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The Mayor of New Plymouth District  
Mr Peter Tennent  
New Plymouth District Council  
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NEW PLYMOUTH

Dear Peter

I wish to congratulate the NPDC on the move recently taken to formalise a tree care policy and subsequently embark on a courageous catch-up programme starting with no less than the kauri plantation at Brooklands.

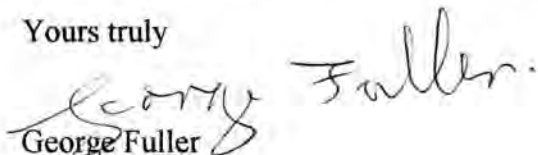
I have campaigned for many years to have our particularly rich heritage of trees appropriately husbanded, only to find the subject side-lined time after time because of the emergence of seemingly more urgent projects. As a consequence I had become quite despondent and resigned myself to accepting that no progress was likely to occur while I was still around to hurl bouquets. As if by a miracle I now find myself busily gathering the flowers!

The steps taken to fully acquaint the community with the reasons for and methods to be adopted prior to what was to inevitably be a controversial exercise were in my estimation masterly and the council is to be commended. To have authoritative specialists brought in to the district and provide opportunity for differing viewpoints to be aired publicly certainly minimised the risk of traumatising those ignorant of the urgent need to undertake thinning for the ultimate good. As a consequence the scheme seemed to be graciously accepted even by those initially sceptical.

I was also very impressed with the standard of workmanship carried out by the team of arborists involved in the thinning process. Removal of malformed and ailing specimens in such a dense stand without damage to those chosen to remain is a particularly complex and demanding activity involving the use of chainsaws near tree-top level. Dismantling trees from the top downwards is not a task for the faint-hearted! This team employed techniques which in my day had not even been dreamed about. Their level of skill was so great that I have to confess that perhaps it was just as well in the long-run that we didn't manage to find the time or finance to get on with the task because we would have been obliged to use the "one base-cut and run like Hell" technique which would definitely not have been in the best interests of the residual trees.

I have a firm belief that as the years go by trees will become a progressively more important element in the envied fabric of what combines to make our region so very attractive and that judicious investment in their long-term care will pay handsome dividends over hundreds of years. Successive generations will pay homage to those who had the wisdom to take such bold actions as those recently initiated in Brooklands.

Yours truly

  
George Fuller