



By Sam Duff

A group of Houghton Valley residents are angry at the prospect of a 13 house subdivision being built in their suburb without them being able to have their say.

Kaikoura View Limited have been granted un-notified resource consent to turn the empty gorse covered area at 215 Houghton Bay Road into a number of three bedroom family homes.

The Friends of Houghton Valley Incorporated Society was formed

at the end of January by about 25 locals to contest the development and they have hired a lawyer.

Jacob De Ruiter, a Houghton valley resident of 40 years and landscape designer, lives across the road from the proposed development site.

"We're not against development but we just feel that it's too many houses," he says.

Developer Smith Guersen says he and his associates have bent over backwards to get community members involved in the development.

Continued on page 2

GROUP FORMED: Houghton Valley residents Francesca Pouwer, Kim and Matiu Chapel and Jacob De Ruiter are contesting a local development. PHOTO CREDIT: Sam Duff

Cooks Strait news

WELLINGTON SOUTHERN & EASTERN SUBURBS

news

YOUR LOCAL NEWS

Monday, February 16, 2015



Today 12-19



Tuesday 15-18



Wednesday 15-18



Thursday 14-18

www.wsn.co.nz (04) 387 7160

CARS REMOVAL

GET CASH NOW!

Up to **\$999*** for any small vehicle

For any Van, Ute, Truck, 4WD

From **\$500 - \$10,000***

DEAD OR ALIVE

Damaged, Mechanical, De-registered, Crashed, No WOF
No Problem "ALL WELCOME". For selected models only.
Call Now 0800 71 72 73 or 021 663 254

Same day service
Satisfaction Guaranteed

Fight in the valley

LETTERS to the editor

Lower Houghton Valley Road a closed shop?

Dear Ed, It is a pity the residents of lower Houghton Bay Road are so antagonistic towards the prospect of a small housing development going up in this area. (CSN, February 9).

Thirteen houses is small bikies by today's standards. However, I could empathise with a long standing resident

who suddenly lost his seaview because of a three storeyed house mushrooming up right outside his living room window.

I would have thought the Hae-wai Meadery folks would have been ecstatic at the prospect of more potential customers for their products.

The whole situation sounds

very churlish to me.

It is not as if the current dwellings in this area are in any way 'posh' themselves.

Most people would react with incredulity that anyone would even want to build a home in such a bleak, inhospitable part of Wellington, with its dismal lack of sunshine.

Not to mention the bitter southerly that howls up Houghton Bay Road during the winter.

Similar small scale subdivisions have in the past gone up in Happy Valley (goodness knows why!), so why not Houghton Valley?

Every day we open our newspapers to read of the acute

housing shortage prevailing in Wellington today, and other parts of the country.

Come on you truculent Valley residents, let other people have the chance for a home you yourselves were once given!

*Christine Swift,
Island Bay*

Houghton Valley a visually key headland

Dear Ed, Wellington City Council went through a rigorous and lengthy process not that long ago in which the high values of the coastal environment, surrounding this proposed development, were significant enough for the Environment Court to decline the application to build an Aquarium nearby.

This new proposal is proposing to create a block of visually prominent, high density housing in the same area, on the side of a visually key headland

designated as a reserve for its amenity and environmental values.

It would seem the current council officers are unaware of the complicated and extensive examination of issues relating to protecting our outstanding coastal environment that have already been thrashed out and supported by judicial examination.

Your re-examination, in light of this, would help confirm these boundaries for future ventures of this kind.

Sunita Singh

Once houses built they will forget why they objected

Dear Ed, I attended the public meeting last year during which the developer of the proposed housing development on Houghton Bay Road (CSN, February 16) was accused by one or two local residents of trying to make money out of the project.

Some of them became abusive when developer Smith Geursen tried to explain that is how a capitalist system works; people provide services (like building houses) and make a profit to continue their business.

These people have now apparently formed an official opposition group.

Perhaps they would rather live in some

other suburb where there is no investment in new houses, so their precious lives are not disrupted by a short construction period.

Once the houses are built, they will have forgotten why they objected in the first place.

I agree with Christine Swift (CSN, February 16). Let other people have a chance for a home you yourselves were once given!

And if you don't agree, perhaps the naysayers should move to Transmission Gully. No new houses there, only an expressway!

Roger Watkin, Melrose

Thirteen houses too many for valley

Dear Ed, I live on Buckley Road overlooking this area and I agree with the local residents that 13 houses is too many for that place.

It is completely out of character with the area, eight houses would be the right amount. I'd also like to say that when the council asked for feedback, I called the supplied number and stated the same thing to the

council officer I spoke to.

He implied that it was already a done deal, which made me wonder why the WCC asked for comments at all, except to give the appearance of consultation.

Impacted residents should have definitely been notified as the development is certainly "more than minor" for those affected.

Gary McInney, Houghton Valley

Allow Greenfield sprawl

Dear Ed, I want to commend Christine Swift's common sense (CSN, February 16).

"Let other people have the chance for a home that you yourselves were once given" needs to be flashed on the nation's TV screens for five seconds every hour, until the point has sunk in and enough housing has been built that it is affordable again.

For a start, we used to make sure housing was affordable by building whole subdivisions in a few years flat.

Now apparently the powers that be have decided that this is "sprawl" and was a mistake.

Yet the Kiwi fair go of home ownership at a fair cost absolutely depended on it.

A referendum should be

done regarding whether developers should be allowed to do new Greenfield developments like Newlands.

I know nothing about whether the Happy Valley mob would be caught out under this approach.

However, in the many US cities where sprawl is freely allowed and housing is systemically affordable as a result, the people generally have been intelligent enough to make the connection that if they want their own neighbourhood preserved, and they want the next generation to "have the chance for a home that they themselves were once given", that means "allowing greenfield sprawl".

For some reason, it is not rocket science to them, but it is to us.

Philip G. Hayward, Naenae

Valley developer responds

Dear Ed, here is some info about our development at 215 Houghton Bay Rd (CSN, February 16) that may be of public interest:

Our houses are part of the Homestar programme and are registered with the Green Building Council. This means they will be more sustainable than most new houses.

An ecologist has designed extensive native planting which will recreate what once was on the coast. The development won't just look green it will be an ecological improvement.

The houses are architecturally

designed to sit down into this planting so that they are less visually dominant than many others in the area.

It is not 'too intense'. The houses average 28 percent site cover, which is less than the 35 percent that is allowed in the neighbourhood.

The water main for the area has just been upgraded and we don't contribute to the 60 year old leachate issue as is some people's concern.

We think this is a great development and exactly what New Zealand needs more of.

Smith Geursen, Melrose



FIRST LOOK: An artist's impression of what the first house in a proposed development at 215 Houghton Bay Road would look like.