

8 November 2021

Media Release

New Chums headland for sale, needs permanent protection says EDS

The Environmental Defence Society (EDS) is working with local groups and mana whenua to bring the northern headland of New Chums Beach into public ownership to protect it forever. This 30ha lot is part of the wider New Chums property in Wainuiototo Bay and is being separately marketed by Colliers on behalf of the Bank of New Zealand.

The wider property is subject to Environment Court proceedings over a proposed structure plan development, with a decision awaited. The Court has been lamentably slow in issuing a decision and that is complicating what is a challenging sale.

“EDS has been working with the owners for some years now, looking to ensure the houses in the structure plan development, if approved, are not visible from the beach. Now the BNZ has stepped in, because of a dispute with one of the owners over a mortgage, and has put the northern part of the block on the market,” said EDS CEO Gary Taylor.

“The headland was intended to be a donor property with its development rights transferred elsewhere within the multi-lot structure plan. Depending on the outcome of the hearing, there may be no right to build a house on the 30ha lot.

“There is also no clear road access to the lot which is effectively landlocked.

“Furthermore, it’s arguable that consent for a dwelling is unlikely to be granted in any event. The headland is an outstanding natural landscape and is likely to be caught by the precedent established in the Supreme Court decision *EDS v King Salmon Limited*.

“All these factors make this a messy sale and extremely difficult to place a value on the property. It is also important that the final purchase price is realistic: an overinflated one could make the eventual acquisition of other parts of the property, including the beachfront, prohibitively expensive.

“We believe that this is a case where the BNZ should step up and facilitate a sweetheart deal to protect the property in perpetuity. It is the Bank of New Zealand after all and this would be a great signal of its commitment to our environment and people.

“EDS is seeking donations [here](#) towards the purchase. Any donations received by EDS will be dedicated exclusively to the purchase and if unsuccessful will be refunded in full.

“We are working co-operatively with all other interests including Preserve New Chum for Everyone (PNC4E) which has been working towards a positive future for the beach for many years,” said Mr Taylor.

PNC4E spokesperson Linda Cholmondeley Smith says its efforts have been stalled by endless legal battles to prevent subdivision of the wider property.

“This has been a long battle and we are extremely keen to see this opportunity to permanently protect the headland taken up. We think there will be wide public support for that,” said Ms Cholmondeley Smith.

“We are asking people to donate to our Give-a-Little page [here](#) and will add those contributions to the EDS donations.”

Ngāti Huarere ki Whangapoua spokesperson, Wanda Brljevič, said that they are supportive in principle of the proposed campaign to purchase the land.

“As kaitiaki for this whenua we have always fought to protect the cultural and natural values that are of great importance to our people. We are open to negotiating a collaborative structure that protects those values for future generations of all people if the campaign is successful,” said Ms Brljevič.

The Whangapoua Beach Ratepayers Association has also confirmed that it strongly supports EDS in its mission to ensure this iconic headland remains protected and pristine through achieving public ownership in perpetuity for the common good.

“This is a fantastic opportunity to secure this real jewel, one of the few undeveloped beaches left on the eastern Coromandel Peninsula. The headland frames the beach experience and should be protected from development forever. It is a purchase that all kiwis should get behind to ensure this is not lost to an overseas buyer,” Mr Taylor concluded.