

Kawau Project (Auckland Council pest eradication initiative)

A little background:

If you recall some time ago, Auckland Council polled the Auckland ratepayers about the introduction of a targeted environmental portion to the general rates. This was adopted and has provided Council with substantial funding that must be utilized on improving environmental outcomes. For several years, certainly pre Covid, Council has indicated to the Pohutukawa Trust that they would like to see Kawau become a totally pest and predator free island. With the adoption of the Auckland Council's Regional Pest Management Plan 2020–2030 all introduced pests currently present on the island are now on the schedule of declared pests and as such should be removed. This along with having access to the environmental funding raised through the rating system I believe has enabled this to move forward.

In recent times you will have been contacted by Island Conservation working on behalf of Auckland Council. They were engaged to poll your view/appetite for the concept of a pest and predator free Kawau Island. I understand that this process has largely been completed with several drafts of a report on the outcome of their engagement with landowners, having been produced. Prior to, and alongside the discussions with landowners, there has been quite an amount of work taking place on the now named Kawau Project.

This includes but is not limited to:

- 1) Investigating methodologies for pest removal, the how and what processes might be needed to be in place for the work to be undertaken.
- 2) Budgetary considerations such as how much it might cost and where the funding could come from.
- 3) Who might be tasked to undertake the work.
- 4) What processes and requirements might be needed to be put in place for the work to be undertaken.
- 5) At its conclusion should the project proceed what on-going Biosecurity measures and their costs would need to be in place.
- 6) The governance structure around who would be able to make the project decisions and what the decision-making process would be.

The report from Island Conservations contacts and discussions with landowners has or is about to be finalised. We have been told that this will be a public document and available to all landowners to view through various means. It will provide information on the 6 items listed above and much more.

A very important point is that this document is a feasibility study and NOT a project plan.

However, it does contain quite a lot of information on what the plan might look like. If the project proceeds it would chart Kawau's environmental direction going forward and represent a significant point in the island's history. As approximately 80% of the island is privately owned it is very important that you read (and there is robust discussion about) Island Conservation's report and Kawau Project.

There will be a lot of information which I am sure will raise many questions, some of which will undoubtedly be challenging.

As a landowner initiative the Pohutukawa Trust awaits the release of the consultation report and the resulting discussion across the Island to collectively determine our way forward and whether we will support the Kawau Project.