sit on land holdings until there is a shortage in supply/ read more profit and certainty of sale.

I have witnessed this through the development of Papakura District and evidence is in the availability of land for development that was being held until the recent "shortage" and increased demand was created through the media.

Increased affordable housing will require minimum numbers of such housing stock to be 'required' to be included within developments.

5. What data sources will be most useful in identifying effective local authority planning processes for the development of land for housing?

The biggest resource is the staff involved in the processes and bodies such as the Land Development Engineering Group. The staff understand the processes, positive and negative, more than anyone or any other data source.

As an example, in my role as a Development Control Manager we were audited by an independent Planning Consultant to critique our process and those of the developers to see what improvements were required. These reviews and experience give true insight to the processes.

6. Are there other local authorities exhibiting good policies or practices in making land available for housing that the Commission should investigate?

Papakura District Council showed real courage and expertise through the period of yr2004 to yr2010 that resulted in huge growth within the area including provision for affordable housing. The Director of Engineering worked with the land owners to bring them together to create development agreements that enabled a managed supply of land and cost sharing amongst the land owners, the council and its asset groups and the NZTA to ensure development occurred in a staged and controlled manner.

In my 30 or so years involved in land development across Auckland I have been involved in many different relationships with developers to encourage land development but this was the most successful in trying times.

7. What policies and practices from other countries offer useful lessons for improving the supply of effective land or development capacity for housing in New Zealand?

During a study tour I undertook in yr2011 for this same purpose I found we could learn from various states in Australia. Although funds did not permit a visit to Copenhagen I believe their practices would be worthy of consideration due to their scale and successes.

The input by State agencies within Australia displayed positive and negative practices.

8. Alongside the Resource Management, Local Government and Land Transport Management Acts, are there other statutes that play a significant role in New Zealand's planning and development system?

No comment

9. How easy is it to understand the objectives and requirements of local authority plans? What improves the intelligibility of plans?

The Plans are typically clear, the difficulty is determining the degree of variance from the Plans the Council will accept. This also varies from person to person and council to council.

10. Is ensuring an adequate land supply for housing an objective of current District or Unitary Plans? If so, what priority is this objective given?

Unless changed Auckland's Unitary Plan will allow for development in areas, many of which will be constrained due to geotechnical, flooding and other issues, messy piece-meal development will occur but with limited increase in affordable housing due to the engineering restrictions.

I believe a Plan alone will not ensure adequate supply of land for housing. Land zoning may allow for development but infrastructure and other engineering elements dictate the availability of land for housing as done the land owners desire for profit.

11. What steps do local authorities take to ensure that all people potentially affected by land use Plan provisions or changes have the opportunity to comment? How effective and efficient are these steps?

I have witnessed excellent example of real engagement particularly during early development in East Coast Bays of North Shore City and more recently at Papakura District Council in the early yr2000's. This is not the case in Auckland's Unitary Plan. Good engagement typically results in completion of development, usually early completion. It can also be a great marketing tool.

12. What steps do local authorities take to understand and incorporate the views of people who are potentially affected by Plan provisions or changes, but who do not formally engage in the Plan process?

Engagement directly with land owners, as done in Papakura District, lead to development agreements. Also through engagement directly with owners, community groups and interested parties have great results.

Local communities are keen to engage with people who will work with them to create positive outcomes. When the Council or group gets too large and non-personal engagement fails and developments are delayed. Successful engagement is particularly important where Affordable housing is proposed in green or brownfield development.

13. How can the Plan development process be improved to increase the supply of development capacity?

Good engagement can not only speed up the Plan development processes but also results in positive outcomes for land owners (developers), increased community ownership including that of landowner developers who are more likely to progress their developments.

14. How accurate are local authority assessments of the demand for and supply of land? How well do they reflect market demands and the actual development capacity of land? Are there any good examples of supply and demand forecasts?

I believe Auckland Councils assessment of land availability were very accurate when it was identified there was land available for many thousands of houses. Councils are able to calculate the number and location of subdivided land and also other available land.

15. How well do zoning decisions in District Plans and infrastructure planning in Long-Term Plans reflect demand and supply forecasts?

In small communities where the engineers, planners and policy teams work closely together it can work very well as I believe occurred in Papakura District. But typically I believe it is quite poorly.

16. How effective are local authorities in ensuring that the rules and regulations governing land use are necessary and proportionate?

