

28 May 2026

Attn: Waimauku Community Association



Statement re: Proposed Waimauku West Development

As a starting point, northwest Auckland has been subject to ad hoc development and flooding issues over the years that are well known. Unfortunately (and even, in some cases, tragically) the effects of severe weather have damaged property and caused safety issues.

I have been consistent in advocating - both in public and private settings - for development only that adequately takes into account this reality. More particularly, we should not be building in areas where the risk of flooding cannot be mitigated or managed by stormwater systems etc.

Clearly the events of August 2021, January 2023 and February 2023 highlighted examples where insufficient (and, in some cases, insufficiently cleared) stormwater systems were overwhelmed. At the risk of stating the obvious, it is important to avoid such situations.

At the same time, housing is needed to accommodate a growing population, employment for the construction sector is positive and so on.

While not universally popular, NZ has a resource consenting system designed to enable development where it makes sense taking into account all factors, which of course includes flooding. This is common between the current RMA and the so-called "fast track" system. The latter doesn't guarantee a positive outcome for an applicant (and we have seen applications turned down elsewhere) but costs much less time, energy and money for all concerned to get to the answer of "yes" or "no" in a more reasonable timeframe.

The current "private plan change" avenue, where developers can seek that housing be enabled in areas that are not zoned "residential", is less controlled than this.

As local MP, I don't have a role as decision maker in any of these kinds of resource consent process. I can still play a role, however, when it comes to reflecting the views of communities to decision makers. I have supported other policy measures to reduce housing development pressure on northwest Auckland, for example "Plan Change 120" which will gear development much more towards inner city areas and away from the old Rodney and Franklin districts. This may not be popular with everyone in central Auckland suburbs but densification around public transport networks simply makes sense.

I have drafted a letter to the Fast Track consenting panel to express my view that any new development in northwest Auckland should properly account for the risk of flooding, as experienced previously, and also the cost of supporting infrastructure, along with any other particular local aspects. The historic lack of transport and school infrastructure (among other things) already has us playing "catch up", as we all know.

I will be happy to share a copy of that letter if you wish. In the meantime, thanks again for the contact and please do stay in touch on this important issue for Waimauku and surrounding areas.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Chris Penk'.

Chris Penk MP

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