

A Study of 'Lifestylers'

on the South Kaipara Head Peninsula



By Dianne McLeod
for Primary Industry Council/Kellogg
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Statistics reveal around 6800 new lifestyle blocks are created each year. Yet surprisingly little is known about “Lifestylers” – nobody knows for sure whether the anecdotal data reported in media matches the reality of life on a lifestyle block.

This research was undertaken to investigate people who have purchased and live on lifestyle properties on the South Kaipara Head peninsula. The hypothesis was that, “buyers find the reality of living on a lifestyle block is different from their perception prior to buying”. The research sought to find if these people are satisfied with their lifestyle by identifying behaviours and factors that may influence their attitudes. The research also wanted to learn the opinions of lifestylers with the view their experiences may assist prospective buyers of smallholdings. At the same time the research endeavoured to bring to light possible planning issues that could be of interest to the local authorities and organisations.

Key findings were...

- The desire for open space, rural views, peace and quiet and privacy is what motivates the majority to buy a ‘lifestyle’ property.
- Only a small proportion (22%) purchase a lifestyle property because they want to be self-employed or establish a business.
- Generally lifestylers undertake little research prior to buying their property.
- Some 40% of the properties were completely undeveloped when purchased. People with household incomes of less than \$50,000 purchase many of these properties.
- Some 82% of households have one or more adults commuting to work, which indicates they are likely to have considerable urban influence in their daily life.
- The majority (64%) of lifestylers are opposed to further subdivision and a greater proportion (79%) want South Head to be retained as a framing area.
- Some 70% say they identify most with the rural community.
- The majority (60%) of lifestylers say that lifestyle and land use are equally important to them.
- Some 60% of households do not have dependent children.
- The majority (64%) identified themselves as ‘lifestylers’.

An overwhelming majority (96%) indicated they are satisfied or very satisfied with their lifestyle, which proves the hypothesis to not be true.

Recommendations for action include:

1. Rodney District Council and Auckland Regional Council identify methods to improve communications with the developing lifestyle sectors under their jurisdiction.
2. Rodney District Council publish and distribute a brochure with the advice

provided by lifestylers (Table 7) for potential buyers.

3. Ongoing support be provided South Kaipara Landcare by agencies including the Rodney District Council, Auckland Regional Council New Zealand Landcare Trust and the Department of Conservation.

The following topics are recommended for further study:

- Is the Rodney District Council equipped to provide the infrastructure to support the predicted growth in the district?
- Would smaller units of land (eg: 1ha) satisfy the needs of lifestylers?
- What effect will continued subdivision of rural farmland have on New Zealand the economy?
- How can rural communities maintain their identity in the face of change?

Also included in the report are the stories of two local identities. Their recollections of earlier times on the peninsula may aid understanding of how life changes. It is hoped this research may shed some light on the changing rural culture and assist communities like South Head adapt to new ways without discord.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background Information

Significant changes of land use throughout New Zealand have been generating considerable debate. Statistics reveal “around 6800 new lifestyle blocks are created each year, adding more than 37,600ha to the sector annually”. (Stevenson, August 2005)¹ We now find that lifestyle blocks outnumber farms in New Zealand². Agriculture has traditionally been the foundation of New Zealand’s economy. The loss of productive land is of concern to some who assert, “any land taken out of production affects the income of the nation and we should view land use from a wider perspective”.³

Despite the significant increase in lifestyle blocks and smallholdings throughout the country in the past two decades the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) highlight, “Knowledge of small holders and lifestylers is limited by a lack of national survey data.” (Sanson, Cook, Fairweather, December 2004)⁴. Consequently there are differing and possibly inaccurate accounts of the life led by those people living on these smallish parcels of rural land and the affect they are having on rural areas.

The Issue

Whilst concerns have been expressed about the loss of productive land there have also been anecdotal reports that many people who buy lifestyle blocks are not really interested in the land and do not readily adapt to rural ways (Palmer 2005)⁵ (Smith 2004)⁶. They are soon disillusioned when they actually experience rural life because frequently lifestyle properties are distant from urban centres where everything is close at hand; commuting to work, education, recreation and social activities soon becomes an inconvenience. In addition the labour and time involved in developing and maintaining the land becomes a chore, while the unforeseen costs and caring for animals proves stressful for those who lack previous rural living experience. But does anyone really know if these anecdotal reports truly reflect how people find the realities of lifestyle living?

Rodney District Council

Rodney District lies on the northern outskirts of Auckland, New Zealand’s largest city. This district tops the list for all districts throughout New Zealand having the most lifestyle blocks (10,071), followed by the Far North District with 7562, then Franklin District with 7231.⁷ Rodney has a population of approximately 80,000 (77,385 population on Census night 2001, an increase of 15.1% up on the 1996 census results).⁸ “Only 25 of the 59 districts across New Zealand is projected to experience a population increase over the next 25 years and it is Rodney District that is projected to have the highest rate of growth of all territorial authority areas.”⁹

In July 2003 Rodney District Council (RDC) adopted Vision Rodney. This document provides the overarching principles for management of the Districts future. Six key intentions are identified for management of future changes in the District:¹⁰

- We will keep our country look and feel;
- We will not let our towns and villages sprawl;
- We will maintain our lifestyle and look after the environment;
- We will take care of ourselves while working with others;
- We will be able to make our living in Rodney;
- We will determine the future of our district.

It should be noted that neither the Auckland Regional Council (ARC)ⁱ, nor the Rodney District Councilⁱⁱ has conducted research on smallholdings and lifestyle blocks in their area, though the Rodney District Council did conduct a limited survey (RDC Community Preference Survey Oct 1992) about the attitudes and behaviours of those who live in rural areas.

A Current Rural Situation

South Kaipara Head is a peninsula on the Kaipara Harbour, under the authority of Rodney District Council. The demographic structure of this community has visibly changed in recent years. South Head peninsula is no longer an unknown rural backwater dominated by traditional sheep, beef and dairy farmers. The changes are evident from every perspective. Subdivisions, sealed roads, modern cars and advanced telecommunications have opened the way for people to combine the best of both worlds – rural living with urban convenience.

Definition Of A Lifestyle Block

The term ‘lifestyle block’ does not have any official statistical classification attached to it.ⁱⁱⁱ Yet there is a conceptual difference between larger blocks of land that are primarily used for traditional farming purposes and those smaller units of land not used for traditional farming activities and are occupied by people colloquially referred to as ‘lifestylers’. What’s more the expression ‘lifestylers’ is used very broadly, encompassing an eclectic mix of people who buy smallish parcels of rural land for a variety of reasons. It’s quite possible not everyone buying smallish blocks of rural land think of themselves as ‘lifestylers’ and actually may be offended by the term. These people may identify themselves as small farmers, hobby farmers, small block holders, horticulturists or similar.

For the purpose of this research a ‘lifestyle block’ includes all properties between 0.4ha and 30ha in size, that are not part of a rural residential area (eg: Shelly Beach residential area) but may, or may not, be used for business or profit generating purposes and are lived on by their owners.

Definition Of South Kaipara Head Peninsula

The South Kaipara Head peninsula was defined as all that area of land north of Green Road and including Green Road South Head.

ⁱ pers. comm. David Lindsay, Planner ARC

ⁱⁱ pers. comm. Peter Vari, Planner Rodney District Council

ⁱⁱⁱ pers. comm. Ronald Mair, Information Analyst

2.0 The Research

Research Objectives

The objective of this exploratory research was to study the people who have purchased and live on lifestyle properties on the South Kaipara Head peninsula. The hypothesis is that, “buyers find the reality of living on a lifestyle block is different from their perception prior to buying”.

The research sought to find if these people are satisfied with their lifestyle by identifying behaviours and factors that may influence their attitudes. The research also wanted to learn the opinions of lifestylers with the view that their experiences may assist prospective buyers of smallholdings. At the same time the research endeavoured to bring to light possible planning issues that could be of interest to the local authorities and organisations.

Purpose Of The Research

This research has been undertaken for academic purposes. Nonetheless it is anticipated readers of this report will better understand the essential nature of people who live on lifestyle properties. The results may be useful to potential buyers of lifestyle properties and also assist local government authorities and local organisations. Armed with up to date data it is likely that the needs of this rural community can be better catered for.

Approach To The Research

Limited resources, particularly costs, restricted the scope of the research and therefore influenced the design. It was considered that a self-administered questionnaire would be the most effective method to gather data, especially as the sample extended over a large area (Appendix A).

Sample Size

There are 601 properties between 0.4ha and 30ha on the South Head peninsula (Appendix B). It should be noted that:

- An unspecified number of these properties have no dwelling.
- An undetermined number of dwellings on lifestyle properties are rented, or are not used as a permanent residence by their owners.
- An undetermined number of traditional farming units have dwellings on lifestyle units that have been created for future sale, but in the meantime continue to be part of existing farms.
- An unspecified number of properties between 0.4ha and 30ha are bush blocks that were created by subdivisions but are protected from use.
- The writer, by means of local knowledge, determined that there were (circa) 250 owners living on South Head properties between 0.4ha and 30ha.

Questionnaire Design

The study was essentially descriptive in nature. Quantitative data was sought using a self-administered questionnaire (Appendix E). Some of the questions were drawn from an earlier study of smallholdings and their owners undertaken by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF).¹¹ To encourage participation, care was taken to ensure questions were clear and well laid out for ease of completion. The survey instrument comprised 29 questions. Respondents were required to tick a box, or boxes, from qualitative options that best described their answer. They were also given the opportunity to specify other factors if those listed did not meet their situation. Five point Likert scales were used for questions where opinions and behaviours were sought. It was considered that a five-point scale, while not definitive, did provide a clear indication of behaviours and attitudes.

The questionnaire was anonymous, though participants were asked to provide a postal or email address if they wished to receive an Executive Summary of the results. Alternatively they could contact the researcher by writing or by phone or fax for the results. The researcher's contact details were included in the cover letter sent (Appendix D) out with the survey.

Data Analysis

Completed questionnaires were coded and raw data entered into a computer. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) Version 11.5 software was used to analyse the data.

The analysis includes:

- Bar charts to graph the results
- Frequencies illustrated as percentages. These have been rounded up or down to the nearest whole number.
- The number nine on the graphs identifies non-response or invalid response to a question.
- Comments by respondents were collated into like categories and are listed
- Some further analysis was done manually.

Limitations Of Report

- A reminder letter was not sent out because it was considered the time and travel costs were too great.
- This research only sought the views of those people currently living (ie: June 2005) on lifestyle blocks. The report does not take into account the opinions of people who have sold their lifestyle properties. Consequently these results may present a biased view.
- The small imbalance of male respondents to female was not considered significant.
- While a very small proportion was aged under 30 years, the majority of respondents' age groups were reasonably evenly spread in each age group from 30 years to over 60 years.
- Analysis of the data was elementary; it was considered that in-depth analysis of the data was not necessary for this exploratory research.

3.0 DISCUSSIONS AND ANALYSIS

Setting the Scene

South Kaipara Head is a peninsula approximately 80 kilometres northwest of Auckland City. It is part of the Auckland region and is under the territorial authority of Rodney District Council. Helensville with a population of approximately 2214¹² people is the nearest township. It is essentially a service centre for the surrounding rural areas including the South Head peninsula.

The South Head peninsula has traditionally been used for pastoral farming (ie: sheep, beef, dairy farming) and in latter years some farm forestry, with the exception of the west coast, which has long been dominated by the Woodhill Forest. All the same, a variety of land uses have come and gone. The subdivision of farmland in recent times has been stimulated by economics with some landowners taking advantage of the capital gains to be made, whilst others have subdivided their land for the purpose of acquiring capital to purchase larger more economic blocks of land for their farming business. Subsequently the South Head peninsula has for a while been in a state of flux. At the same time as these larger rural landowners have been subdividing, there has been an equally increasing demand for relatively small properties by people seeking a rural lifestyle.

Statistics New Zealand 2001 Census results for the South Head peninsula reported a total of 441 dwellings¹³ and a population of 1161¹⁴. This was an increase of 22.3% and 20.2 % respectively from the 1996 Census. These statistics are now four years old and it is evident that there has been a significant increase in dwellings and population on the peninsula since the last count. It is not known how much of the projected growth for Rodney District the South Head peninsula will absorb, but it is quite likely the area will attract a significant proportion because of its' proximity to Auckland.

As a consequence of subdivisions on the peninsula there is more diversity of income-generating activities from this land, including orchards, horticulture, flower growing, alpacas and chicken farms. Then there are those who have established non-farm related businesses on their lifestyle blocks including artists, a gunsmith, kitchen cabinetmaker, engineering workshop and mechanical workshop. There may be other businesses that are unknown to the writer.

In contrast other people have purchased 'lifestyle blocks' not for the purpose of earning an income but simply for the rural 'lifestyle'. Whilst some of these landowners are retired, others often rely on deriving their primary income by travelling outside the area to work.

Transformation Of The Rural Sector

The development of 'lifestyle blocks' has increasingly been changing the face of rural communities throughout New Zealand since the 1980's (Sanson, Cook, Fairweather 2004)¹⁵. "In 1997 there were 94,000 lifestyle blocks in the country, now there are 134,000 reports Blue Hancock of Quotable Value New Zealand".¹⁶ In addition, Parliamentary Commissioner for

the Environment Dr Morgan Williams was reported saying, “New Zealand has lost its focus on soils with 6800 lifestyle blocks being developed last year meaning that 37,600 hectares of high quality soils were now being used for less productive activities”.¹⁷ These figures are supported by MaF who report, “If we assumed that all this was productive farmland, the area going into lifestyle blocks is equivalent to the loss of 247 dairy farms per year, based on a mean dairy farm size of 152ha”¹⁸. By any accounts these figures are quite startling. In light of these observations it was notable to discover MAF acknowledge little is known about lifestyle blocks and the people that live on them. This highlighted a need for more information about this rapidly growing sector.

Defining a Lifestyle Property

One of the foremost difficulties with researching people living on lifestyle properties is that there is no official definition of what constitutes a ‘lifestyle’ property. For this reason it is difficult to make hard and fast comparisons with other studies, as each is likely to apply their own subjective interpretation. All the same some broad comparisons with the MAF study “Smallholdings and their Owners”, have been arrived at.

Key Objectives

This exploratory research focussed on those people who have purchased lifestyle blocks on the South Head peninsula. The primary objective was to learn if buyers find the reality of lifestyle living is different from their perception prior to buying by identifying behaviours and factors that may influence their attitudes. In addition the opinions of these lifestylers were sought. These opinions were considered especially useful for potential buyers of lifestyle properties. At the same time the research endeavoured to bring to light possible planning issues that would be of interest to the local government authorities and organisations.

Self-Classification Of Owners

The majority of respondents identified themselves as ‘lifestylers’ (Appendix F Fig. 1). This result was comparable to MAF’s findings.²⁰ All the same this was notable because it contrasted with masters student Roger Smith’s findings that “this sector prefers to call themselves smallholders”.²¹ The difference in mind-set may be due to owners of South Head lifestyle blocks influenced by the close proximity of Auckland city where it is considered somewhat fashionable to own a ‘lifestyle’ property. The minority who identified themselves as small farmers or horticulturists are likely to be more committed to making some level of income from their land.

Size and Location of Properties

The majority (77%) of the properties where owners identified themselves as lifestylers were relatively small, being 4ha or less, compared with lifestyle properties in MAF’s study where they averaged 5.2oha.²² Small farmers and horticulturists tended to have bigger properties than lifestylers. The majority of small farmer properties were between 5ha and 30ha, while the majority of horticultural properties between 5ha and 19ha in size.

Approximately half of the respondents lived more than 20km from the Helensville Township (Appendix F Fig.5). Some commented they have experienced difficulties in getting trades people because of the distance they must travel, while concerns were also raised by a number of respondents about the distance commuting to work. Buyers of lifestyle blocks in outlying areas would be wise to keep this in mind when buying. It is also more expensive because trades people generally charge for their travelling time. Results also showed that vehicle running costs were of moderate to extreme concern for 41% of respondents.

Combined Household Income And Property Development

Household incomes for this segment extended across a wide range (Appendix F Table 4). A small proportion (11%) had household incomes of less than \$30,000, though a reasonable proportion (38%) had household incomes of \$70,000 or more, which is above the New Zealand average of \$60,433.²³

Only a small proportion (14%) of the properties surveyed were fully developed when purchased. Some 40% of the properties were completely undeveloped when purchased (Appendix F Fig.6). It was notable to discover people with household incomes of less than \$50,000 purchased almost half (49%) of these undeveloped properties. Not one respondent with a household income of less than \$30,000 purchased a fully developed property. Thus buyers of lifestyle blocks or smallholdings need to be aware that not only time but also significant financial resources are required to develop properties to a desirable level. For households earning less than the average household income the costs of developing their rural lifestyle property may prove difficult. Smith (2005) commented, “The blockholder sin that raises the greatest contestation is farmers’ perception that blockholders fail to care properly for the land they have brought”.²⁴ It may be that people really do care about the land but these results indicate a good number do not have the financial resources to do so properly.

Length of Ownership/Intention To Stay

Results show the majority of respondents have owned their properties for less than six years (Appendix F Fig.2). This may be because many of the properties are the result of more recent subdivisions. Without further analysis of the sales of lifestyle properties in the South Head area it is not possible to make comparisons with other statistics. All the same according to “Barfoot & Thompson’s Michael Williams lifestyle blocks on average turnover every five years while residential properties turnover every seven years”.²⁵ MaF also reported that, “a large number of lifestyle blocks change hands within a relatively short period of time (ie: blocks with dwellings was 4.92 years), although a proportion do stay in the same ownership for longer than 20 years”.²⁶

The majority of respondents indicated they intend staying on their lifestyle property indefinitely (Appendix F Fig. 3), which is positive as it could provide this rural community some stability. Yet when the ‘not sure’ group are combined with those intending to stay five years or less, this accounts for 25% of all respondents. If this turnover rate transpires it could have a destabilising effect making it difficult for local organisations to have continuity.

Motivations For Buying

The foremost motivation for people buying lifestyle properties were the desires for open space, rural views, peace and quiet, privacy, with less traffic and pollution (Appendix F Table 3). This result was parallel to MaF findings of smallholders.²⁷ What's more they support Smith's (2005) claims, "In moving from urban places to the countryside, in-migrants in effect 'purchase' the experience of being in a rural community and landscape"²⁸. Halseth (1999) too was cited by Smith (2005) asserting, "This purchase of an experience of a lifestyle occurs just as a consumer would purchase other goods, services or activities".²⁹ These findings were interesting because only a small proportion (34%) of respondents were seeking to be part of a rural community, yet the majority (69%) also indicated that they mostly identify with the rural community.

It does appear that in general people are buying the benefits a lifestyle property can offer and not a 'traditional' rural lifestyle experience. This may shed some light on why anecdotal reports suggest that some rural communities are grappling with a 'them' and 'us' mentality.³⁰ This mind-set may be a concern for the South Head community; like many rural areas it depends on local residents to get involved to keep the community spirit alive and functioning.

It was significant to discover that the least important factor for those buying lifestyle properties was the desire to establish their own business or be self-employed. While 42% do intend to generate a part time employment from their land, only a small (18%) proportion intend to generate fulltime employment from their land. Further research is required to determine what business activities these landowners have in mind and what demands, if any, would these have on the local infrastructure? Increasing productivity from the land could have a positive spin-off opening up employment opportunities thus reducing the need for people to commute outside the area for work. Research undertaken by Waimakariri District Council showed comparable results, finding only one-third of the lifestylers surveyed in their district obtained income from their land.³¹ Similarly MaF findings³² revealed many smallholders are engaged in serious production activities although these were generally insufficient to support smallholding households. Again the difference in results may be due to this sample being more influenced by the urban culture of nearby Auckland City.