Smaller communities with good engagement typically have more appropriate rules than larger – this is of particular concern with respect to Auckland Unitary Plan.

17. What are the characteristics of the most effective processes for testing proposed rules, Plans or Plan changes?

Testing the rules, Plans or changes, through worked examples. In doing this with respect to the Unitary Plan it is shown areas will not be able to develop as desired yet alone to the densities indicated.

18. How effective are local authority processes for connecting decisions across the different planning frameworks? Which particular processes have been successful? What explains their success?

Open discussions within small teams that understand the various frameworks. This was evident in the small Papakura District Council

19. What impact does transport planning have on the supply of development capacity?

It is an integral part, one that has been ignored to some extent in the Auckland's Special Housing Areas and is starting to show signs of issues arising.

20. Are there examples of effective integration between regional policies and district plans, and what are the features of processes that lead to effective integration?

People understanding the regional and district plans and desired outcomes. And those same people having a practical understanding of the outcomes that can be delivered.

- 21. Do rules or Plan requirements in your area unnecessarily restrict the use of land for housing? Why are these requirements unnecessary? What are the impacts of these rules and requirements?**

I believe the rules and requirements will lead to the creation of future communities that existing communities wish to see created for their children (assuming appropriate earlier engagement)

- 22. How important is it that rules for development and land use provide certainty?**

Important, uncertainty causes delays and personal interpretation that can flex under continued argument or pressure. However most important is the certainty provided by definitive regulators. This is one advantage of processes I identified during my study tour of Australia with applicants and council agreeing that although the Australian approach is typically a little more dictatorial than NZ's process it gave a more definitive outcome which is important for financial management of projects.

- 23. Are rules consistently applied in your area? Is certainty of implementation more important than flexibility?**

Rules are not consistently applied. Applicants seek certainty but then seek flexibility. Certainty assists budgeting and obviously certainty for planning and outcome.

- 24. Which local authorities have the best approach to implementing land use rules or Plan requirements? What makes their approaches the best?**

In this regard I have witnessed smaller authorities perform better as they have a better understanding of the desired outcomes and that understanding permeates throughout those carrying out the regulatory functions (comes down to the people). Equally I time and time again I have witnessed this fail in large organisations.

- 25. Do second-generation Plans take a more flexible or enabling approach to land use control?**

No comment

- 26. What effect do design guidelines have on the availability of effective land for housing? Are the processes by which land use can depart from a design guideline transparent and applied consistently?**

Design guidelines are helpful in ensuring the availability of land where the guidelines are promoting higher density if the guidelines are required to be followed. There is too much flexibility in allowing departure. It tends to be one of things personal decisions. Too often the rules and guidelines are written to enable a certain development (often higher density) only for the developer to change and another style of development to occur (lower density).

27. How many developers work in more than one local authority? Do variations in planning rules between councils complicate, delay or add unnecessary cost to the process of developing land for housing?

Developers consultants will often say this is an issue however I believe to a large extent this is an excuse for simply not researching the rules and opens up the ability for consultants to increase charges. Understanding the rules is just part of understanding of the many issues one must get a grasp on before developing.

28. Which local authority pre-application advice and information services are the most effective for communicating expectations and reducing unnecessary cost for applicants? What makes them effective?

Those where the local authority requires the applicant to engage experts to prepare accurate plans and present well-researched proposals. Local authorities should be able to simply sign off concepts rather than design them,

Where the people involved understand development, customer expectations, experienced and likely to be involved throughout the process in all elements.

29. Which processes are most important to applicants for providing consistent and efficient assessments of resource consent applications?

It is important that the applicant engages appropriately experienced support that present clear researched applications.

Local authorities need people with a good understanding of the rules and take a consistent approach often best achieved by those familiar with not only the rules but a knowledge of the objectives behind the rules (a knowledge gained during formulation of the rules).

Similarly to achieve efficient assessment requires engineers that understand the RMA, have authority to act on the asset groups (and CCO's) behalf, clear rules (engineering standards) and guidelines.

30. Have resource consent processing times resulted in unnecessary delays in the development of land for housing? If so, do you anticipate that the recent changes to processing timeframes will address delays?

Processing time frames do result in delays for development, many many examples. Recent changes are likely to have little impact. Quality of application is the biggest driver followed by the capability of the people involved in the process.

Need to be careful and not just look at how rules, Acts, or local authority processes can change to improve the timeliness of consenting. If local authorities received quality applications they should be able to sign them off very fast.