Land use was the most important factor for only a small proportion (10%) of the respondents (Appendix F Fig. 34). This finding lends some weight to the concerns of some who point out "any land taken out of production affects the income of the nation and we should view land use from a wider perspective".³³ All the same the majority (60%) of respondents said that lifestyle and land use were both equally important to them. Further research is required to determine what these people mean by this, because there was no evidence in these results that indicated land use (production) was of primary importance to the majority of these people. Despite these results, personal observations by the writer suggest there has been considerable tree planting undertaken on many lifestyle properties on the peninsula. This is recognised as hugely beneficial to the environment. It would be worthwhile to further explore how these smallholdings are being utilised.

In view of the fact that respondents in this study were in the main *not* interested in making a living from their land, it would be worthwhile to undertake further research to determine if lifestylers would be content with yet smaller properties, which may result in more land being retained for productive purposes and thus allay the concerns of those about the loss of productive land.

Research Prior To Buying

Buying a home is likely to be one of the biggest purchase decisions people face. Combine this with moving from an urban setting to a rural location somewhat distant from amenities, as many of this group are likely to have done, it was quite surprising to find that only a very small proportion of respondents had undertaken moderate to extensive research of factors likely to affect them prior to buying.

While some may view moving to a lifestyle property as high risk most of this group probably does not. Many still maintain daily contact with the urban sector through commuting to work daily. This provides an element of security for them, because they remain close to all the services they are accustomed to and the people they are familiar with. What's more most are not dependent on the land for deriving an income. They may perceive the financial risk as relatively low because the property market in the Auckland region has been strong for some time.³⁴ So if things do not turn out as they had anticipated it would not be too much of an upheaval to move closer to an urban area.

Educational Facilities

Although 60% of the respondents did not have dependent children only a small proportion (15%) indicated they did moderate to extensive research on education facilities in the area (Appendix F Fig.12). Ensuring children have a sound education is a fundamental role of parents or guardians. Are people prepared to accept whatever education is available? Further research may reveal why more people do not research thoroughly this topic prior to buying.

Community Services and Sports Clubs

Only a small proportion (12%) of respondents did moderate to extensive research about community services in the area (Appendix F Fig. 13). Many of these people travel outside of the area to work so it may be that they retain the services they had prior to moving to South Head, because they know and trust them and it is more convenient for them. On the other hand newcomers may just depend on finding the right people to meet their needs once they have settled into the area and the need arises.

Some 69% of respondents did no research at all on sports clubs in the area prior to buying their lifestyle property (Appendix F Fig. 14). It is often families with dependent children who are high users of sports clubs and the majority (60%) of this sector are adult only households, which may have less of a need for sports clubs. Then again people may well want to take time to settle in before getting involved in local sports clubs.

All the same these results suggest that community organisations and sports clubs could be more proactive in their efforts to communicate with newcomers to the area if they are keen to grow their memberships. This could be done in a number of ways including mail drops and through local media. However a good first step may be to provide real estate agents with brochures about the organisation and contact details inviting new people to join in.

Recreational Opportunities

Rural people are often branded because of their fondness for the outdoors. For this reason it was somewhat unexpected to find only a small proportion (24%) of respondents did moderate to extensive research on recreational opportunities in the area prior to buying their property (Appendix F Fig. 15). It is somewhat concerning if people buy first and then object to the lack of recreational opportunities in the area, for this approach is what often leads to disharmony in these changing rural communities. On the other hand there were limited numbers in favour of possible public developments including those developments with a recreational focus like walkways, bridle paths and cycle ways. (Appendix F Table 6)

Community Organisations

Only a small proportion (34%) indicated they wanted to be part of a rural community, which explains why so few (10%) respondents undertook moderate to extensive research of local community organisations prior to buying their property (Appendix F Fig.16).

On the other hand a little more than half (54%) indicated they have got involved in a local organisation (Appendix F Fig.23) although the extent of their involvement is unknown. Some people may only very occasionally participate in the community as indicated by several respondents eg: annual roadside cleanup. However this is apparently sufficient for them to 'feel' they are part of the rural community. Long established residents might question this philosophy. Other respondents indicated they did want to be involved but said they were too involved elsewhere, or lacked the time to be involved in a community organisation. This explanation is quite reasonable as many are commuting outside of the area to work, which indicates they are out of the area for extended periods. What's more as mentioned earlier few of these properties were fully developed when purchased. Consequently spare time for this sector may be precious and is likely spent developing their lifestyle property.

Local Government

Having some knowledge of the Rodney District Council and Auckland Regional Council (eg: regulations, District Plan, Regional Plan) was relatively important for only a minority of respondents (Appendix F Fig.17). This was possibly more important to those who intended to undertake a business activity and / or those wishing to build on their land. It would be concerning if the majority of people buy their lifestyle property first, then research what activities the District and Regional Plans will allow after purchase.

Rodney District Council do publish an excellent leaflet (Appendix G) outlining what people can expect living in the countryside and also highlights a number of issues that may affect new

comers, as well as District Plan controls. This is available from the Council service centres. It is important these are kept well stocked and lifestyle property buyers are actively encouraged to take them. Auckland Regional Council is somewhat geographically distant from South Head. For this reason they may need to make more of an effort to make known the services they provide and offer easy access to this information.

Activities For Land Use

Approximately ¼ of respondents researched activities that were suitable for their land (Appendix F Fig.18). This result is not surprising, as the majority are not interested in using their property to derive an income. It is likely that those who did moderate to extensive research were those serious about generating an income from the land itself eg: market gardening, horticulture, orchards etc. Some lifestyle buyers may have arrangements with local farmers to graze their land. Further research would be worthwhile to find out what this sector does with their land.

Healthcare and Management Of Animals

It is not known how many landowners in this group actually have animals that may require people to have a degree of knowledge and experience eg: alpacas, sheep or emus. Only a minority of respondents did moderate to extensive research about the requirements for managing animals (Appendix F Fig.21). It may be that people get animals first and then seek advice. While this is not the best approach it shouldn't really be a problem as there are a number of readily available sources (internet, lifestyle magazines, small holder groups etc) catering for this sector providing good information.

Water Supplies

Unlike urban properties, rural landowners are generally responsible for sourcing their own water supply. Consequently it was unexpected to find a good number (42%) did little or no research of the water supply for their property when purchasing (Appendix F Fig.19). Buyers need to be aware that not all properties that are newly subdivided from larger established titles can depend on having a good water supply in place. It was noted that 30% of respondents are anxious about the quality of their water. The Auckland Regional Council and Rodney District Council may be able to assist these landowners to determine what the water quality problems are and provide advice to help eliminate or mitigate any water quality problems.

Neighbours And Nearby Activities

The majority (58%) of respondents did little or no research of neighbours or nearby activities and businesses (Appendix F Fig.20). This result was unexpected as the 2nd most important factor for respondents (78%) buying their lifestyle property were the need for peace and quiet. Buyers of lifestyle blocks may need to be made aware that farming activities can at times be noisy and smelly. Newcomers may find little sympathy for any complaints about long established farming practices that might interfere with their daily life, as evidenced by several respondents who commented, "don't come here and try to change the place".

Farming communities are often blamed for resisting change, but it appears some lifestylers also do not want newcomers to try and change long-held rural behaviours. Smith (2004)³⁵ made an interesting observation of behaviours between cockies and blockies on the Oneriri peninsula noting that “Conflict exists, but it is seldom manifested in any form of aggressive behaviour, or even by the withholding of social niceties. Because the population is sparse in urban terms – people tend to rub along”. It is likely these behaviours will be found in other rural communities experiencing change and South Head would be no exception.

Employment Opportunities

The results reveal most people buying lifestyle properties at South Kaipara Head do not intend to be reliant on local employment, as only a small proportion (8%) undertook moderate to extensive research of employment opportunities in the area (Appendix F Fig.22). Most households (82%) accept commuting to work as a lifestyle choice. One downside of this behaviour is the pressure increased traffic places on the roading infrastructure. According to Statistic New Zealand, the Rodney District is predicted to experience the greatest growth in the country, much of it due to lifestyle development.³⁶ The question is, “are Rodney District Council and the Auckland Regional Council being sufficiently proactive in forward planning for the complex demands lifestyle development is incurring on the local infrastructure?” In view of the fact that neither of these councils has done any research of lifestyle blocks or the people that buy them, it is quite likely they will find they are ill prepared to cope with the expectations and demands of this growing rural population in the coming years.

Identity With The Rural Sector

Statistics New Zealand consider, “there is a huge difference between a rural community based on rural livelihoods and one where a large proportion of the population works in an urban area (particularly a main urban area), but happens to live in a rural area. The urban area provides a significant focus for the latter community”.³⁷

It was notable therefore to find the majority (69%) of respondents indicated they identify mostly with the ‘rural’ community (Appendix F Fig.35). Yet it is evident they do have a moderate to high urban influence in their daily lives, as the majority of households have one or more persons travelling to work. It is likely these people work in urban areas in and around Auckland as the majority travel in excess of 21kms with some travelling more than 60kms to work. MaF described similar behaviours reporting that many smallholders identify with a rural lifestyle, yet it is likely that many work in urban areas while choosing to live a rural lifestyle.³⁸

The implication of lifestylers integrating to the South Head community is that long-held rural values and behaviours are likely to be challenged by those who are strongly influenced by urban principles. Lifestylers who have not experienced rural living may not readily understand why activities are done in a certain way, eg: moving stock along the road instead of by truck, or the importance of asking for permission to access farmland. On the other hand farmers cannot expect to have everything their own way as communities expand. New technologies often allow for improved ways of doing business and where it is reasonable they should adopt these.

Having recognised some of the challenges for this community, it must be noted South Kaipara Landcare who are a volunteer group is very representative of this changing community with a diverse mix of people on their committee including a bank manager, retired orthopaedic surgeon, sheep, beef and dairy farmers, hobby farmers and lifestylers. The group organises an excellent array of environmental projects and activities throughout the year all with a strong social focus. These events provide an opportunity for everyone in this community to come together, which helps bridge the gap between long established residents and lifestylers who may be new to rural ways. It is important this group receives the ongoing support of agencies such as the New Zealand Landcare Trust, Department of Conservation, Rodney District Council and the Auckland Regional Council.

Unexpected Experiences

In the main respondents did little research prior to buying their properties. However only a minority indicated there were unexpected things that caused them moderate to extreme concern. The foremost concern expressed was vehicle-running costs (Appendix F Fig.29). Given that fuel prices can be volatile and rural people are dependent on private transport, buyers of lifestyle properties would be wise to err on the side of caution when budgeting for travelling costs.

Isolation, loneliness or the opportunity to make new friends was of significant concern for only a small proportion (6%) of respondents (Appendix F Fig.26). This result may reflect the fact the majority of households has regular contact outside the area; even though this is commonly for work purposes this interaction no doubt helps meet some of the social needs of individuals. Then again the low level of concern expressed may be attributable to the fact two thirds of respondents indicated they, or someone in their household, have lived in a rural environment prior to living at South Head so they will have some idea what to expect.

Views On Future Development

Almost 2/3 of respondents indicated they would not agree to more subdivision in the area (Appendix F Fig.32) and a greater proportion (79%) indicated it is important that South Head is retained as a farming area (Appendix F Fig.33). Clearly respondents perceive that retaining farmland protects the very attributes of the lifestyle they value - peace and quiet, space, privacy and the views, while more subdivision will threaten these. These opinions match the principles for managing Rodney District's future as outlined in the Vision Rodney document.³⁹ Even so it was interesting to unearth that the majority of those who agree, or strongly agree, to further subdivision had also indicated that open space, rural views, peace and quiet, less traffic and privacy were very important or extremely important to them when they were buying.

At the same time, some respondents were undecided on the issue of further subdivision, while others expressed their concerns about the impact this would have on the environment and the infrastructure. The respondents in this survey may be unaware that many more subdivisions already exist, but are not yet built on (Appendix B) and there is the possibility for even more to be developed.

The results gave no clear directive from this sector about possible future public developments they would agree to (Appendix F Table 6). Some 35% do not want any public developments. However a similar proportion (34%) were in favour of a Regional Park and a slightly higher proportion (41%) was in favour of walkways, bridleways and / or cycle ways. Respondents may perceive walkways, bridleways or cycle ways as having more benefit for the local community and less of a threat to their rural lifestyle. However if these were developed it is highly likely the council and tourist operators would promote them widely. Consequently it is very difficult to create developments for only the benefit of locals. Just a very small proportion were in favour of Off-road 4WD / motorbike park. This result may reflect the age group and type of people that come and live on these smallholdings. They may perceive a motorbike or 4WD park as being very noisy and would jeopardise the lifestyle they so value.

Disadvantages Of A Lifestyle Block

Respondents generally did not experience any significant disadvantages of their lifestyle, although some 48% considered the distance to work a disadvantage (Appendix F Fig.36). This was not surprising when findings revealed many commute extensive distances to their employment. Ultimately long distance commuting to work is likely to take a toll on personal finances and time.

The majority of respondents indicated the lack of services such as water, sewage and / or telecommunications was of some disadvantage (Appendix F Fig.43). The lack of an efficient telecommunication service may deter some people trying to work or operate a business from home. Further research would be useful to determine if improved telecommunications would save some of this sector from commuting daily to work and perhaps improve their quality of life.

Some 39% of respondents indicated problems communicating with local authorities (Appendix F Fig.46). This may in part be due to the fact that few people research these authorities prior to buying; therefore they have unrealistic expectations of the services they seek. All the same further research by Rodney District Council and the Auckland Regional Council is advisable to identify how this communication problem can be overcome.

The distance from family and friends was a moderate to extreme disadvantage of the lifestyle for some 36% (Appendix F Fig.47). While today's telecommunications (internet/email, telephone, text messaging etc) should help bridge the gap of living at a distance, would-be buyers of lifestyle properties need to consider how they might cope with being some distance from their family and friends.

A good number of respondents are likely to have properties on unsealed side roads. Whilst the majority believed the standard of roads of some disadvantage it was somewhat surprising to find only 32% of respondents believed the standard of roads was a moderate to extreme disadvantage of their rural lifestyle (Appendix F Fig.41).

Respondents offered an assortment of sound advice for potential buyers of lifestyle blocks

(Appendix F Table 7). It may well be worthwhile publishing this information and making it widely available so that costly land purchase mistakes can be avoided. While Rodney District Council and the Auckland Regional Council may not consider the distribution of this information their responsibility, it is thought they are the best placed to do so, because they have the necessary resources and this is where people first turn to seek important information about land purchases such as LIM reports. Moreover, their involvement in communicating this information would extend a cooperative attitude to the community they serve. This could be done in a brochure much like that mentioned earlier (Appendix G) and distributed in the same manner. There are a number of other avenues for distributing this information including organisations like the Kumeu Landowners Association, websites like lifestyleblock.co.nz, or magazines eg: New Zealand Lifestyle block, however people are likely to refer to these organisations after they have purchased, which may in fact be too late to heed the advice.

Despite the majority of respondents doing very little research prior to buying their properties, and keeping in mind most of these properties were only partly developed or not developed at all, with the added drawback many are 20kms or more from Helensville, it was remarkable to find only a very small proportion (3%) dissatisfied with their lifestyle now. This study found the things lifestylers said they enjoy most about living on a lifestyle block or smallholdings (Appendix F Table 5) are consistent to their motivations for purchasing. These results challenge anecdotal data⁴⁰ that report people find the lifestyle not what they had expected and proves the hypothesis not to be true; people do *not* find their experience of life on a lifestyle property different from their perceptions prior to buying.

KEY FINDINGS

“Lifestylers”

It was found the term ‘lifestyler’ is not in fact derogatory, as the majority identified themselves as such. This term fits well with a key finding of this research, which found the desire for open space, rural views, peace and quiet and privacy is what motivates the majority to buy a ‘lifestyle’ property. Only a few (22%) people buy lifestyle properties because they want to be self-employed or establish a business (Appendix F Table 3). This result lends some support to those, like Dr Morgan Williams (Commissioner for the Environment), who are concerned about the loss of productive land to this sector and the potential adverse impact this may have on New Zealand’s economy.

What’s more a good number of lifestylers have below average household incomes and have bought undeveloped properties requiring substantial financial resources to develop. It is this group which are almost certain to raise criticism from the community because they are more likely to put on substandard housing, which lowers the tone of the area. What’s more they are less likely to care for the land well quite simply because they do not have the financial resources required.

Smith (2005) found farmers and lifestylers agreeing that 10acre subdivisions should be a thing of the past, because that area is too small to farm and too big to otherwise care for.⁴¹ It is quite possible many lifestylers would be equally as content with smaller properties provided a ‘sense’ of space and their privacy could be retained. All the same not enough information is known about lifestylers and the activities taking place on these lifestyle properties, nor what activities are feasible on these properties to make any reliable judgment. Further research would be worthwhile to determine just how this land is being utilised and whether in fact it is suitable for income generating activities.

It appears somewhat of a contradiction to find the majority (70%) say they identify mostly with the rural community when some 82% of households have at least one person travelling most likely to urban communities in and around Auckland for their employment. This result indicates most households are likely to have considerable urban influence in their daily lives. All the same around half indicated they were involved in a community organisation, although there is some question about the degree of involvement. It is likely people have differing philosophies about what defines a rural person.

Pre-Purchase Research

It was somewhat surprising to find that the majority of respondents had not undertaken robust research prior to buying and yet few experienced any unforeseen difficulties. The lack of research prior to buying does not appear to have affected the level of satisfaction with their lifestyle now, as the overwhelming majority indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their lifestyle. The fact most of these households do not have dependent children may make it easier to cope with the complexities of rural living. All the same as mentioned earlier

the turnover rate of properties is unknown and this research has not included those people who have purchased lifestyle properties and since left. Future research may be worthwhile to determine their reasons for leaving.

Potential Future Developments

There were mixed results with regard to possible public developments with no clear indication of what would be acceptable to most. However results clearly showed the majority are opposed to further subdivision on the peninsula, as they perceive this would threaten the very way of life they value. Their opinions were in line with Rodney Council's strategy for managing growth as outlined in the Vision Rodney document. It would be worthwhile to find out how Rodney District Council is implementing the Vision Rodney strategy as many lifestyle properties already exist but are not yet built on and current subdivision rules will allow more to be developed. These findings are not surprising and perhaps reflect human nature; people are often reluctant to accept on-going changes in an attempt to preserve their preferred lifestyle.

This research was merely exploratory. The results provide an insight into the nature of people living on lifestyle properties on the South Head peninsula. Results proved the hypothesis to not be true. Lifestylers in this study, do not find the reality of living on a lifestyle block different from their perception prior to buying.

Lifestyle properties are now a significant part of New Zealand's rural landscape. The recent changes occurring in rural communities like South Kaipara Head should not be considered altogether negative, because change can be make for dynamic, healthy communities. However trying to understand the changes and plan for the future is very important. The stories of two local identities are attached (Appendices H & I). Their recollections of earlier times on the South Head peninsula may aid understanding of how lifestyles do change. It is hoped this research may shed some light on the changing rural culture and assist rural communities like South Head adapt to new ways without discord.

CONCLUSIONS

It was not surprising to find that the matter of lifestyle properties and the people that buy them frequently reported on in the media throughout the country; every year approximately 6800 new lifestyle blocks are created in New Zealand accounting for some 37,600ha. On the other hand it was most unexpected to discover that very little research has been undertaken by authorities to learn about this fast-growing sector.

Given that little work has been undertaken on the people who buy lifestyle blocks it is expected that the results of this exploratory research may be helpful to local government authorities, buyers of lifestyle properties and the South Head community.

This study focussed on those people who have bought and live on a South Head lifestyle property. It is considered that the self-completed questionnaire met the aims of the research providing sound results. Some questions were drawn from earlier MaF research enabling some broad comparisons to be made. Results revealed both similarities and differences in the two studies. It may be worthwhile to repeat this survey in other rural areas where subdivision is occurring to determine if there are any differences in the lifestyle sector throughout the country.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ACTION:

1. Rodney District Council and Auckland Regional Council identify methods to improve communications with the developing lifestyle sectors under their jurisdiction.
2. Rodney District Council publishes and distributes a brochure with the advice provided by lifestylers (Appendix F Table 7) for potential buyers.
3. Ongoing support be provided South Kaipara Landcare by agencies including the Rodney District Council, Auckland Regional Council New Zealand Landcare Trust and the Department of Conservation.

The following topics are recommended for further study:

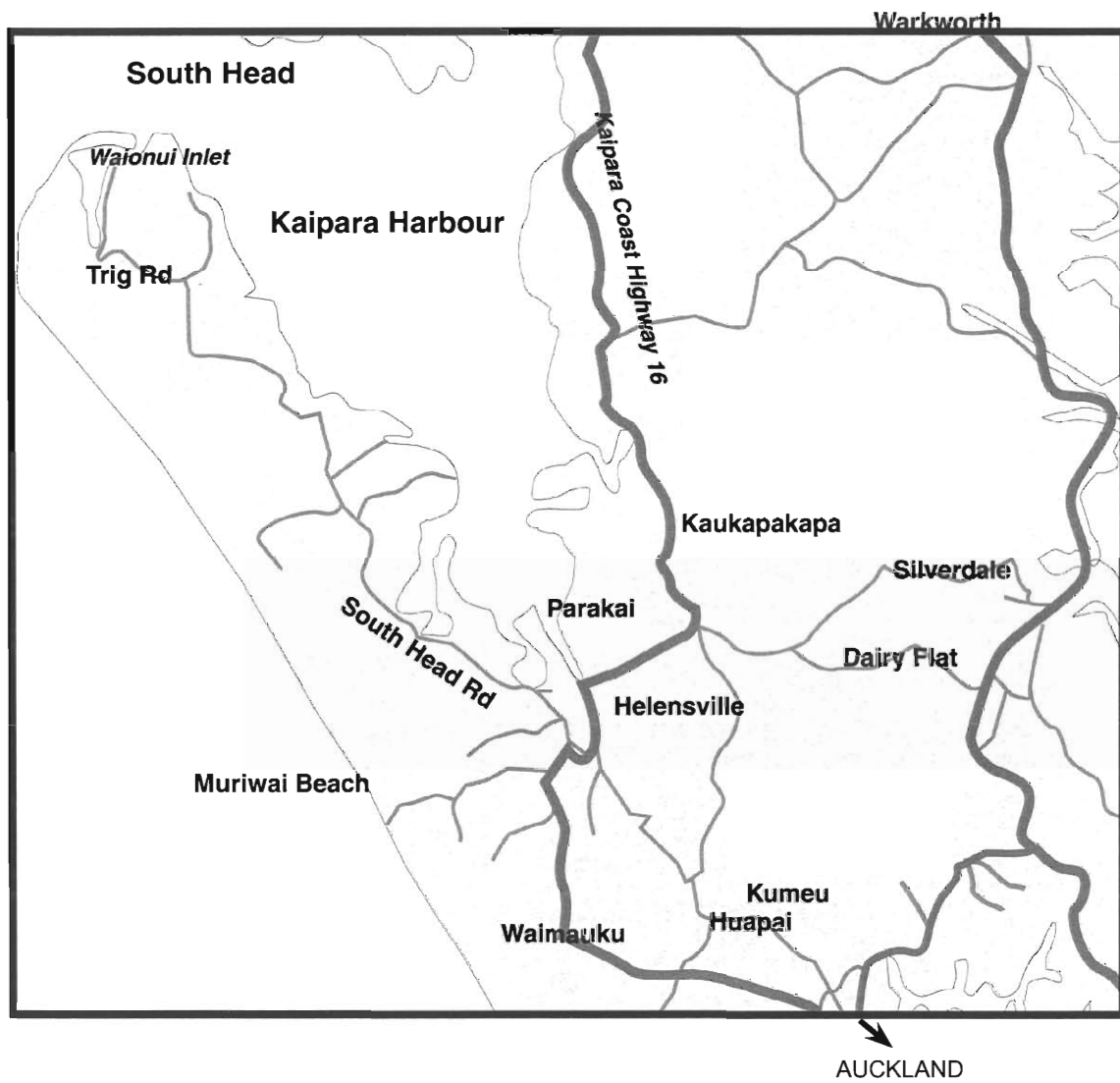
- Is the Rodney District Council equipped to provide the infrastructure to support the predicted growth in the district?
- Would smaller units of land (eg: 1ha) satisfy the needs of lifestylers?
- What effect will continued subdivision of rural farmland have on New Zealand's economy?
- How can rural communities maintain their identity in the face of change?

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

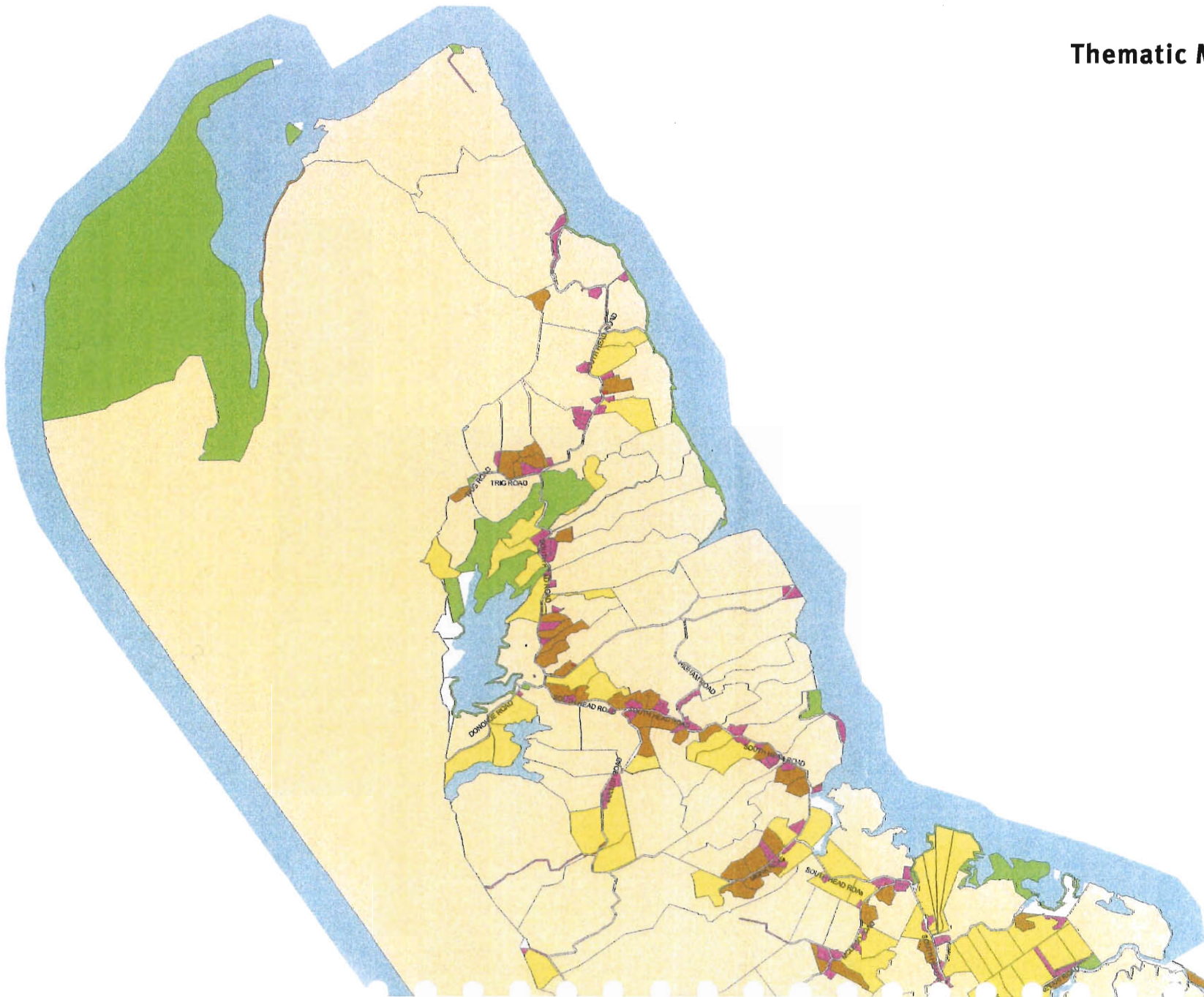
I wish to thank all those who made this report possible, including the people who took the time to complete and return the questionnaires, the Rodney District Council for assisting with printing the questionnaires and report and also providing the Thematic map, Alistair Emerson (Unitec) for his assistance with the SPSS software and providing support for this study and also Cora Ballie (Lincoln University) for her assistance.

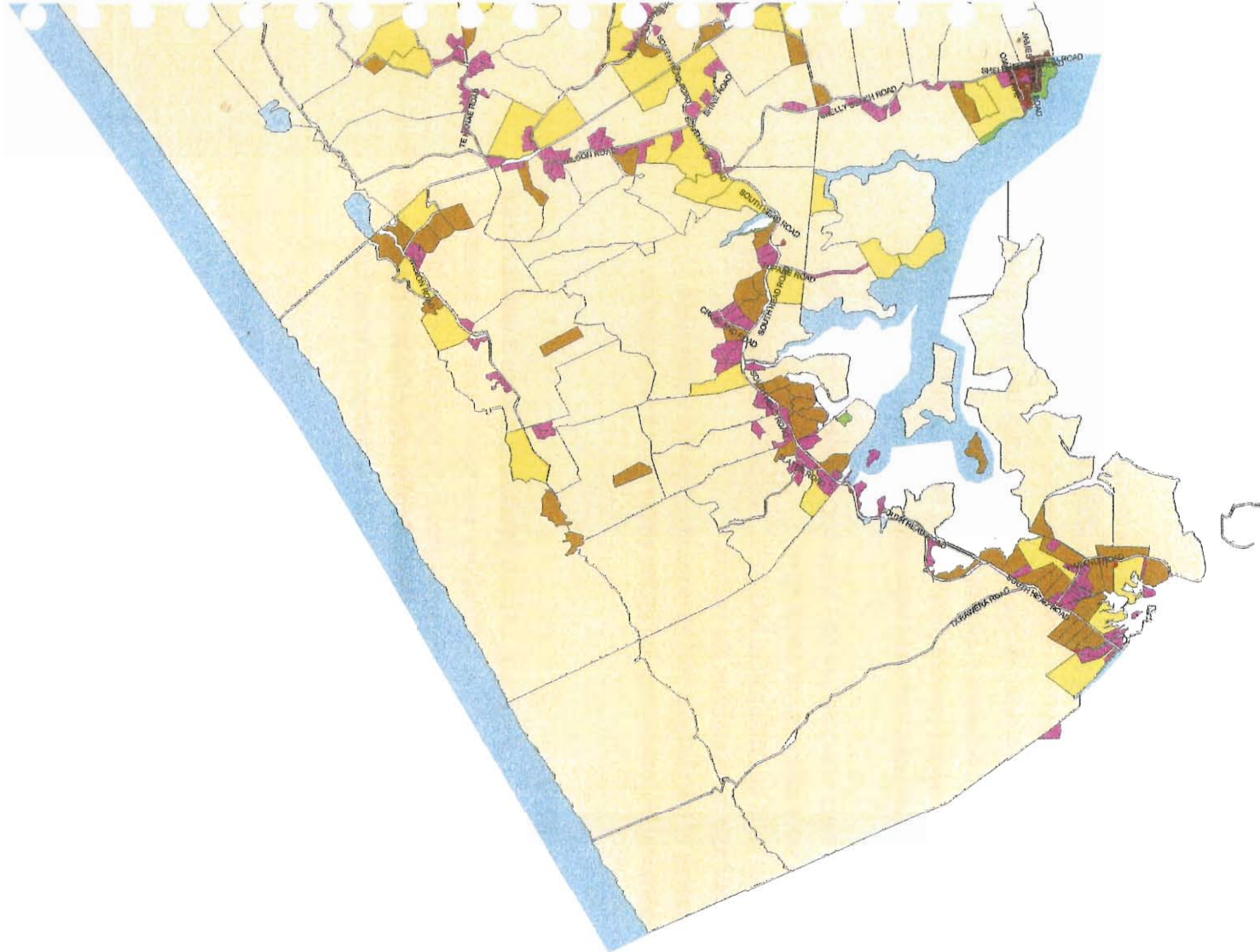
Appendix A

Map of South Head



Appendix B
Thematic Map of South Head





Head Office: 50 Centreway Road, Orewa
Private Bag 500, Orewa 1461, New Zealand
Tel: 0800 4265169, Fax (09) 4267280
Email: info@rodney.govt.nz

Legend
Thematic Map of South Head

	0 to 0.4 ha (230)		10 to 30 ha (113)
	0.4 to 4 ha (339)		30+ ha (189)
	4 to 10 ha (149)		ARC,DOC,Defence Force and RDC Properties not included in the query (25)

South Head



SCALE: 1:60000 @ A2



This plan is for information purposes only, and best produced in colour. Its content is NOT to be considered of survey grade, and should be verified prior to design or construction. While Council endeavors to provide accurate data, no guarantee as to the completeness and accuracy of the data shown can be given. Council accepts no liability for any error or omission whatsoever. Note:- Some parcels are not linked to rate account.

DATE: July 2005
RDC 17786

Appendix C

Method

- A self-administered questionnaire (Appendix E) was designed for ease of use.
- A cover letter (Appendix D) explaining the purpose of the research was attached to the questionnaire.
- The questionnaire was hand-delivered to 250 mailboxes across the entire peninsula identified as a lifestyle block between 0.4ha and 30 hectares in size.
- Self-addressed stamped envelopes were provided for the return of questionnaires.
- 103 households completed questionnaires were returned on time. These were found to be unbiased.
- Three questionnaires were returned late and were not included in the results.
- Four questionnaires were returned not completed.
- The response rate of valid questionnaires was 42%. This was considered sufficient to provide a sound basis for evaluating the results.
- To aid understanding of the changes that have occurred on the South Head peninsula two personal histories compiled by the writer have been included.

Pretesting Questionnaire

The questionnaire was pre-tested on six people, of both genders to ensure it was inclusive and that respondents could easily follow the instructions and understand the questions. Feedback from the pre-testing found that people understood the questions and followed instructions correctly. Although suggestions for further questions were put forward these were not included in this questionnaire because of the need to limit the number of questions.

Appendix D Cover Letter

3202 South Kaipara Head
RD1
Helensville

1 June 2005

Dear Householder

ACADEMIC RESEARCH – LIFESTYLER / SMALL HOLDER SURVEY

I am presently enrolled in Lincoln University's Kellogg's / Rural Industry Leadership course, which I am doing extramurally. I seek your participation in a research survey I am undertaking as required for my studies.

Lifestyle blocks have become very popular throughout New Zealand and today they form a significant part of the South Head profile. However very little is known about people who purchase smallholdings or lifestyle blocks. There are differing opinions and possibly inaccurate perceptions by people about the quality of life led by those living on "lifestyle" blocks.

In order to meet the needs of this ever changing community it is important not only for organisations within our local community, but also for the Rodney District Council and Auckland Regional Council to understand what the expectations and experiences are for people who purchase lifestyle blocks and small holdings. For this reason I would really appreciate your participation in this survey, as it is important the results are accurate and as comprehensive as possible.

Instructions

This questionnaire is anonymous. It will take about ten minutes of your time. The questionnaire is to be completed by an adult who owns and lives on a South Head lifestyle block or smallholding between 0.4ha and 30ha in size. When the questionnaire is completed please return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope provided by **Friday 24 June 2005**.

If you have any questions please phone me on 420 2510 or e-mail mcleodcd@xtra.co.nz, or write to me at the above address. If you wish to obtain a summary of the report findings please send me your name and address, or contact me by phone, or email. Results will be available after the 1st December 2005.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Dianne McLeod

**Survey of Lifestyle Blocks
and Small Holdings
on South Head Peninsula
June 2005**

Instructions for completing this form

This questionnaire is to be completed by an adult owner living on a South Head lifestyle block or small holding between 0.4 ha and 30ha. In answering these questions, please be as honest and accurate as possible. Put a tick ✓ inside the box provided.

1. With which group do you identify yourself? *Tick one box*

- a. Lifestylers ☐
- b. Hobby farmer ☐
- c. Small farmer ☐
- d. Horticulture / Grower ☐
- e. Other, please specify ☐

2. How long have you owned your South Head "lifestyle" property? *Tick one box*

- a. Less than 2 years ☐
- b. 2 to 5 years ☐
- c. 6 to 10 years ☐
- d. 11 to 20 years ☐
- e. More than 20years ☐

3. How long do you intend staying on your South Head lifestyle block? *Tick one box*

- a. Less than 2 years ☐
- b. 2 to 5 years ☐
- c. 6 to 10 years ☐
- d. Indefinitely ☐
- e. Not sure ☐

4. What size is your lifestyle block? *Tick one box*

- a. 0.4ha to 2.5ha (5 acres) ☐
- b. 2.5 ha to 4ha (6 to 10 acres) ☐
- c. 5ha to 8ha (11 to 20acres) ☐
- d. 9ha to 19ha (21 to 49 acres) ☐
- e. 20ha to 30ha (50 to 75 acres) ☐

5. What distance is your lifestyle property from the Helensville Township? *Tick one box*

- a. Less than 10 kms ☐
- b. 11 to 20 kms ☐
- c. More than 20 kms ☐

6. Was your property developed when you purchased it? *Tick one box*

- a. Not developed at all (bare land only) ☐
- b. Yes partly developed ☐
ie: house but required more development
- c. Yes fully developed ☐

7. Do you intend to generate fulltime employment from your lifestyle block / smallholding? *Tick the box that applies to you.*

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

8. Do you intend to generate part-time employment from your lifestyle block / smallholding? *Tick the box that applies to you.*

- a. Yes ☐
- b. No ☐

9. State the number of adults in each Age Group in your household?

- a. 15-19years....
- b. 20-29years.....
- c. 30-44years.....
- d. 45-59years....
- e. 60 years & over

10. State the number of dependent children for each Age Group in your household?

- a. Pre school ...
- b. Primary School....
- c. Secondary School....
- d. Tertiary School.....

11. What motivated you to purchase a lifestyle block / smallholding?

Tick the box that rates how important each point was to you when buying your property.

	Not at all important	Somewhat important	Neutral	Very important	Extremely important
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Open space / rural views	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Space for animals eg: horse, dog	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Establish business / be self-employed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Safe / healthy place to raise children	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Less pollution	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Peace & quiet	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Less traffic	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Wanted privacy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Wanted to be part of a rural community	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Investment opportunity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Retirement	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Other reasons please specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12. If you, or your partner/spouse works off your property how far do you have to travel? *Please specify the distance you travel.*

- a. Distance you travel to workkms
- b. Distance your partner / spouse travels to workkms

13. What is the total combined income for your household? *Tick one box*

- a. Less than \$30000 ☐
- b. \$30000 to \$49000 ☐
- c. \$50000 to \$69000 ☐
- d. \$70000 to \$89000 ☐
- e. More than \$90000 ☐

14. Have you, or other adults in your household lived in a rural environment before living at South Head? *Tick one box*

- a. YES ☐
- b. NO ☐

15. What research did you conduct prior to buying your lifestyle property? For each point tick the box that rates the amount of research you did.