I have seen large (hundreds of new lots) subdivision progressed very quickly when quality proposals are put together and all involved work together, admittedly the examples are where the local authority has delegated decision processes.

31. What explains the variation between jurisdictions regarding requests for additional information and use of stop-the-clock provisions when assessing resource consent applications?

A lack of understanding of the law by the people making the decisions and the use of these provisions to tamper with the results. Also a reluctance to require quality applications too many poor applications are presented to local authorities.

It is well known consultants submit applications to councils that they know are not complete to meet the applicants deadlines then use councils request for more information as a reason to claim further fees. To support this culture the applicant places pressure on the people receiving the applications who accept them as they incorrectly believe they are providing a better customer service.

An independent audit of processes showed that the local authority should not be so 'helpful' as it actually caused delays.

32. What are the impacts of notification on the supply of development capacity? How could the processes surrounding notification be improved?

Obviously notification is occurring when there is an element of non-compliance or effect on other parties. Early and thorough engagement through the Planning process (zoning etc) would minimise any delays as it is likely there would be less issues and engineering issues (such as provision of infrastructure to minimise the effects) would have been addressed.

A recent development proposal was going to be notified due to engineering issues, huge delays, engineer fixated on engineering design solutions, when an open minded view was taken there was a simple existing use rights solution. People knowledgeable in the development processes, RMA etc need to be involved in the engineering aspects.

Also had the application been notified, rather than looking for ways around it there would have been huge cost savings.

33. What explains the reduction in the prevalence of pre-hearing meetings? n/c

34. Which local authorities make the best use of pre-hearing meetings? What factors best contribute to successful pre-hearing meetings? n/c

35. Does the type of person making the decision on resource consent applications affect the fairness, efficiency or quality of the outcome? What difference (if any) does it make?

Yes, individual decisions are different. The processing person and decision maker need to understand all of the elements including the engineering and infrastructure as these have a huge impact on land development.

36. Does the use of external experts (for example as independent commissioners or contracted staff) in making resource consent decisions create conflicts of interest? If so, how are these conflicts managed?

Yes, conflicts of interest do occur particularly when local authority processing is outsourced due to workloads. I have seen this to be a significant issue at times. A blind eye may be turned to the issue due to lack of ownership of the process by those involved and 'friendships' that develop.

37. What processes do local authorities use for ensuring that consent conditions are fair and reasonable? How successful are local authorities in meeting the "fair and reasonable" test?

Employment of experienced staff by local authorities ensures "fair and reasonable" if those staff (the people) take ownership of the consents from start to finish, through early discussions at concept stage and setting of conditions with the knowledge that they are representing the asset groups, creating good outcomes and will be involved in site inspections and final issuing of certifications (S224c).

Experienced Development Engineers ensure the desires of the asset groups and tempered to a fair and reasonable outcome.

38. In your experience, what impact do conditions on resource consents have on the viability of development projects?

The conditions are critical to the development. A trust between those setting the conditions and those guiding the developer is important as is a shared expectation of outcome. This helps to ensure the conditions are fair and reasonable, reduces lengthy waste of time and costs on disputing the wording of conditions and assists with final sign off of conditions prior to certification.

I have worked on some very large scale and successful land developments where the conditions have been quite irrelevant to the process other than the legal need for definition and as a record. This is because of the relationship that had developed between the parties as all understood the processes and the part they played.

I have also seen some very simple developments flounder due to aggressive consultant arguing the wording of every condition at great cost to the client for no real benefit.

It is the people involved in the process that make the difference.

39. Which local authorities have been most successful in providing coordinated decisions over applications to use land for housing? What explains their success?

I have witnessed great success in North Shore, Auckland (yr's 1990 to– 1995) and Papakura District Council (yr's 2005 to 2010) when both of these areas were developing at a fast pace.

The success was due to the delegation afforded to the small team of skilled staff familiar with all elements of development and the ability to have decisions made and guidance provided quickly and definitively from other parties involved within the council such as asset groups, city planners, and policy interpretation.

I believe the successful outcomes were due to a new team and processes that had been created to provide a one stop shop for land subdivision with all elements of the subdivision being managed by one team and typically by one person from initial discussion with developers, approval of infrastructure designs through to final completion.

Auckland's Housing Project Office does not provide this.

40. Are there issues relating to the process for challenging or changing decisions which impede the supply of effective land for housing?