1. Did no research at all - impulsive purchase
2. Did a little research - eg: talked only to Real Estate agent
3. Did some research - eg; Real Estate agent plus a couple of other people
4. Did moderate research – eg: Real Estate agent plus talked to some other people & visited the area
5. Researched extensively – eg: talked to many people, learned about the area, researched clubs, community organisations / services, District planning etc

1	2	3	4	5
Did no research at all	Did a little research	Did some research	Did moderate research	Researched extensively

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Education eg: preschool, primary, secondary, tertiary | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Community services eg: Doctors, telecommunications | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Sports clubs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Recreation opportunities in the area eg walkways, off road tracks, bridleways, swimming, boating, fishing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Community organisations eg: Ratepayer groups, Environmental groups, Lions club, Fire Brigade | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Rodney District Council / Auckland Regional Council
Eg: Regulations / District Plan / Regional Plan / Zoning | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Activities that were suitable for the land | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Water supply | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Neighbours / nearby activities / businesses | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Animal healthcare & management | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. Employment opportunities in the area | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l. Other please specify | <input type="text"/> | | | | |

16. Have you got involved in a local community organisation?

Eg: School, Ratepayer group, Landcare, Fire Brigade etc.
Tick one box

- a. YES ☐ (go to Q18)
- b. NO ☐

17. If you answered NO to Q16, why is this? Please tick one

- a. Lack of time / too involved elsewhere ☐
- b. Choose not to be involved ☐
- c. There are no organisations that interest me ☐
- d. Have not been asked to join a local organisation ☐
- e. Other reasons please specify.....

18. What unexpected things have you experienced since living on your lifestyle block / smallholding? Tick the boxes that rate the level of concern these have been to you or your household.

1	2	3	4	5
No concern at all	A little concern	Moderate concern	A lot of concern	Extreme concern

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Unforeseen costs for property maintenance / development | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Unforeseen requirements for health & management of animals | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Isolation / Loneliness/ Opportunity to make new friends | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Distance to travel to sport / recreation / social activities / shopping | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Time required travelling to work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Vehicle running costs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Reliable water supply | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Water quality | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Nearby farming activities eg: noise, undesirable smells, spraying | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m. Please specify other | <input type="text"/> | | | | |

19. List two things you enjoy most about living on a lifestyle block or smallholding?

- a.
- b.

20. Do you agree with this statement? "Rodney District Council should allow more subdivision of land on the South Head peninsula". Tick one box

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

Expand if you wish.....

21. Do you agree with this statement? "It is important that South Head is retained as a rural farming area". Tick one box

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly agree

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|

Expand if you wish.....

22. Which public developments, if any, would you like to see in the South Head area? Tick the boxes you would agree to.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Regional Park | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Bridleways/ Walkways/ Cycleway | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Off – road 4WD / motorbike park | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Shops / Cafes | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Tourist ventures | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. No public developments | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Other please specify | <input type="text"/> |

23. In terms of the balance between lifestyle and land use (production), which is the most important to you? Tick one box

- a. Lifestyle☐
- b. Land use☐
- c. Both equally important☐

24. Which community do you identify most with? Tick one box

- a. Rural☐
- b. Urban☐
- c. Both equally☐

25. Based on your personal experience list two things you would advise people when buying a lifestyle block.

- a.
- b.

26. Rate how you perceive the following as disadvantages of living on a South Head lifestyle block/smallholding?

Tick the boxes that apply to you

	1 Not at all a disadvantage	2 A Slight disadvantage	3 Moderate disadvantage	4 Very big disadvantage	5 Extreme disadvantage
a. Distance to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Distance to shops and services	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Distance to schools / education	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Distance to sports / recreation / entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Limited local clubs / interest groups	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Standard of roads	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Nearby farming activities eg: Noise/ undesirable smells / spraying	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Lack of services eg: water/sewerage/ telecommunications	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Time / cost required to maintain property	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Cannot subdivide further	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Problems communicating with local authorities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Distance from family & friends	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

27. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your smallholding lifestyle now? Tick one box

1 Very Dissatisfied	2 Dissatisfied	3 Neither dissatisfied or satisfied	4 Satisfied	5 Very satisfied
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

28. What gender are you?

- a. Male☐
- b. Female☐

29. Please state your agegroup

- a. 15-19years☐
- b. 20-29years☐
- c. 30-44years☐
- d. 45-59years☐
- e. 60 years & over☐

Any further comments of your experience of life on a South Head lifestyle block or smallholding are most welcome

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**Thank you for completing this questionnaire.
Please return it in the stamped addressed envelope provided.**

If you wish to receive an Executive Summary of this report please send your name and contact details to: Dianne McLeod 3202 South Head Road, RD1, Helensville or email mcleodcd@xtra.co.nz
Please note that all names will be kept strictly confidential.

Name

Address

.....

.....

Fax

E-mail

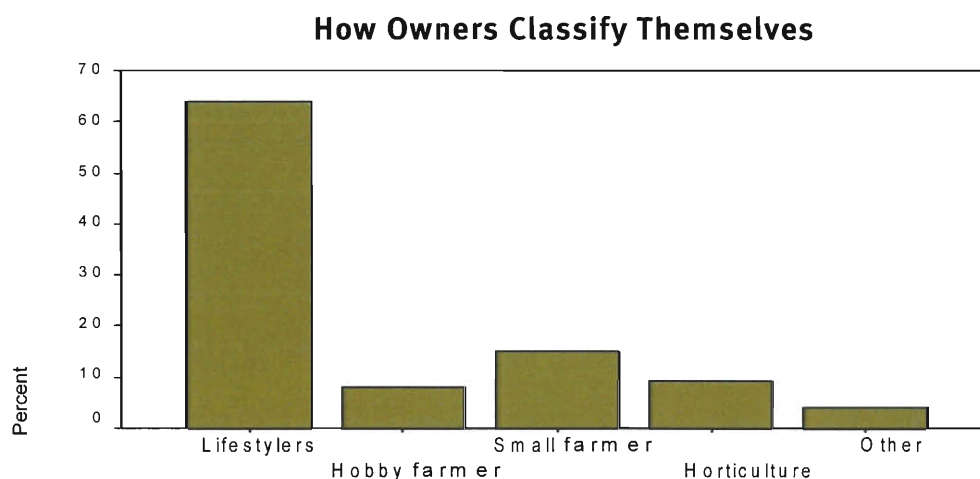
Appendix F

SURVEY RESULTS

How Owners Classify Themselves

Figure 1 illustrates 64% of the respondents identified themselves as 'lifestylers', 8% as hobby farmer, and 15% as small farmers and 9% as horticulturists. A small proportion (4%) did not identify with any of the listed options.

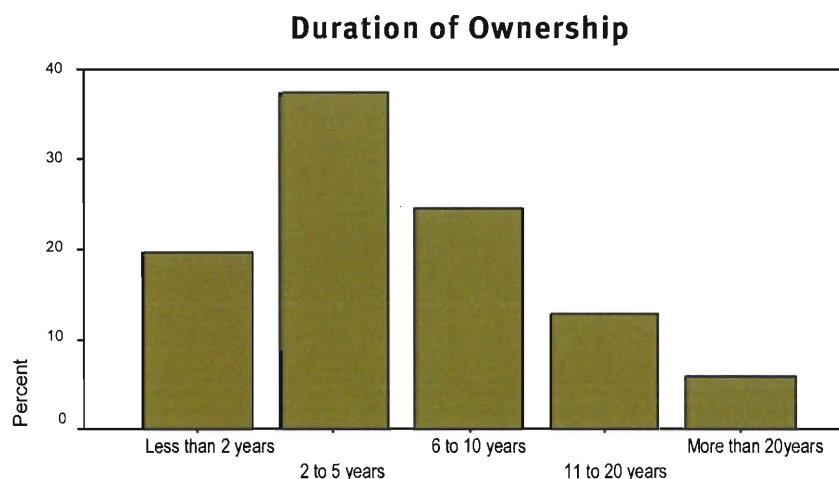
Figure 1



Q2 Duration Of Ownership

Figure 2 illustrates more than half (57%) of the respondents have owned their property for five years or though some 43% have owned their property for 6 years or more.

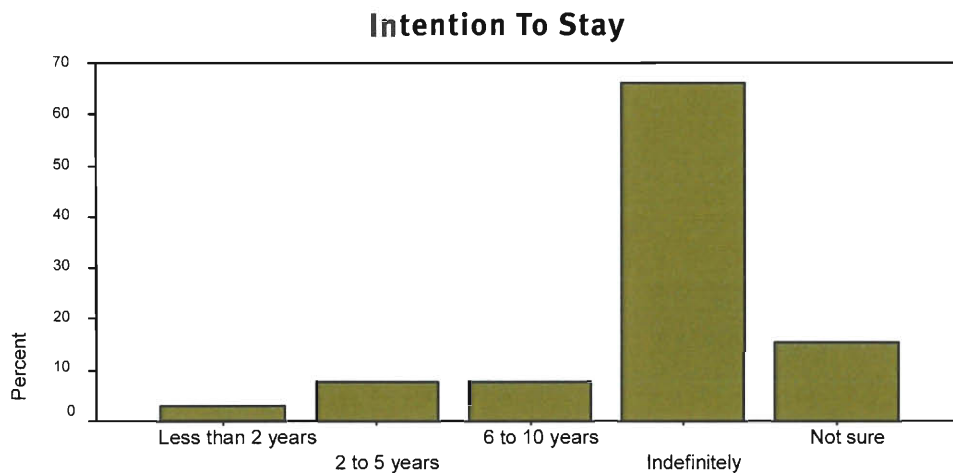
Figure 2



Q3 – Intention To Stay On South Head Lifestyle Property

Figure 3 illustrates 66% of respondents intend staying on their South Head lifestyle property indefinitely, while approximately 11% intend staying five years or less. A further 15% are not sure how long they will stay.

Figure 3



Q4 – Size Of Lifestyle Property

Figure 4 illustrates the size of lifestyle blocks owned by the respondents. Results found 60% of properties were 4ha or less, with only 7% between 20ha to 30ha and the remaining third ranging in size between 5ha and 19ha.

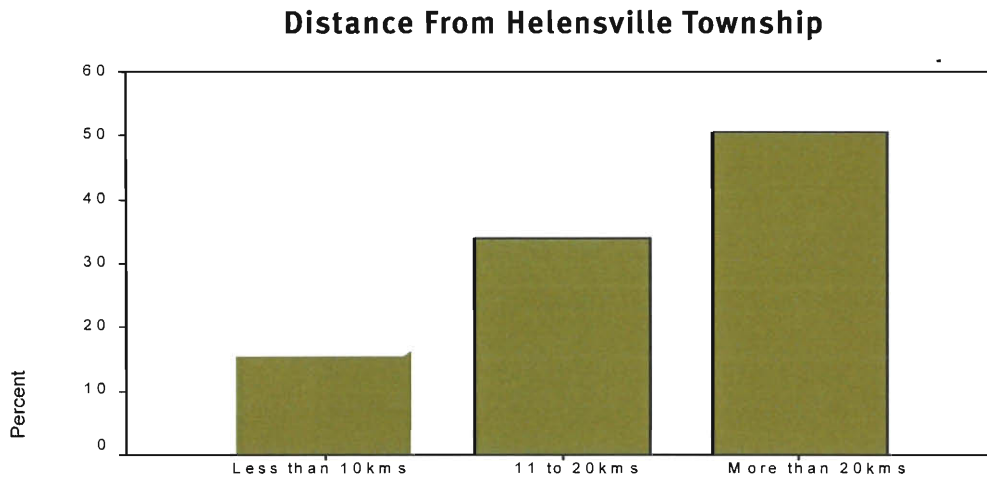
Figure 4



Q5 Distance From Helensville

Figure 5 illustrates the distance of lifestyle properties from the nearest township, Helensville. Some 55% of the respondents live more than 20km from the Helensville.

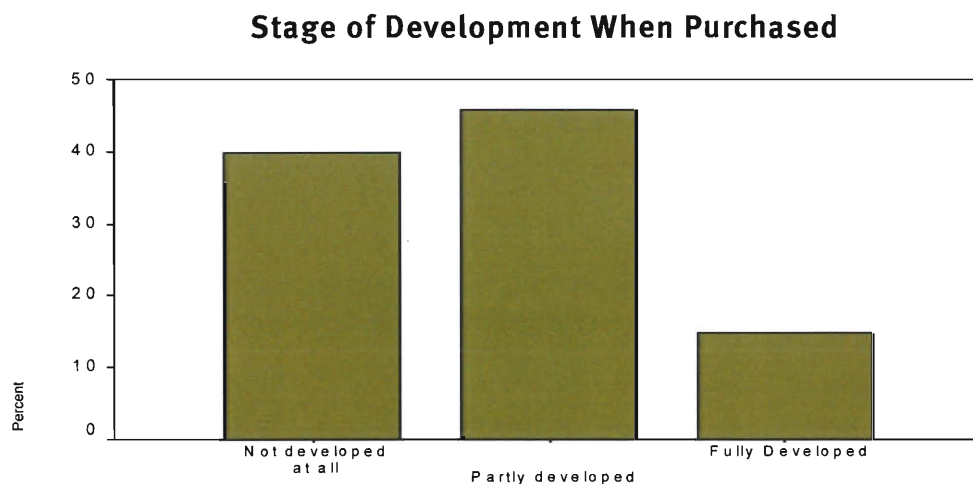
Figure 5



Q6. Stage Of Development When Purchased

Figure 6 illustrates 40% of the lifestyle properties were not developed in any way when purchased by these respondents, while a slightly greater proportion (46%) of properties were partly developed: eg they may have had a house but the property required more development. A small proportion (15%) of the properties were fully developed when purchased by these respondents.

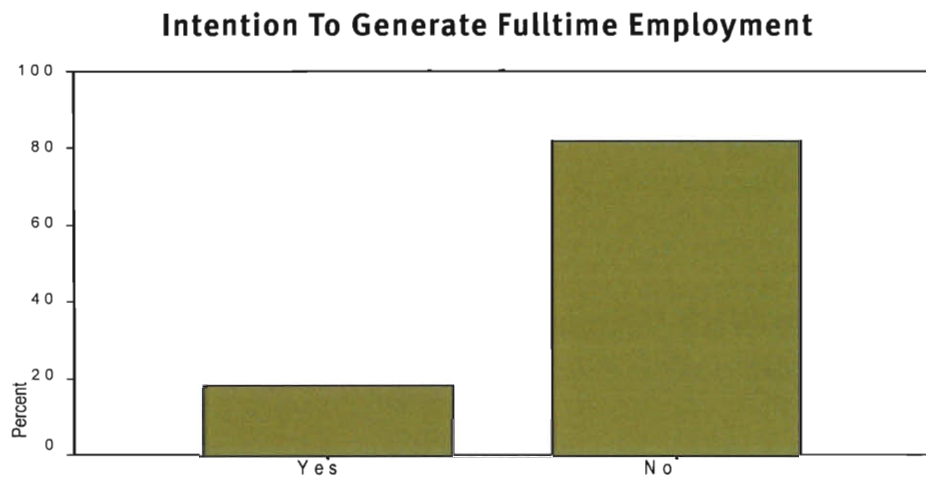
Figure 6



Q7. Intention To Generate Full time Employment

Figure 7 illustrates that only a small (18%) proportion intends to generate fulltime employment from their property. The majority (82%) of respondents have no intention to do this.

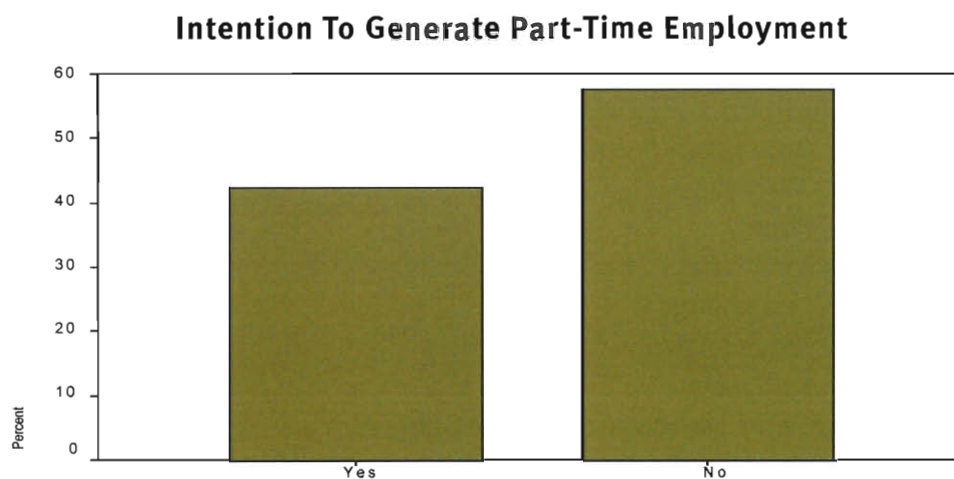
Figure 7



Q8. Intention To Generate A Part Time Employment

Figure 8 illustrates the majority (68%) of respondents do not intend to generate a part time employment from their land.

Figure 8



Q 9. Adult Age Groups Of Households

Table 1 shows the age groups within the surveyed households

Table 1

Age Groups		Households
a.	15 -19 years	10%
b.	20 – 29 years	11%
c.	30 – 44 years	44%
d.	45 – 59 years	44%
e.	60 years & over	35%

Q10. Households With Dependent Children

Table 2 shows the education status of dependent children in households.

Table 2

Education Status		Households
a.	Pre-school	14%
b.	Primary	25%
c.	Secondary	16%
d.	Tertiary	3%

Note - 60% of the households surveyed had no dependent children

Q11. Motivation For Purchasing A Lifestyle Property

Table 3 presents the respondents' motives for purchasing a lifestyle property. The proportions show the factors that were very important or extremely important for respondents when they purchased their lifestyle property / smallholding.

Table 3

Motivation for purchasing Lifestyle Property		
1.	Open space / rural views	83%
2.	Peace & quiet	78%
3.	Privacy	68%
4.	Less traffic	66%
5.	Less pollution	61%
6.	Space for animals	53%
7.	Retirement	39%
8.	Safe / healthy place to raise children	36%
9.	Wanted to be part of a rural community	34%
10.	Investment opportunity	30%
11.	Establish own business / be self employed	22%

Q12. Distance Travelled To Work

Figure 9 illustrates the majority of respondents commute to work. While only a small proportion (8%) travel less than 20kms to work, a greater proportion (21%) travel between 21 and 40kms and a further 21% of respondents travel between 41kms and 60kms to work. Some 18% travel more than 60kms.

Figure 9

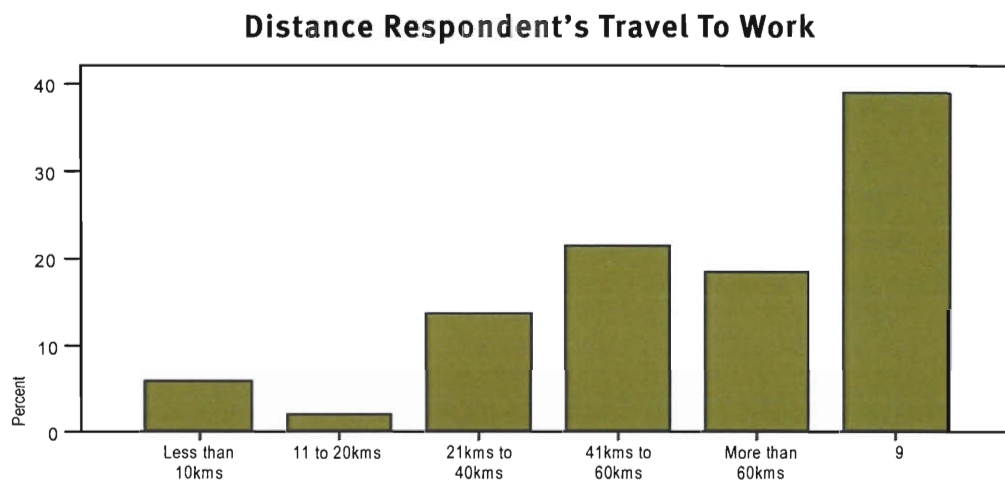
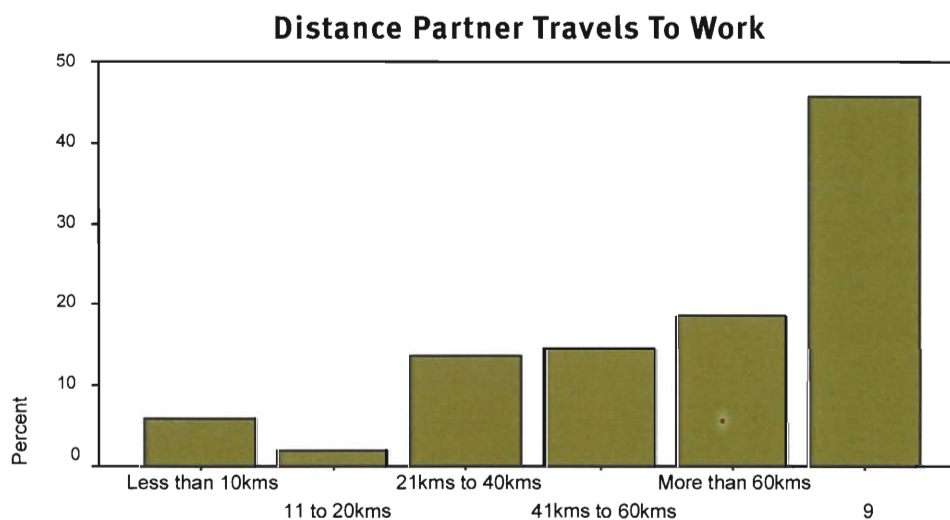


Figure 10 illustrates that the majority of respondents have a spouse or partner travelling to work, with the majority of this group commuting more than 20kms.

Figure 10



Q13. Combined Income Brackets Of Households

Table 4 shows the proportion of households in each of the five income brackets provided.

Table 4

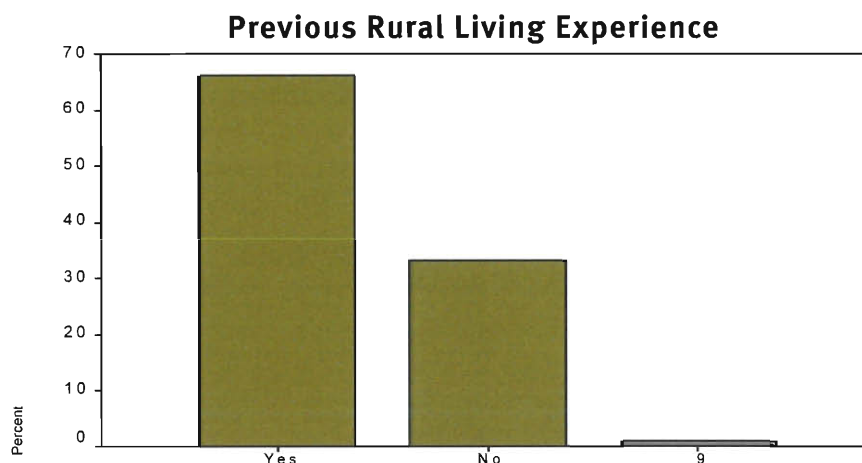
Income Group of Household		Households
a.	Less than \$30000	11%
b.	\$30000 to \$49000	19%
c.	\$50000 to \$69000	25%
d.	\$70000 to \$89000	12%
e.	More than \$90000	26%
f.	Missing data	7%

Note - The New Zealand average annual household income was \$60,433 in 2003/04.⁴²

Q 14. Previous Rural Living Experience

Figure 11 illustrates that the majority (66%) of the respondents or another adult in their household had lived in a rural environment before living at South Head.

Figure 11



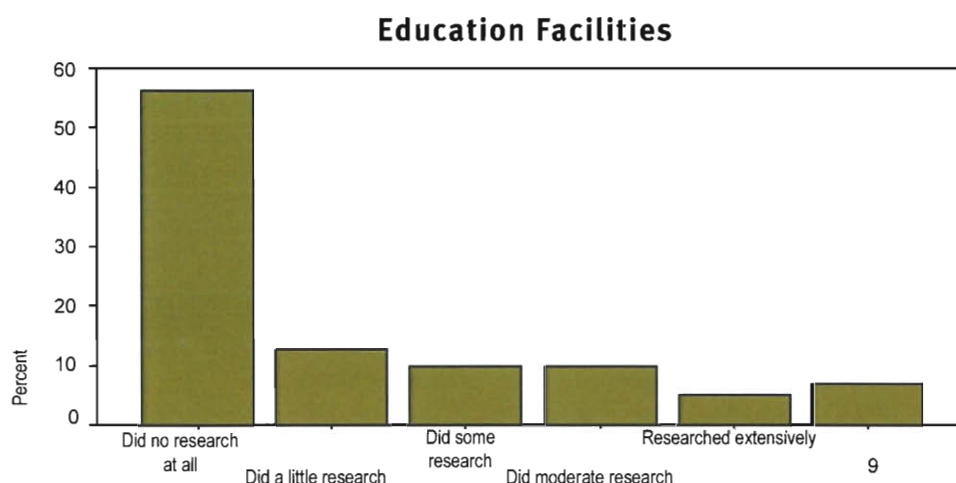
Q15. Research Prior To Buying

The following graphs illustrate the amount of research respondents undertook prior to buying their lifestyle property.

Q15a Education Facilities

Figure 12 illustrates the majority (56%) of respondents did no research at all on education facilities in the area. Though a small proportion (15%) of respondents indicated they did moderate to extensive research.

Figure 12

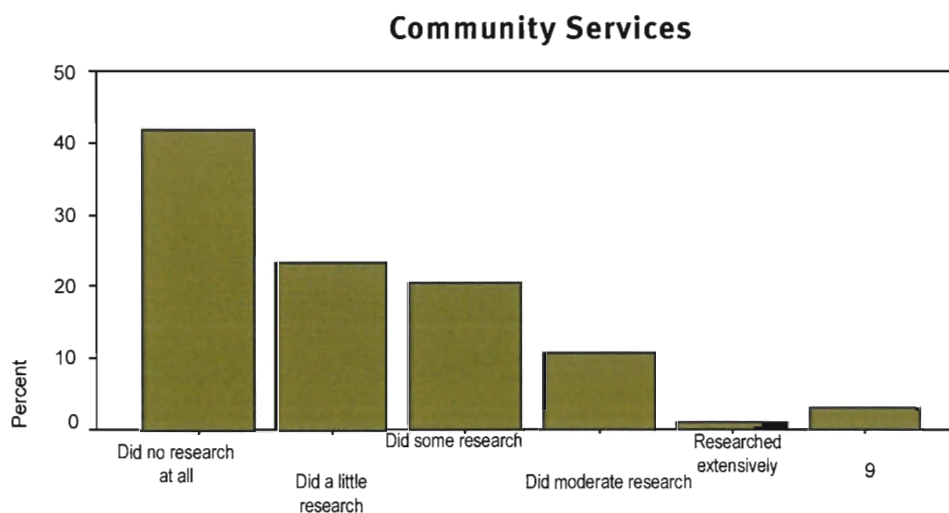


Note - 60% of households did not have dependent children.

15b Community Services

Figure 13 illustrates that some 42% of the respondents did no research at all about community services, though 44% did a little or some research. A small proportion (12%) of respondents did moderate to extensive research on community services.

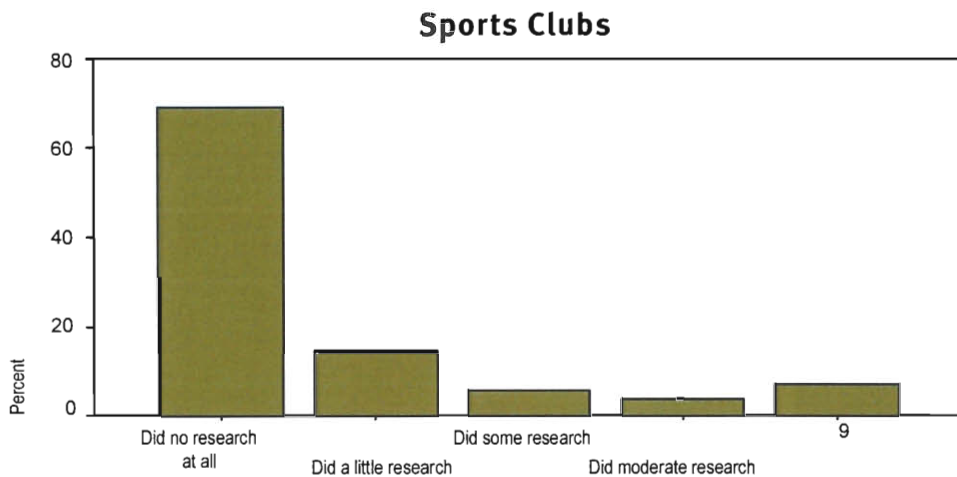
Figure 13



Sports Clubs

Figure 14 illustrates that the majority (69%) of respondents did no research on sports clubs prior to buying their lifestyle property. While 15% did a little research, a smaller proportion (10%) did some or moderate research. No one researched this topic extensively.

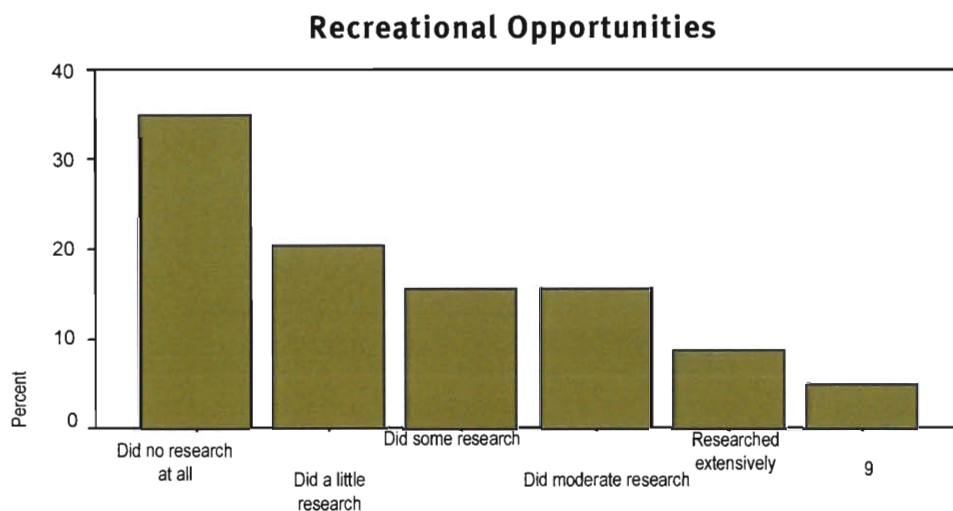
Figure 14



Q15 d Recreational Opportunities

Figure 15 illustrates 35% of respondents did no research at all of recreational opportunities in the area, while 20% did a little research, a further 16% did some research and 24% of the respondents indicated they did moderate to extensive research.

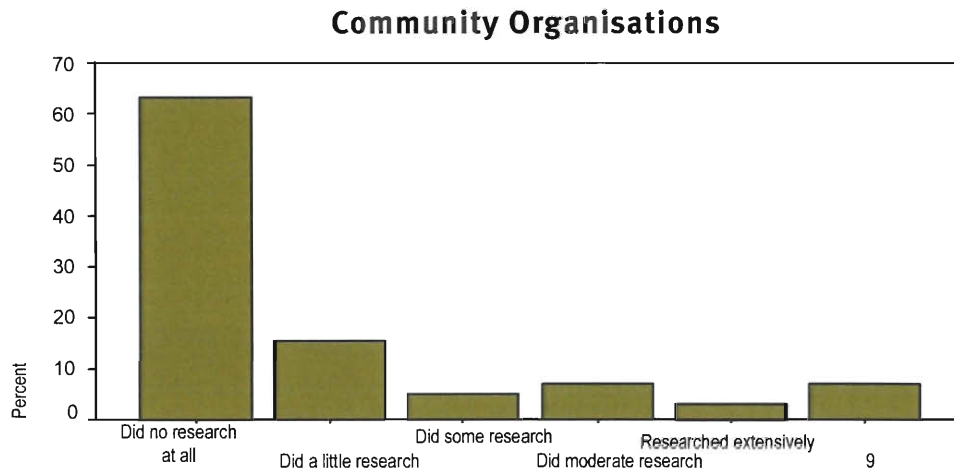
Figure 15



Q15e Community Organisations

Figure 16 illustrates the majority of respondents (63%) did no research at all on community organisations in the area prior to buying. Though 21% did a little research, or some research, only 7% did a moderate amount of research, while 3% had researched extensively on this.

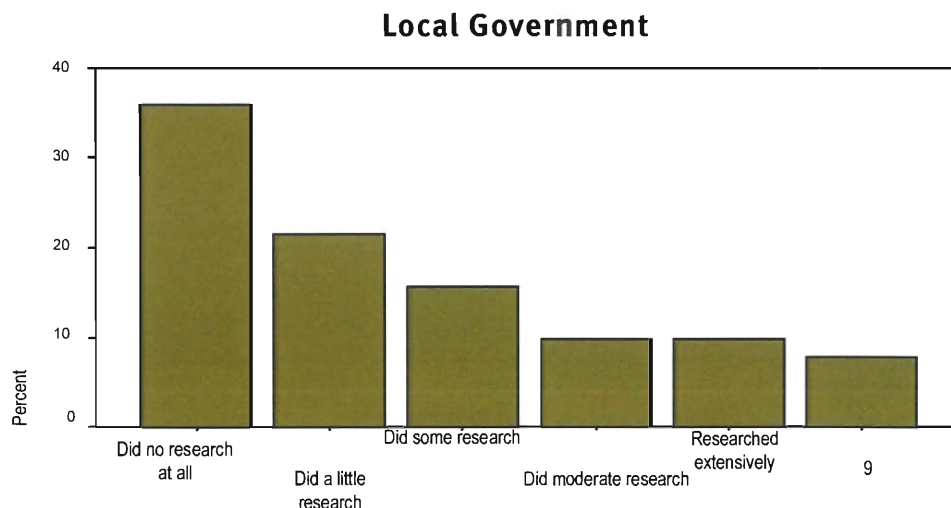
Figure 16



Q15f Local Government

Figure 17 illustrates that only a minority of respondents undertook moderate to extensive research on the Rodney District Council and/or Auckland Regional Council prior to buying. The majority of respondents did little or no research.

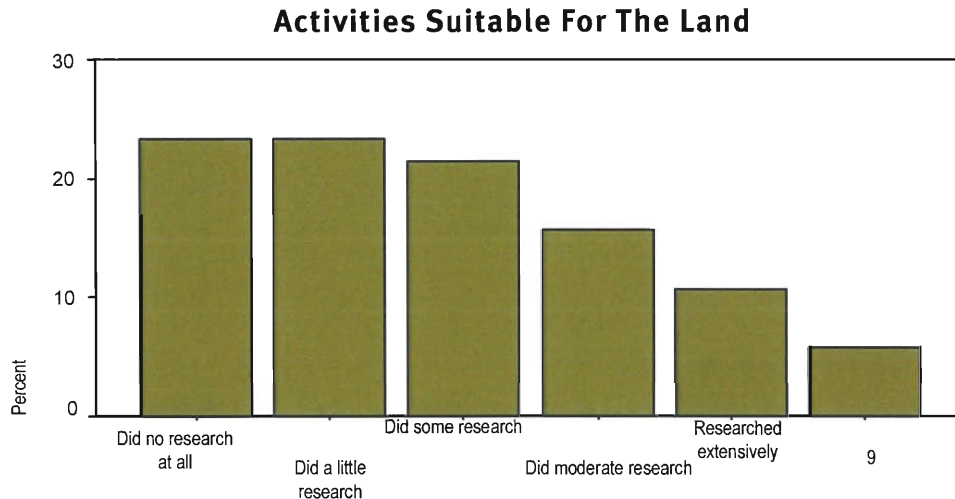
Figure 17



Q15 g Activities Suitable For The Land

Figure 18 illustrates that almost half (47%) of the respondents did little or no research of activities that may be suitable for the property they were buying, while 21% did some research, 16% did a moderate amount of research and 11% did extensive research.

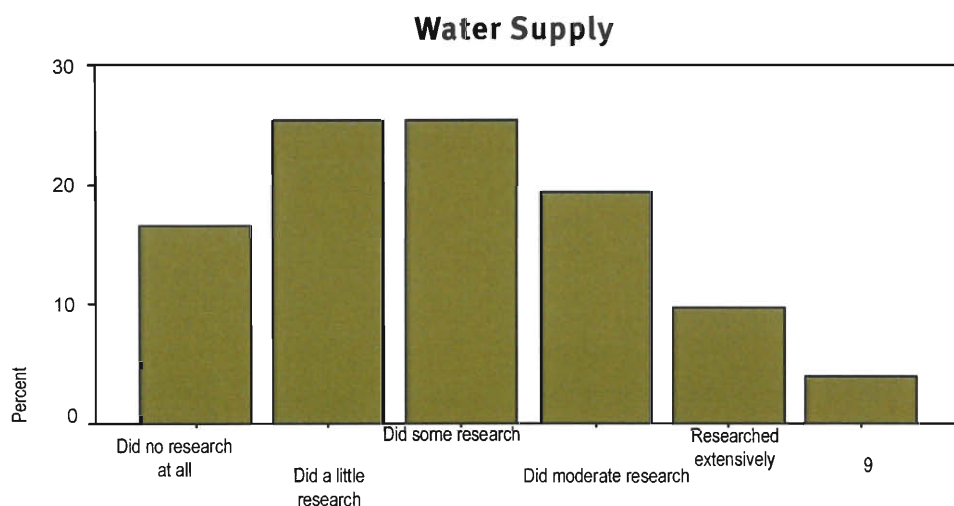
Figure 18



Q15 h Water Supply

Figure 19 illustrates that only a minority (17%) of respondents did no research at all on the water supply for the property they were buying, while 25% did a little research, another 25% did some research, 19% did moderate research and 10% did extensive research.

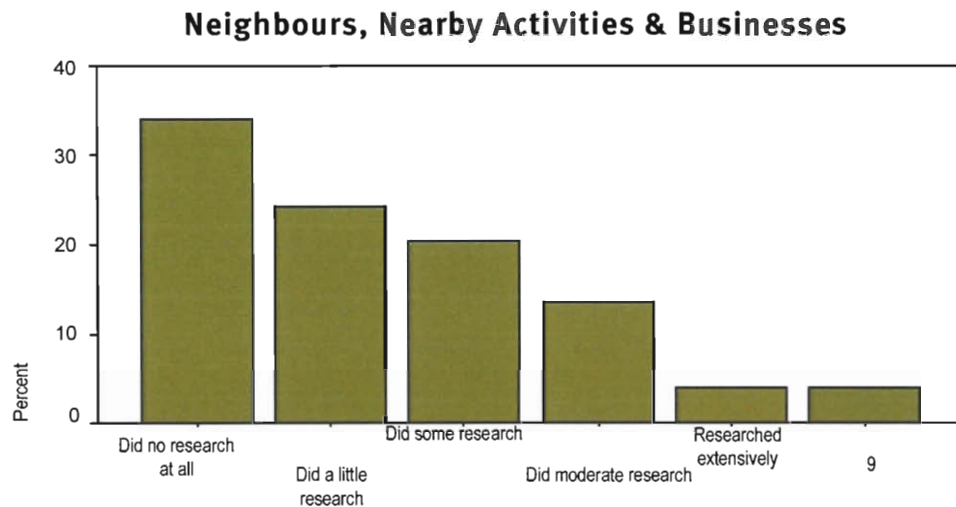
Figure 19



Q15 i Neighbours, Nearby Activities & Businesses

Figure 20 illustrates that over half (58%) of respondents did little or no research of neighbours, nearby activities and / or businesses to their property prior to buying. Though 14% of respondents did moderate research and 4% undertook extensive research.