Decisions are made based on a huge range of complex rules and regulations required for valid purposes. The difficulty in challenging or changing decisions is only difficult when the decision maker lacks appropriate knowledge and support from appropriate divisions of a local authority. Delegated authorities would assist.

In the right circumstances, as a staff member within a local authority, I have been able to make decisions, to enable development, that result in significant cost to council or significant impact on zoning easier than minor decisions simply due to the level of delegation and particularly due to the ability (or lack thereof) to engage with appropriate people across the local authority.

During my Australian study tour I found instances where a level of State control assisted in decreasing on going arguments.

Also in New Zealand there are consultancies that are prepared to argue non critical issues delaying development for months and charging their clients.

41. Compared to other processes of relevance to land release and development, how important is the ability to obtain a Plan change or variation? Why?

A Plan change or variation is only part of the process of land being suitable for development. Plan change processes should not be changed.

42. How easy is it to obtain a Plan change or variation in your area? What are the major barriers? No comment

43. Do council-led Plan changes or variations help or hinder the supply of development capacity?

They help

44. What is your experience working with the infrastructure component of the land supply system?

Many years of positive experience. It is important for those involved to have a very good understanding of the entire development process including not only the engineering elements but also RMA and subdivision processes.

Those considering developing their land holdings must engage their engineers early. Over the last twenty years there has been a move from local authorities having engineers involved in the land development and land release processes in Senior positions to Planners.

It is important that Planners and Urban designers work with engineers to determine which land is appropriate for development and to agree where local government expenditure should occur for provision of the necessary infrastructure.

Small councils typically work well across the areas of Planning and Engineering infrastructure to ensure capital works are carried out to enable development of land zoned for such purposes. Larger councils, particularly with CCO's do not have such alignment, This is where Development Engineers play an important role in assisting the process.

It is critical the people involved within Local authority regulatory and asset groups understand what the community, through the various Plans, is trying to achieve and that those people have the commitment to achieve those goals and appropriate delegated authorities and have easy access to those others who need to be involved in key decisions.

45. Are there particular aspects of the system, or particular types of infrastructure, that are problematic?

Large local authorities and CCO's make the processes difficult as there is such segmentation and narrow focus where smaller councils have a common focus. Problems also occur when the local authorities Infrastructure groups do not delegate sufficient authority to the regulatory groups to manage the infrastructure elements of land development. As they say too many cooks spoil the broth.

46. What are the opportunities to improve this part of the land supply system?

Engineering and infrastructure requirements need to be considered as an integral part of land zoning and development. (land is still being zoned for development that is not suitable due to infrastructure and engineering constraints).

Rather than ignoring engineering elements of developments they must be considered at the earliest possible stage as it affects costs and the final land form.

Increased delegated authority from the Asset groups and particularly CCO's needs to be provided to those involved in the Regulatory process on infrastructure creation and vesting.

Engineering Codes and standards need to be written and managed by those that provide the engineering input to consents within the local authority Regulatory departments (Development Engineers where possible) as they have a clear understanding of what is fair and reasonable, can ensure a consistent approach across the country and ensure

documents will be written in a manner that can be easily understood by the development community.

The IPWEA NZ Land Development Engineering Group was created to lead improvements and initiatives in this area.

During a study tour to Australia I undertook on this subject I found some of the Australian initiatives in this area have been very successful.

47. Is there sufficient alignment of incentives for the various organisations involved in the provision of infrastructure to support housing? If not, what could be done to improve alignment?

The best results I have seen have been in the smaller local authorities, as mentioned above, where the various departments have worked together to achieve a common goal.

Where the infrastructure groups and various Planners have been involved in the Planning of the city through involvement in the creation of the all of the various Plans. I.e infrastructure groups involved in the Planning of the city, the creation of the Regional and District Plans and LTCCP's ensuring there is clear agreement and commitment to ensuring appropriate infrastructure is available at the appropriate time.

48. Are there differences in the approaches taken between council controlled and private infrastructure organisations (eg, electricity lines companies)? What is the nature of these differences? What explains the differences?

CCO's and private infrastructure organisations clearly have more of a focus on profit and less of an understanding of the RMA and land development processes. This results in requirements that do not meet "fair and reasonable" test.

Private infrastructure organisations tend to fit in with the councils requirements working proactively with local authorities where CCO's tend to take more of a dictatorial approach.

As an example a local authorities Urban Designer or Planner may seek to allow development with narrow roads, where the CCO may dictate the requirements within a Code of Practice that they create whereas a private organisation is more likely to work with the local authority regulatory groups to achieve the desired outcome following the engineering Codes created by the local authorities regulatory group as long as they meet the technical requirements of the private organisation.

49. What comparative information about the provision of infrastructure to support housing should the Commission be aware of? No comment

50. Is there evidence that territorial authority debt levels are acting a barrier to the provision of infrastructure for housing in rapidly growing areas? n/c

51. How variable are the practices and processes around infrastructure charges across different jurisdictions? Does variability complicate, delay, or add unnecessary cost to the process of developing land for housing?

Yes, there is a huge variation. It is important that the charges are able to be clearly understood and supported otherwise delays occur. However over recent years there has been a marked improvement in this area.

52. Are there particular examples of good practice regarding infrastructure charges?

Papakura District Council had very clear and well-reasoned Development Contributions regime. My team was involved in the administration (not creation) of the DC's and it was an easy clear process with a quick review process.

The infrastructure teams had worked very closely with the Cities Planners and finance departments to create a reasoned long term plan.

53. Are there particular types of development (eg, greenfields, infill etc) that are less costly to service with infrastructure? What evidence can you provide about any variation in infrastructure costs?

Change of use development such as Industrial to residential will typically result in less infrastructure costs as the services are usually available however in general the scale of the development and location are the significant features.

54. Do development contribution policies incentivise efficient decisions about land use, or do they unduly restrict the supply of land for housing?

They can have both a positive or a negative effect. The outcome is dependent on the desire of those setting the policies (assuming the policy creators have sufficient knowledge of the land development drivers.

55. Are development contributions used exclusively to drive efficient decisions about land use, or are they used to promote broader goals?

Through the Land Development Engineering Group we have learnt the various councils have different approaches and understandings with different impacts on land use. Some use them to promote broader goals, others to promote development, delay development or plan for future development.

56. How effective have the recent changes to development contributions been that were introduced in the Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Act 2014? No comment

57. What is the likely effect of long-term infrastructure strategies on the availability of land for housing?

If the strategy aligns with the local authorities Regional and District Plans and LTCCP the effects will be positive in provision of infrastructure, enabling planning of developments to commence and short term strategies to be put in place to enable more immediate development to occur.

58. Do councils in high-growth areas require a greater range of approaches for funding infrastructure?

No. There are sufficient mechanisms at present, it is simply a matter of the councils understanding these and having the right people to bring together the appropriate parties to set in place the strategies to enable development. I refer to the earlier example of Papakura District Council being very successful in this area due to the council, the community and landowners common and clear desire to enable development.

59. What alternative approaches for funding infrastructure should be considered in New Zealand's high-growth areas?

None needed. Refer above.

60. What are the main advantages and disadvantages of having infrastructure vested in Council Controlled Organisations?

The infrastructure must vest in Council. It can then be transferred and managed by CCO's. Trying to change this process would lead to many issues through laws and the regulatory processes.

If you mean the ownership and management after vesting the asset becoming the CCO's, this in itself is not a problem if the process to require and accept infrastructure is managed by the Councils Regulatory divisions.

The huge range of issues arise when the CCO's become involved in the Regulatory processes. Additional costs for developers, delays, conditions of consent being unfair and not reasonable, dictatorial approach, escalations, creation of Codes or standards that result in unnecessary land use restrictions or conversely that will result in huge ongoing unnecessary costs to ratepayers.

A separate book could be written on this subject based on the experiences I have had in this area. The land development processes should be clear and simple. This is something I seek to pursue through the Land Development Engineering Group.

61. Does the use of Council Controlled Organisations create challenges with respect to integrated provision of infrastructure to support housing?

Yes, they can be very single focused and profit driven with a lack of understanding of the regulatory processes and the local authorities drivers.

62. Has the National Infrastructure Plan helped promote coordination of infrastructure investment? Is there sufficient integration between central and local government infrastructure planning? No comment

63. What impact does heritage protection have on the supply and development of land for housing?

It can result in the community supporting the development of the land, more interest and successful development outcomes.

- 64. Are there good examples of local authorities, in areas where there is a housing shortage, working well with landowners who want to build housing for whānau on Māori land?**

I think this would be an exciting project to work on and other than funding struggles that occur (which Banks are starting to improve on) I do not believe there would be too many impediments to work through.