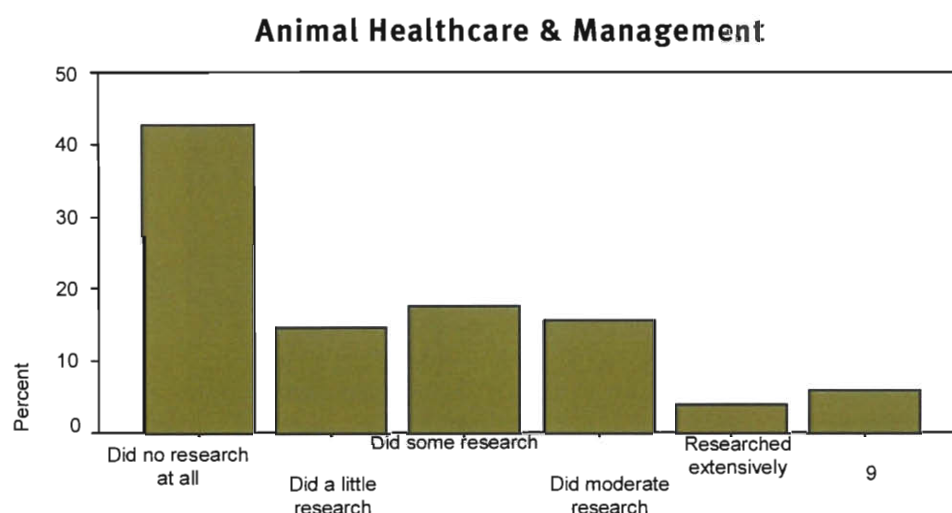
Figure 20



Q15 j Animal Healthcare & Management

Figure 21 illustrates that the majority of respondents did little (15%) or no research at all (43%), on animal healthcare and management prior to buying. Though 18% did some research and 16% did moderate research. A small proportion (5%) did extensive research of this matter.

Figure 21

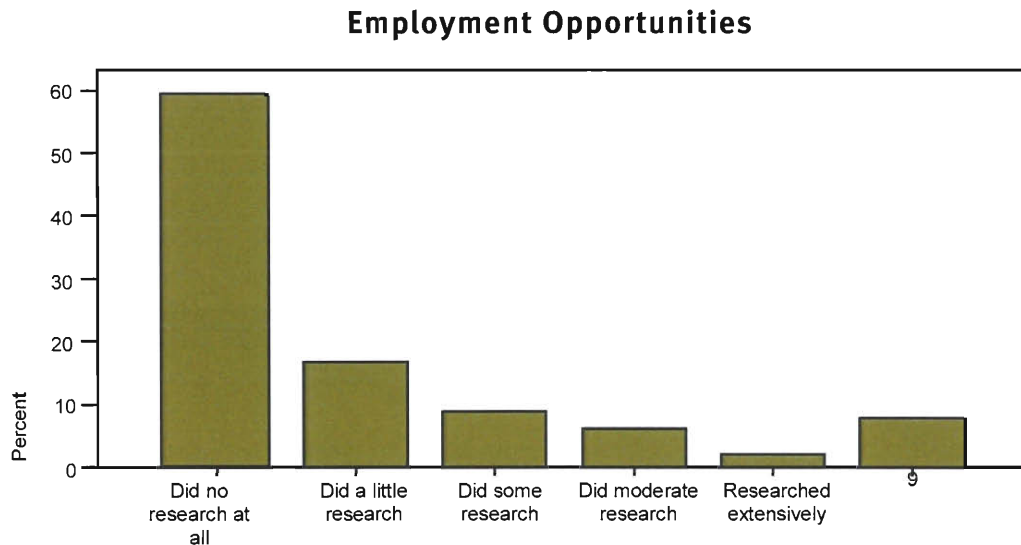


Q15k Employment Opportunities

Figure 22 illustrates that the majority (59%) of respondents did no research at all of employment opportunities in the area prior to buying their property, while 17% did a little research and 9% did some research. Only a very small proportion did moderate research (6%) to extensive (2%) research on employment opportunities in the area prior to buying.

* Note this result includes respondents / households that may not be in need of employment eg: retired or self employed.

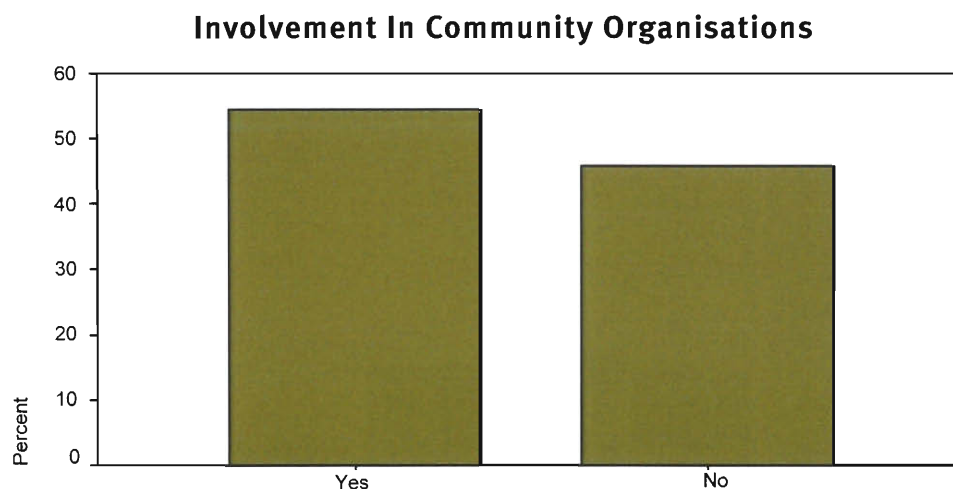
Figure 22



Q16 & 17 Involvements In Community Organisations

Figure 23 illustrates that just over half (55%) of respondents indicated they are involved in a local community organisation.

Figure 23



Of those respondents who indicated they had not got involved in a community organisation, 29% indicated they were too involved elsewhere, 9% choose not to be involved in a community organisation, 2% indicated there were no organisation that were of interest to them, while 3% indicated they had not been asked to join a local organisation.

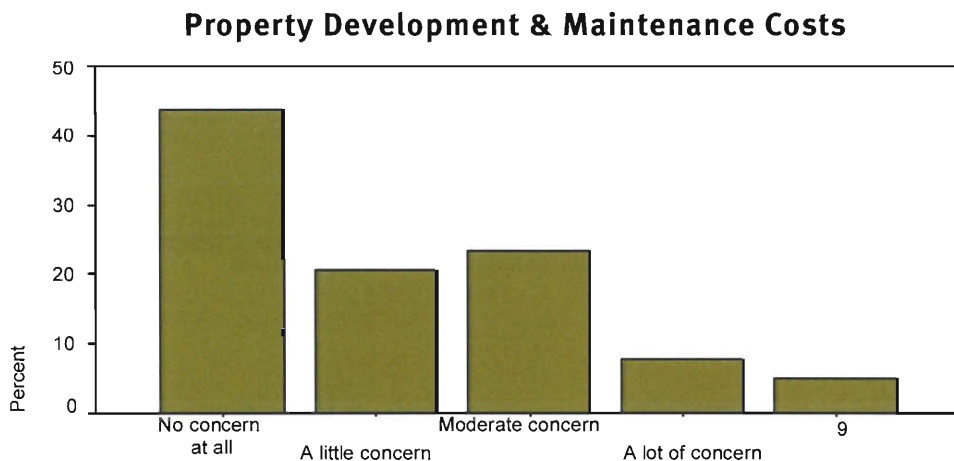
Q18 Concern For Unexpected Factors

The following graphs illustrate the level of concern respondents have had for unexpected factors.

18a Property Development & Maintenance Costs

Figure 24 illustrates that less than half (44%) of the respondents have had no concern at all for unforeseen property maintenance and development costs. While 20% had a little concern, 23% indicated moderate concern and a small proportion (8%) had a lot of concern. No respondents indicated extreme concern regarding unforeseen costs for property development and maintenance.

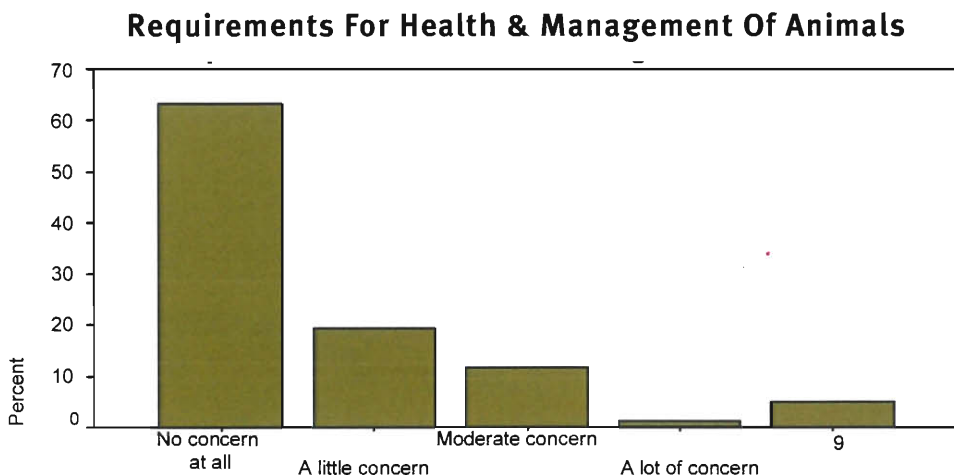
Figure 24



Q18b - Health & Management Of Animals

Figure 25 illustrates that the majority of respondents (63%) had no concern at all about unforeseen requirements for the health and management of animals. Though 19% had a little concern, 12% indicated moderate concern and only a very small proportion (1%) had a lot of concern. No respondents indicated extreme concern.

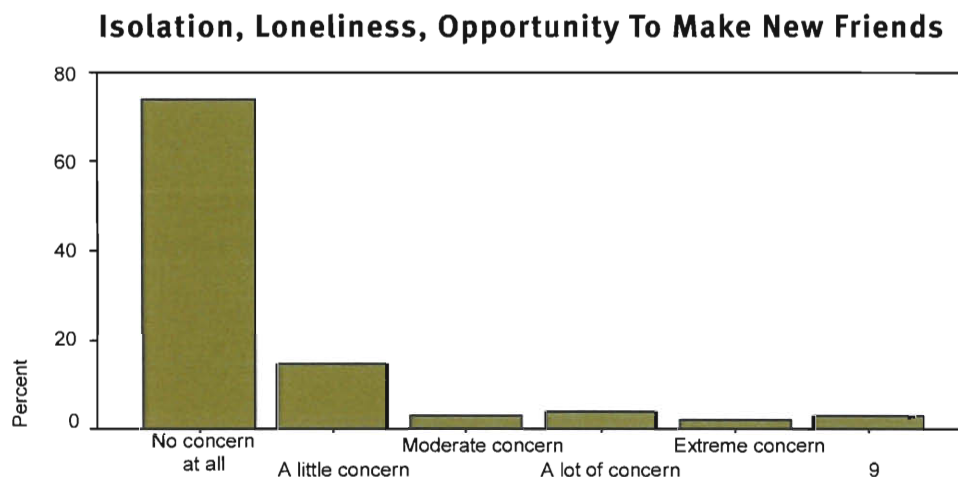
Figure 25



Q18c Isolation, Loneliness, Opportunity To Make Friends

Figure 26 illustrates the level of concern respondents have with regard to isolation, loneliness or the opportunity to make new friends. The majority (74%) had no concern at all regarding these matters, while 15% indicated a little concern. At the same time only very small proportions indicated moderate or a lot of concern or extreme concern regarding these issues.

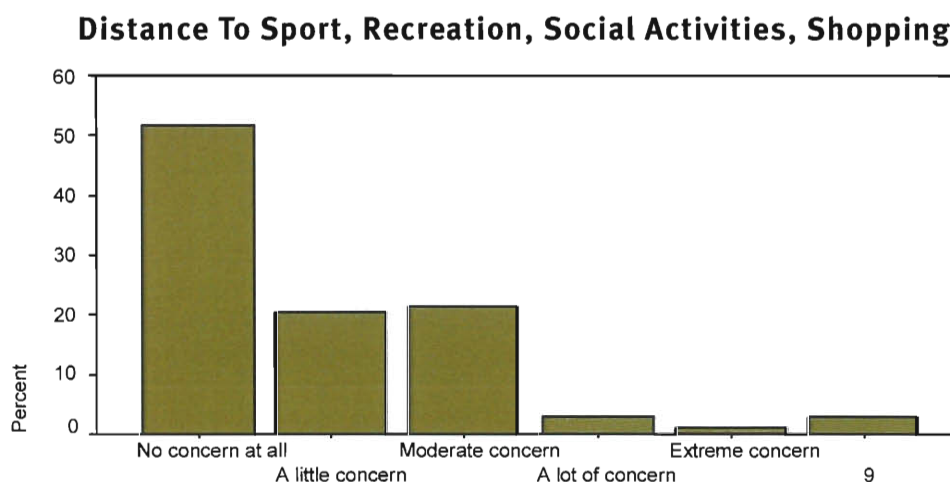
Figure 26



Q18d Distance To Sports, Recreation, Social Activities, Shopping

Figure 27 illustrates that just over half (52%) of the respondents had no concern at all about the distance to sports, recreation, social activities and shopping. Though 41% indicated a little or moderate concern. Only a very small proportion indicated this was a lot of concern or an extreme concern for them.

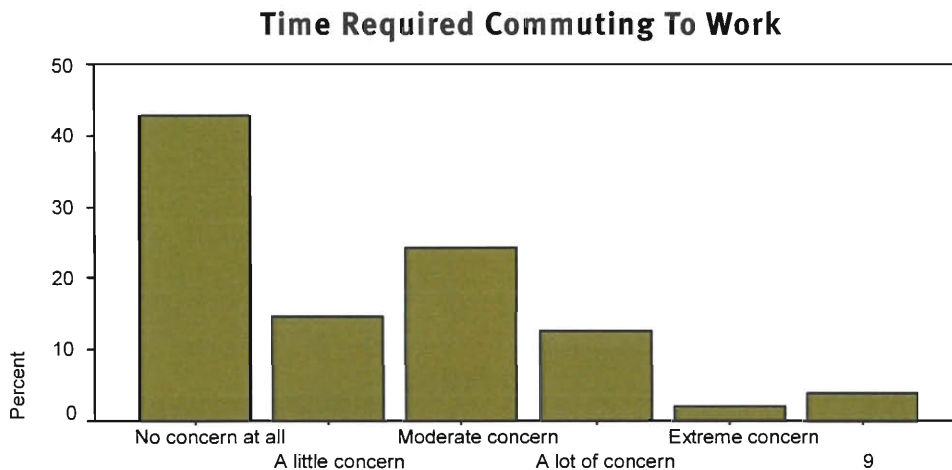
Figure 27



Q18e Time Required Commuting To Work

Figure 28 illustrates the time required to travel to work was of little or no concern for the majority (57%) of the respondents, though it was a moderate to extreme concern for 39% of the respondents.

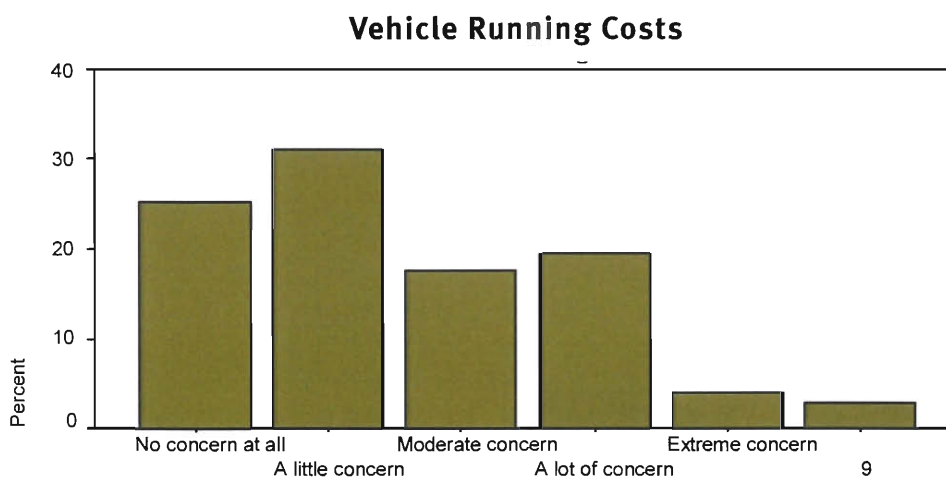
Figure 28



Q18f Vehicle Running Costs

Figure 29 illustrates that vehicle running costs were of no concern for 1/4 (25%) of respondents, however they were of moderate concern for 18% of respondents and were a lot of concern, or an extreme concern for 41% of respondents.

Figure 29

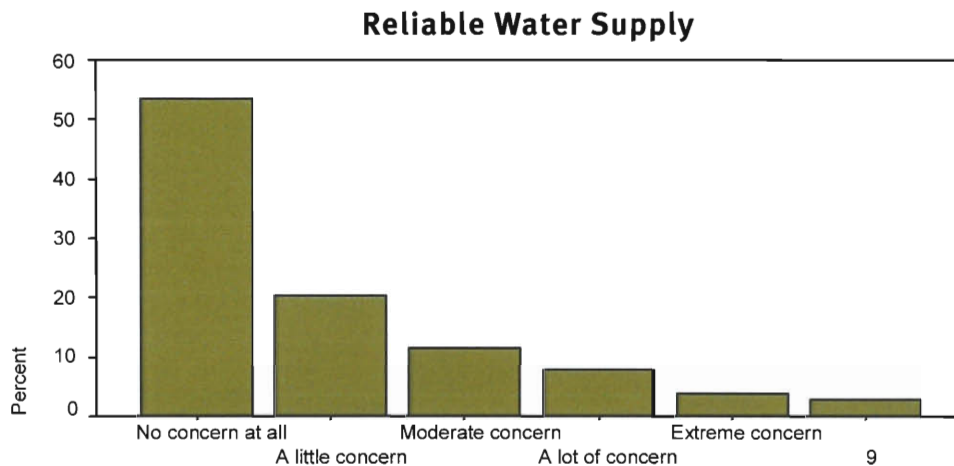


*Note all respondents were asked this question. This result includes those who do not travel to work.

Q18g Reliable Water Supply

Figure 30 illustrates that the majority of respondents have little or no concern with having a reliable water supply, though 20% indicated a little concern, and almost a ¼ indicated moderate to extreme concern about having a reliable water supply.

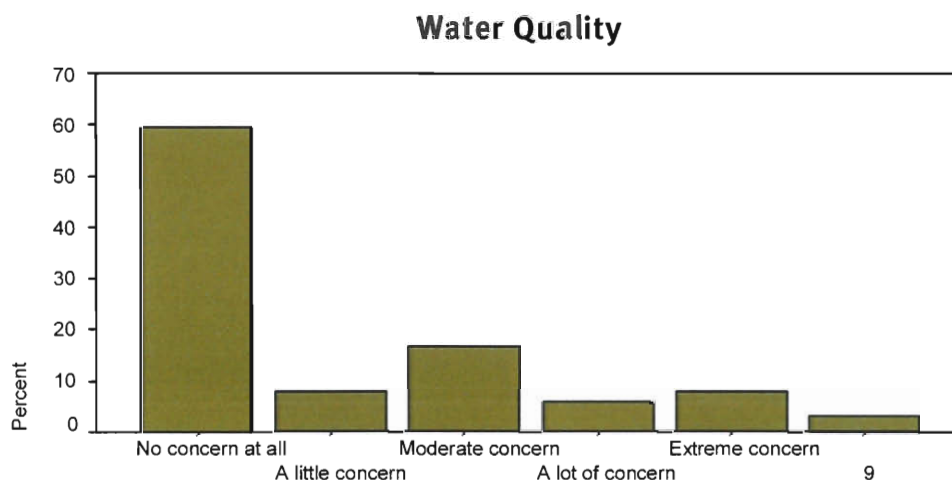
Figure 30



Q18h Water Quality

Figure 31 illustrates that 59% of respondents have no concerns regarding the quality of their water, while 8% have a little concern. At the same time 17% have moderate concerns, 6% have a lot of concern, with 8% indicating extreme concerns about the quality of their water.