- 65. To what extent are Plan change requirements, consultation requirements, or the need for infrastructure, barriers to Māori aspirations for building housing for whānau on Māori land?** No comment

- 66. How important is the aggregation of land for housing development? How difficult is it? Do some local authorities have processes in place that make land aggregation easier – if so, which ones, and how?**

Papakura District Council worked very well to bring property owners together to enable development ensuring such things as access over neighbouring properties, financial agreements and staging by different owners.

- 67. Is there a need for public agencies that can aggregate land in New Zealand cities? If so, who should establish these agencies? What powers and functions should they have?**

No need but Councils could be proactive in this area.

- 68. To what extent do central or local government policies and practices prevent or discourage landowners from selling or developing land for housing?**

To me this question is like asking 'how long is a piece of string' as the central and local government policies and practices influence the communities in so many ways that impact on their desires to purchase elsewhere/sell or develop.

Tax has an impact especially on smaller land holdings.

Infrastructure charges by CCO's for connections (such as Watercare) – ridiculously expensive to connect to an asset already paid for by the landowner in infill situations

Confusion of processes within councils

Lack of resources within council regulatory offices leads to huge delays especially in areas not governed by statute

Lack of skills by staff

Councils charges are high

Lack of certainty in rules, too much room for interpretation

Lack of clarity of future infrastructure projects and lack of confidence in them being completed

Lack of clear planning of communities as future nodes – lack of community engagement

Inconsistency across Councils processes and offices

Inconsistency across councils throughout NZ

Varied engineering requirements within Auckland and across NZ

69. How much land in New Zealand is being held in anticipation of future price rises? What evidence is there?

There are obviously large and many tracts of land across the Auckland region that are zoned in a manner that provides for development, some with the necessary infrastructure and some able to be developed subject to it becoming financially viable at a later date. I believe Auckland Council undertook a study to determine the availability a couple of years ago.

There are many parcels of land across Auckland that have been purchased since the introduction of the Unitary Plan marked for future development. Council records have this information in terms of change in zoning and purchase dates but I believe it would require a particular study of the data as opposed to being readily available.

During my personal search for development land many of the properties were being purchased by Asians for that purpose. I believe the Real Estate agencies hold a record of their clients and the purchases made by their clients for the purpose of development.

70. Does the setting of rates on the basis of land value or capital value (that is, including the value of improvements) influence the supply of land for housing? What evidence can you supply?

No comment

71. How common is the use of covenants in new housing developments? To what extent are private covenants restricting the supply of development capacity?

Covenants can afford many benefits and remain very popular but elements of the covenants nearly always seek to see large expensive houses and prevent the establishment of affordable housing and higher density development.

Obviously a key driver for developers is profit and covenants are seen as a means of assisting achieve this with desirable communities being created which leads to a lack of desire to create affordable housing.

However working with developers and engaging with the community can have very positive results.

Also good planning can lead to higher densities when it is either agreed at an early stage with the landowner or through a requirement of the Plan.

72. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the Housing Accords and Special Housing Areas Act 2013 and of its implementation to date?

There is no need for the HPO (office) in Auckland.

Advantages;

- clear point of contact for some developers
- Funding provided to ensure appropriately staffed
- CCO's required to support the regulators in the team
- Engineering requirements and processes defined
- Easy access by staff to decision makers

All of which could easily be achieved within the existing regulatory offices.

Disadvantages:

- lack of consistency with other departments approving consents
- Emphasise and priority taken from other depart's
- Marketing data not a true reflection of results
- Rules and practises being broken without need for appropriate consideration
- Apparently a lot of money is being diverted from infrastructure budgets to enable developments.
- Future negative impacts of infrastructure likely to occur in some areas
- Different processes, rules and departments creates confusion
- Different contact points creates confusion
- Lack of long term planning
- insufficient consideration and input from the neighbouring communities

No need for the Special Housing Office.

I believe all of the advantages and less of the disadvantages can occur within a well-managed regulatory office such as that occurred in Papakura District Council in 2005 where development agreements were reached with multiple landowners, a clear Urban design vision was created with long term community outcomes considered enabling rapid and successful development to occur even though the land held many infrastructure constraints.

73. Are there wider lessons for New Zealand from the planning and development processes that have been used in greater Christchurch? N/c

74. What evidence is there that the Land Use Recovery Plan changes are resulting in more land being made available for housing, or allow land to be developed faster? No comment