Figure 31



Q19 Things Most Enjoyed About The Lifestyle

Table 5 presents the number of respondents and collated comments indicating what people enjoy most about living on a lifestyle block or smallholding.

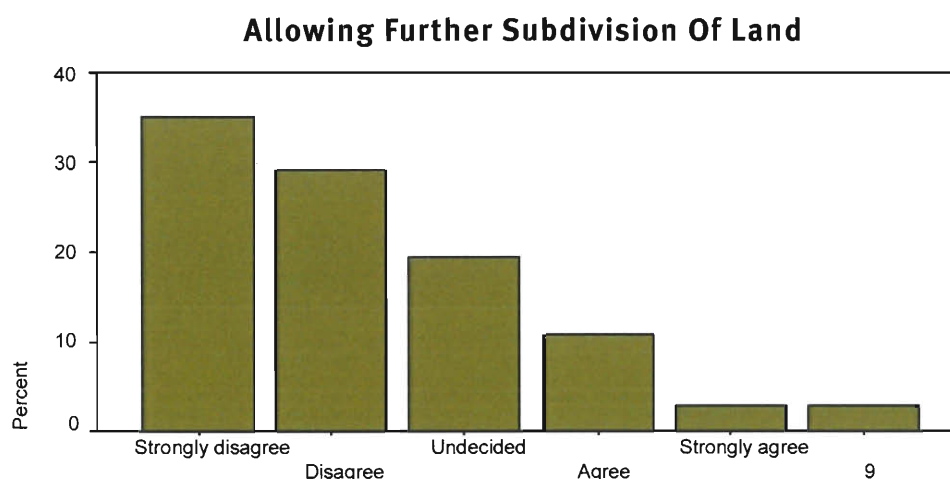
Table 5

- Peace and quiet (29)
- Space (24)
- Privacy (21)
- Views (15)
- Lifestyle / family (10)
- Nature / environment (7)
- Animals (7)
- Providing own food/organics/home kills/gardening (7)
- Clean air / no pollution (4)
- Safety / peace of mind (2)
- Lovely neighbours (2)
- Few visitors (1)
- South Head locals, nice community feel – you don't feel isolated (1)
- Community has very family based feeling, everyone is friendly (1)
- Friendly farmers (1)
- Sense of having a “place” (1)

Q20 Further Subdivision

Figure 32 illustrates the response to the statement “Rodney District Council should allow more subdivision on the South Head peninsula”. A majority of respondents either strongly disagree (35%) or disagree (29%), while 11% agree and 3% strongly agree with the statement. Though 19% of respondents were undecided on the issue.

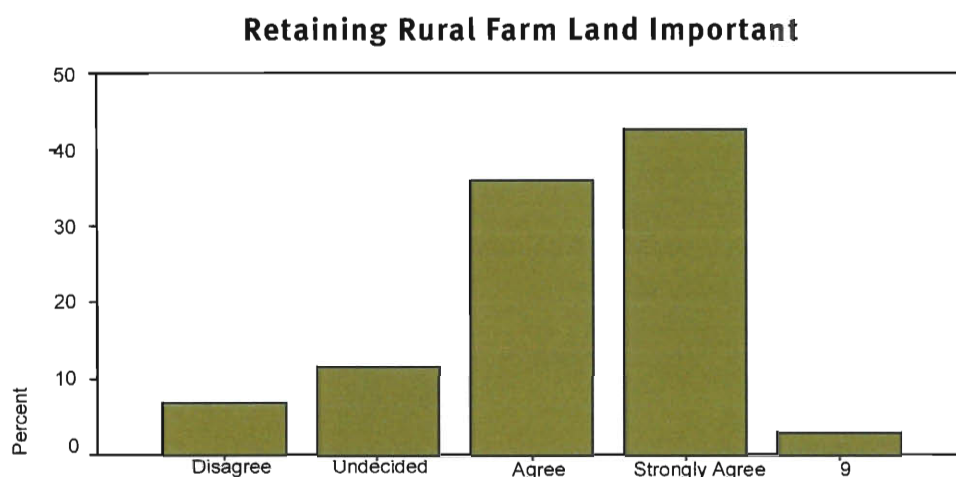
Figure 32



Q21 Retaining Farmland

Figure 33 illustrates that the majority of respondents agree (36%), or strongly agree (43%) that retaining rural farmland is important. Though 7% of respondents disagreed this was important. No respondents strongly disagreed that retaining rural farmland was important, while 12% of respondents were undecided about this.

Figure 33



Q22 - Possible Public Developments

Table 6 lists five possible public developments and gives the proportion of respondents in favour of each development.

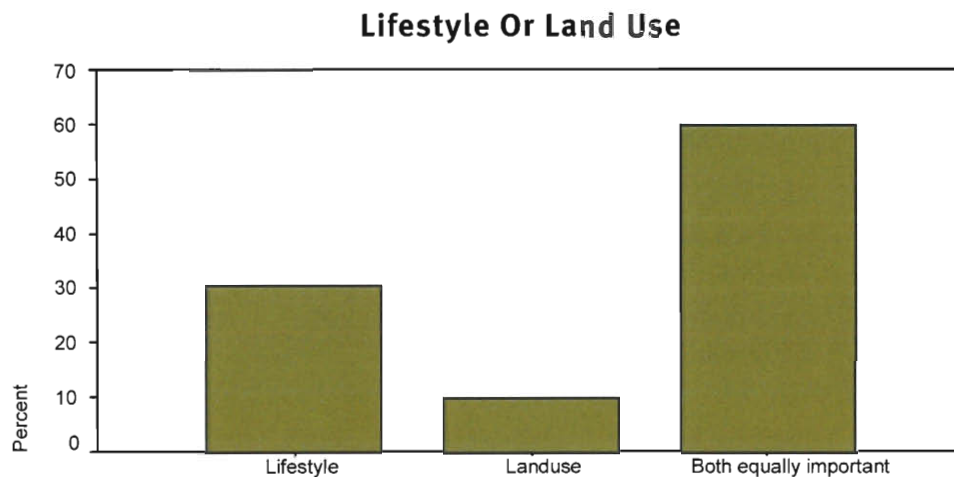
Table 6

Type of development		Households In Favour
a.	Regional Park	34 %
b.	Bridleways/Walkways/Cycleway	41 %
c.	Off-Road 4wd / Motorbike Park	6 %
d.	Shops / Cafes	17 %
e.	Tourist Ventures	21 %
f.	No Public Developments	35 %
g.	Invalid	4%

Q23 Lifestyle Versus Land Use

Figure 34 illustrates that for the majority (60%) of respondents, lifestyle and land use were both equally important to them. However the lifestyle was the most important factor for 30% of the respondents, while land use was the most important factor for 10%.

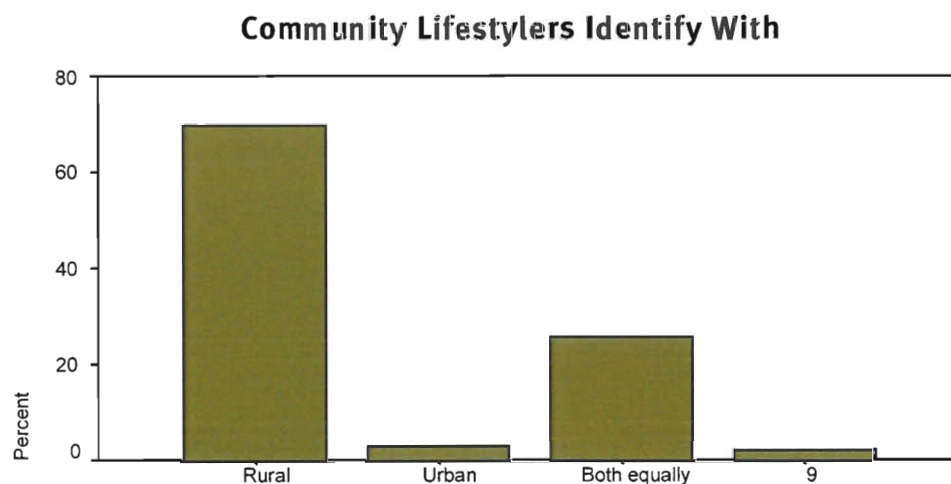
Figure 34



Q24 Rural Or Urban Identity

Figure 35 shows the majority (69%) of respondents' say they mostly identify with the rural community. However a very small proportion (3%) of respondents indicated they identified mostly with an urban community, while 26% of respondents identify equally with an urban community and the rural community.

Figure 35



Q25 - Advice For Buyers

Table 7 lists the advice respondents would give people when buying a lifestyle block. Responses were collated into four categories:

Table 7

Lifestylers' Advice For Potential Buyers

Reasons for buying	Costs/Payments	Technical Advice	General
Be sure of your reasons for buying	Have ability to meet payments	Check on LIM	Be prepared to meet people in your community
Ask yourself twice why you are doing it	Finance for the unexpected	Seek advice how land can be used	Be aware it is more work than you think
Check out what your real passions are	Think about water, electricity & roading costs	Consider north facing & wind	Don't try to change the place.
Lifestyle quality?	Travelling greater distances & higher maintenance costs for vehicles	Check out consent availability	Maintenance takes up time
Need clear requirements	Get a diesel truck!	Visit the block in both adverse & good weather conditions.	Do not be scared to meet your neighbours
Have a plan for land use	Check out how much work needs to be done (eg: on house)	Make sure you have sufficient water for yourself & animals. Revisit block several times.	Beware of tradesmen that don't turn up - they don't like coming so far.
For people that come from an urban upbringing it would be prudent to spend an extended period of time (eg: holiday) on a farm or other rural holding at least 25kms from urban amenities before purchasing, so they realise some of the obstacles & benefits they may encounter.	Our property was already planted with trees (mature), which allowed a small income from the start. This allowed me to give up career in city. My husband still needs to travel to his city business.	Checkout how your drainage, land lies. Some places get swampy.	Don't buy & then go crook about noises & activities that have been going on for ages.
Know what you want to do with your land, research possibilities	Have enough capital to have tidy unit	Subdivision plans by Council	Hard work required
Grow what you are interested in; make sure you really want the lifestyle.	Travelling if necessary to work	Look in winter	Be physically fit
Make sure you buy adequate acreage for your intended use.	Try going in with others to afford a decent amount of land.	Check what business' are on the road ie: horse /4wd	Difficult to get services out, so establish contact beforehand
Does land suit your purpose?	Buy big property	Good water supply	Do not be afraid to work hard.
Land production	Time involved in looking after land	Require excellent fencing (esp. boundary)	Be prepared for the work
Don't be afraid to take a gamble on something new	Be sure they can afford to maintain it properly	Need knowledge of land management	Distance from friends

Reasons for buying	Costs/Payments	Technical Advice	General
Visit & research	Cost it out carefully	Need knowledge of animals	Easier to move into established house
Be prepared to drive a little further than you may wish to	Be careful of cost of fencing & land care costs	Research future neighbouring land subdivisions	If lifestyle dwellers don't like smells etc. they should go back to town.
Decide the purpose	Be sure to have extra money for repairs	Get a good architect	Must take responsibility for land & livestock
Be comfortable with solitude	Do not over commit & do things badly	Check covenants - buildings etc	If you are a city person don't come here.
If going to CBD on a regular basis (ie: dining, entertainment) is important you think twice about being that far out.	If buying a bare block be aware of the workload to develop	How much rainfall?	Check local trades people very hard to get tradesmen on time
Consider commuting distances	Consider the distance to work	What grass type is growing?	Know your local area well.
Can it be developed into an economic unit?	Have enough capital	Look out for pylons (not an issue on South Head)	To make friends, you have to be a friend!
Be sure you want the lifestyle	It should be big enough to make a profit	Consider the layout	Isolation from family, friends, shopping facilities
Consider all aspects first	Travel running costs to work	Check your own plans	Requires hard work
Make sure it is manageable	Be willing to improve your property	Check surrounding activities eg: chicken farms etc.	Check amenities
Is it situated to suit their needs (shops, work, family)	Understand distance from amenities	Consider the affect that some neighbour's farming/business might have on you.	Farms were here first, live with it or move out.
Make sure you can cope with distances in travel & driving on country roads.	Be aware services are distant	Don't be afraid to ask for advice or help ie: tap into the local wisdom & expertise.	Adapting to the environment, coping with less social activities & more physical work
Consider distance from work	Consider maintenance	Research carefully	Don't expect a big capital gain
Research & decide on wants & needs		Acquire knowledge prior	Time required
Be prepared for country lifestyle - unlike town, people matter		Water quality?	Consider & get to know / respect neighbours
		Need for water conservation	Make sure you can manage the amount of land you have.
		Ask about how neighbours cope with their land.	Consider the isolation
		Consult possible neighbours	Be prepared to accept rural ways
		Check up on climate extremes eg; wind, lack of rain	Don't rush into building

Reasons for buying	Costs/Payments	Technical Advice	General
		Have a plan of what you want to do with your block	Be prepared to work hard & ask for advice
		Look after your animals	Think carefully about distance you need to travel ie: work, family etc
		Check out soil type if buying for horses/stock to avoid mud etc	It's hard work
		Correct boundaries	Get to know your neighbours
		Knowledge of reserve areas	Get involved in the community
		Learn how to maintain pumps	Absolute courtesy on roads
		Learn which animals suit your land best	Get onside with the Postie lady
		Make sure house is set back from roads	Get involved with the local community
		Know the weather effects on property (floods, wind etc)	Prepare for problems getting trades people in
		Check the boundaries thoroughly	Avoid RDC if poss!!
		Permits for sheds etc.	They are time consuming
		Check land details	More work than you imagine
		Check neighbours	People don't drive any better on rural roads, so be careful
		Wrong use of land	Check your neighbourhood
		Check fencing standards	Talk to potential neighbours
		Require water supply & septic tanks	Research area
		Do the groundwork	Importance of organics
		Ensure a good water supply	Land is not renewable - act wisely
		Require good fencing & yards	Get to know the vet

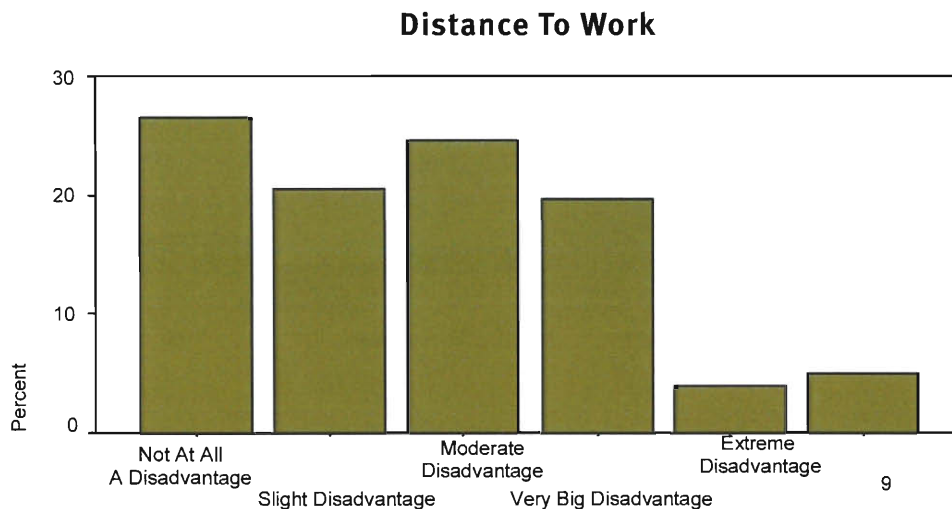
26. Disadvantages Of A Lifestyle Block

The following graphs illustrate how respondents perceive different factors as a disadvantage of living on a lifestyle block.

26 a. Distances To Work

Figure 36 illustrates that 27% did not consider the distance to work at all a disadvantage, though 21% did consider this a slight disadvantage, 25% indicated this was a moderate disadvantage, while 20% indicated this was an a very big disadvantage and for 4% this was an extreme disadvantage.

Figure 36



*Note this result includes those (18%) households who do not have someone travelling to work.

26b. Distance To Shops And Services

Figure 37 illustrates that 33% did not consider the distance to shops and services at all a disadvantage, though 38% find it a slight disadvantage. However 23% find it a moderate disadvantage and a very small proportion find it a very big disadvantage (2.0%) or an extreme disadvantage (2.0%).

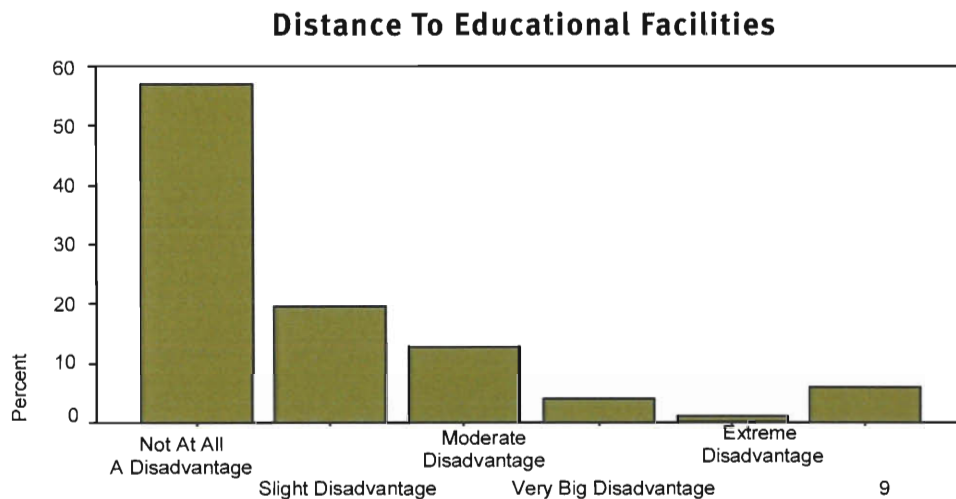
Figure 37



Q26c. Distance To Educational Facilities

Figure 38 illustrates the distance to schools or education is not at all a disadvantage for the majority (57%) of respondents, though it is a slight disadvantage for 20%, a moderate disadvantage for 13%. Only a very small proportion found this a very big disadvantage (4%) or an extreme disadvantage (1.0%).

Figure 38

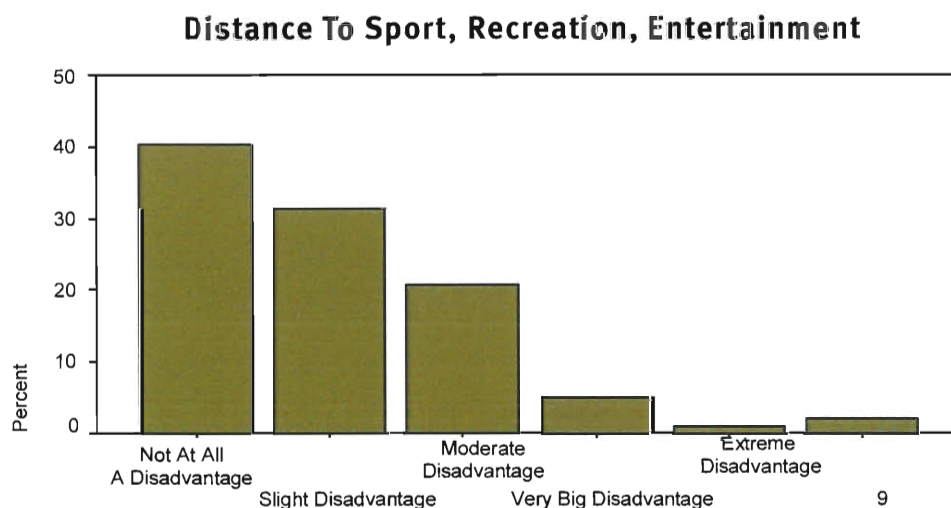


Note - This question was asked of all respondents, including those who do not have dependent children. Further analysis found the distance to educational facilities was a disadvantage for almost half of those with children.

Q26d. Distance To Sports, Recreation, Entertainment

Figure 39 illustrates that for 40% of respondents, the distance to sports, recreation and entertainment is not at all a disadvantage. However it was a slight disadvantage for 31%, a moderate disadvantage for 21%. Though only a very small proportion says it is very big disadvantage (5%) or an extreme disadvantage (1.0%).

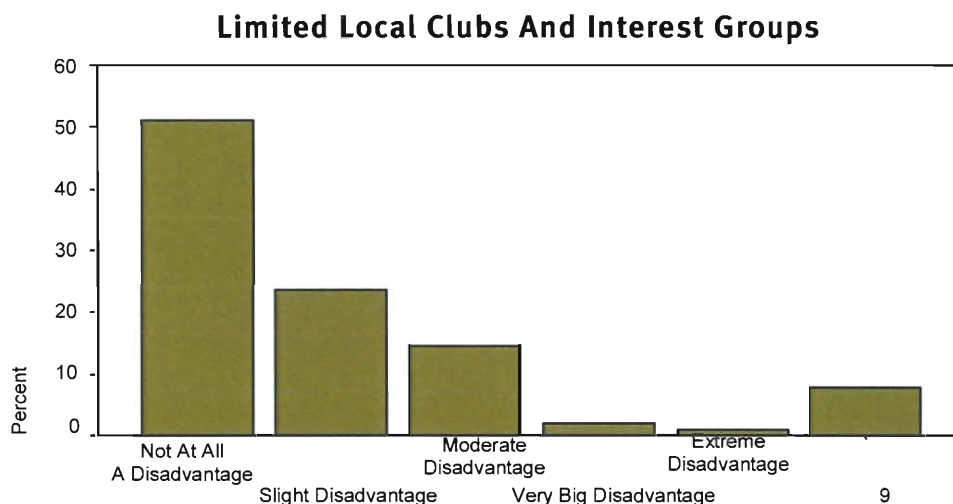
Figure 39



Q26e. Limited Local Clubs and Interest Groups

Figure 40 illustrates that for 75% of respondents the limited number of local clubs and interest groups in the area is not a significant disadvantage for them. However 15% indicated this is a moderate disadvantage and for a very small proportion this is a very big disadvantage (2%) or an extreme disadvantage (1.0%).

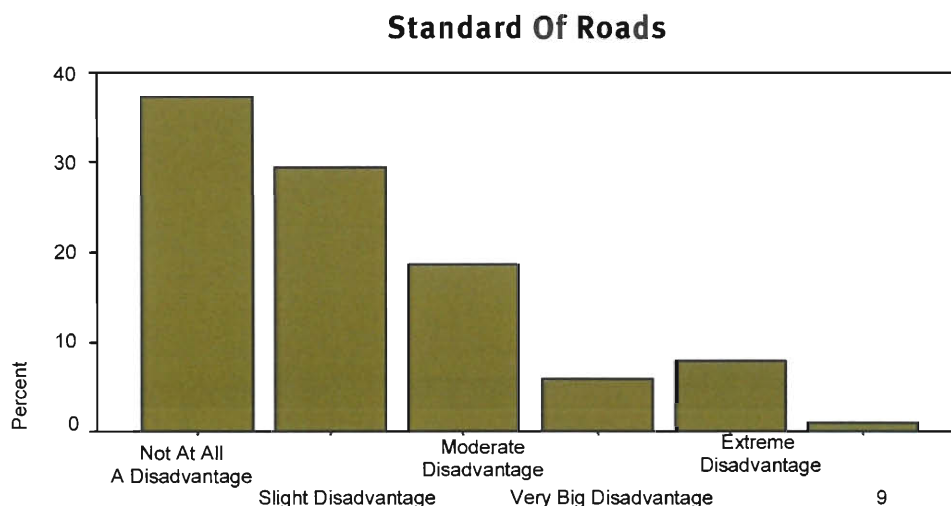
Figure 40



Q26f. Standard Of Roads

Figure 41 illustrates that the majority of respondents believe the standard of roads is some degree of disadvantage, though 37% of respondents do not consider the standard of roads a disadvantage of living on their rural lifestyle block.

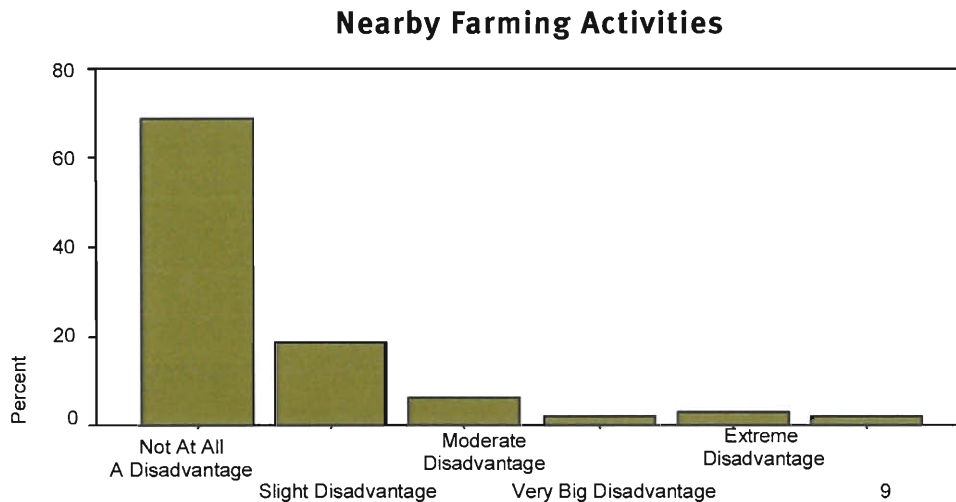
Figure 41



Q26g. Nearby Farming Activities

Figure 42 illustrates that the majority (69%) of respondents did not consider that nearby farming activities (Eg: noise, undesirable, smells, spraying) is at all a disadvantage for them living on their lifestyle block. Though 19% indicated it is a slight disadvantage, while for a small proportion of respondents this is a moderate (6%), very big (2.0%) or extreme (3.0%) disadvantage.

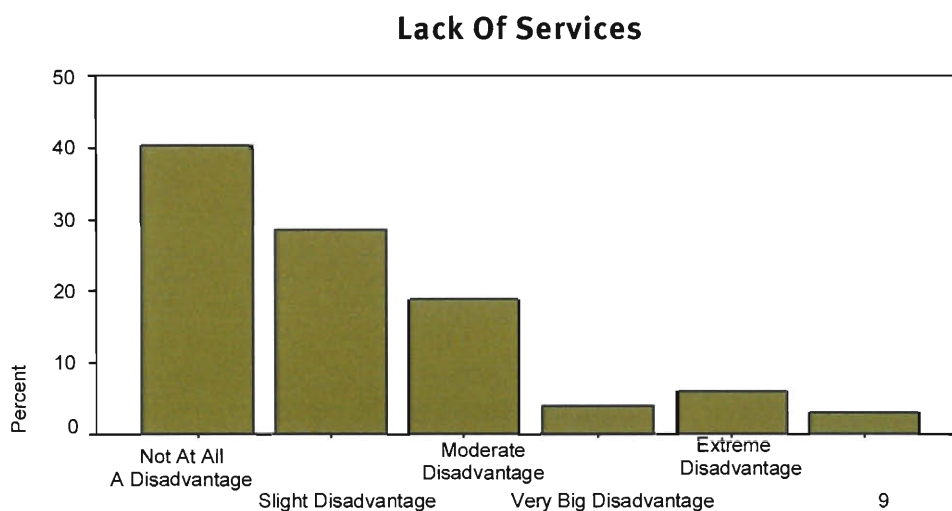
Figure 42



Q26 h. Lack Of Services

Figure 43 illustrates the majority of respondents considered the lack of infrastructure services (Eg: water, sewage, telecommunications) was varying degrees of disadvantage of a lifestyle block. Though 40% of respondents indicated this was not at all a disadvantage for them.

Figure 43

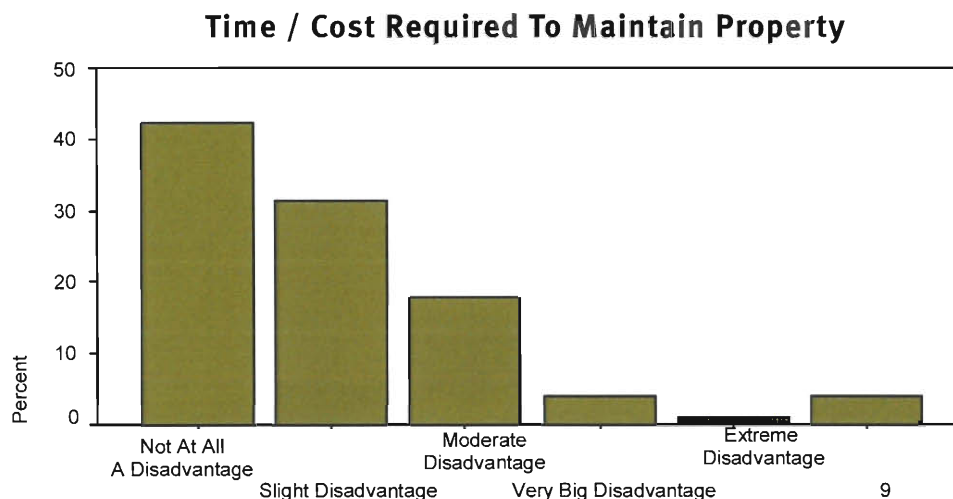


Note - The lack of telecommunications was highlighted by a number of respondents' as the service of most concern to them.

Q26i. Time And Cost Required To Maintain Property

Figure 44 illustrates the majority of respondents indicated varying degrees of disadvantage the time and / or cost required maintaining their property. Though 42% of respondents did not believe this a disadvantage.

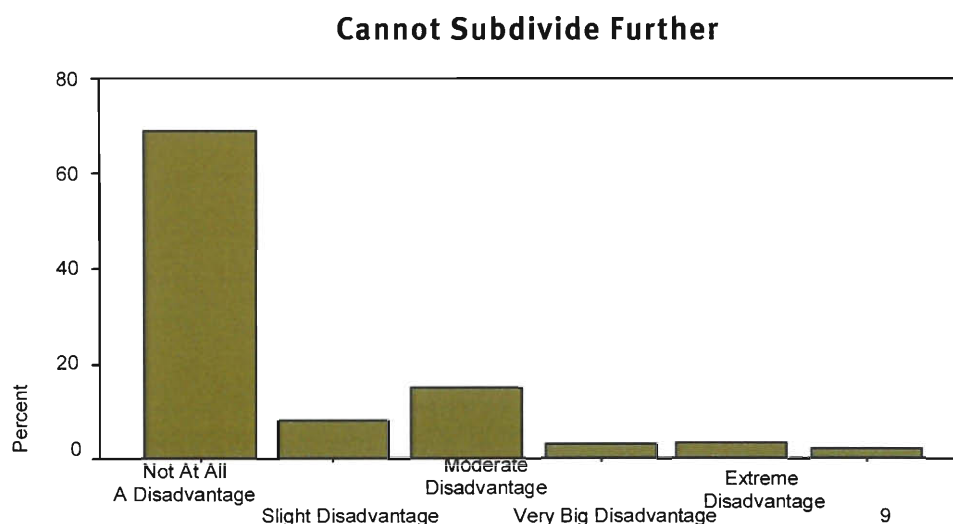
Figure 44



Q26j. Cannot Subdivide Further

Figure 45 illustrates the majority (69%) of respondents do not believe it a disadvantage that they may not be able to further subdivide their land. Though 8.0% indicated this was slight disadvantage, 15% believed this was a moderate disadvantage and a small proportion (7%) considered this was a very big or extreme disadvantage for them.

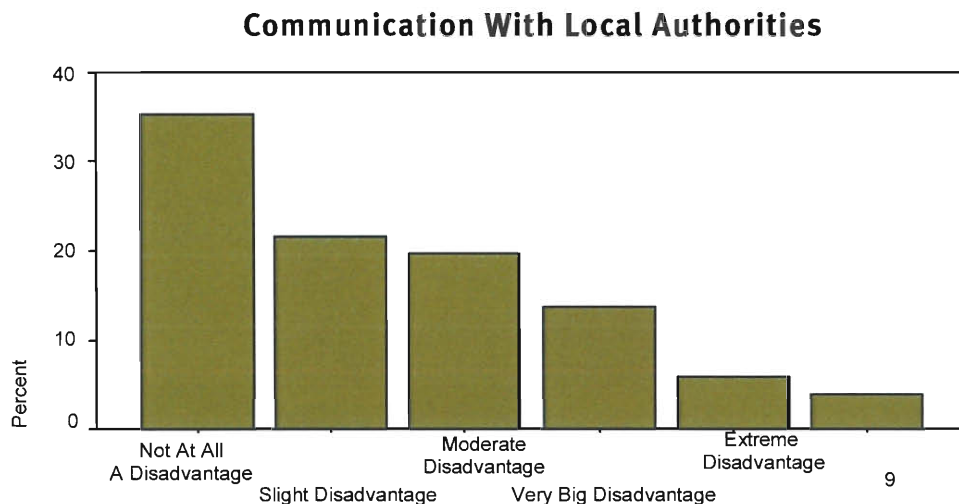
Figure 45



Q26k. Communicating With Authorities

Figure 46 illustrates that 35% of respondents indicated communicating with local authorities were not a problem for them. However the majority of respondents indicated varying degrees of problems communicating with local authorities.

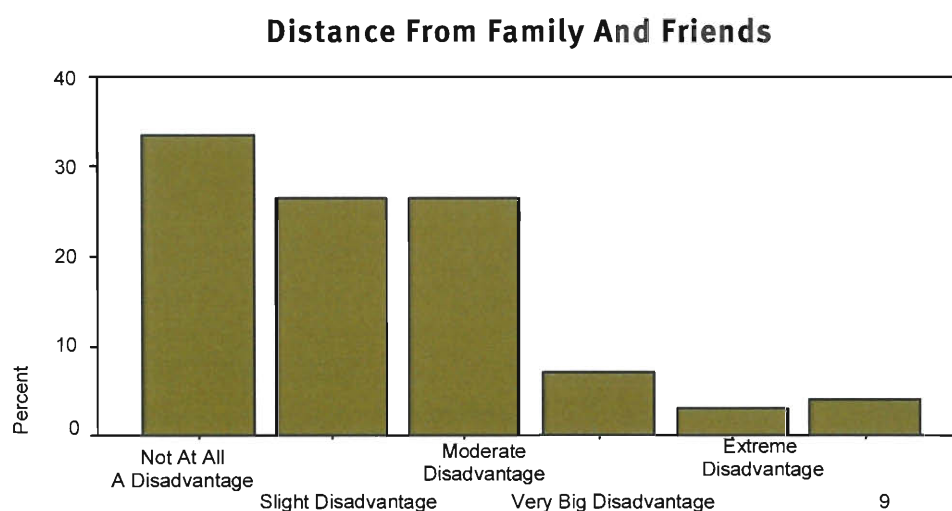
Figure 46



Q26 l. Distance From Family And Friends

Figure 47 illustrates the majority of respondents indicated the distance from family and friends are a disadvantage for them. Though for some 33% of the respondents this is not at all a disadvantage.

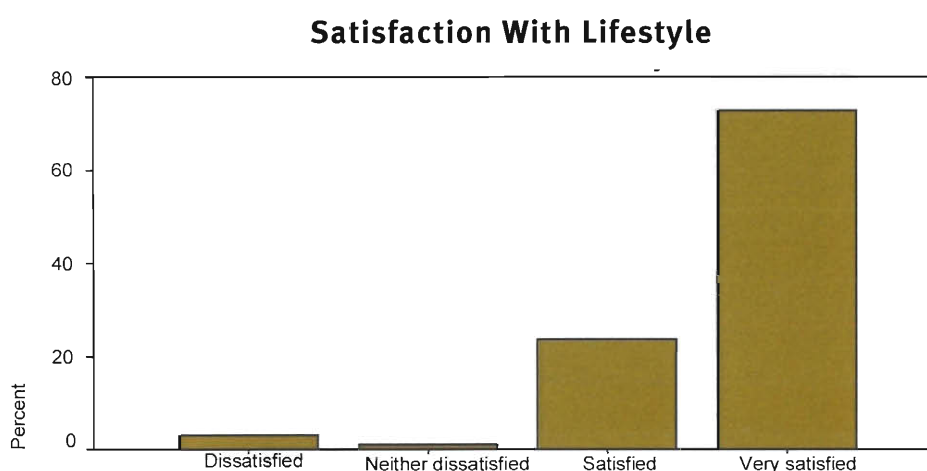
Figure 47



Q27. Satisfaction With Lifestyle

Figure 48 illustrates the majority (73%) of respondents are very satisfied with their smallholding lifestyle, while 23% indicated they were satisfied. No one indicated they were very dissatisfied with their lifestyle, though a very small proportion indicated they were dissatisfied (3%) with one indicating neither dissatisfied nor satisfied.

Figure 48



Q28 Gender Of Respondents

•	Male	46
•	Female	52
•	Invalid	5

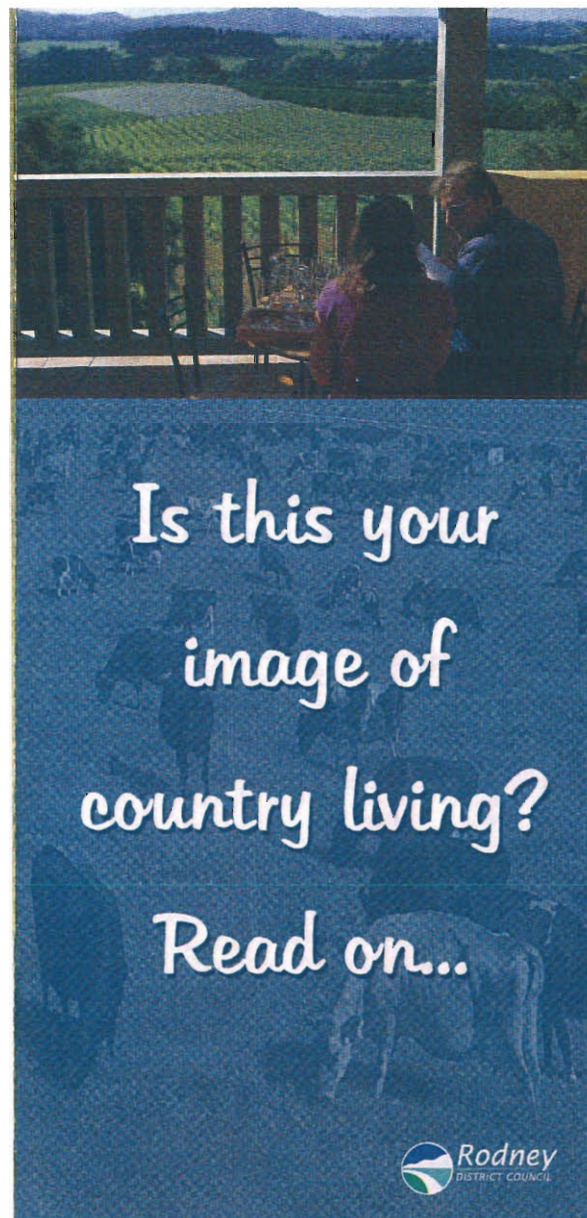
Q29 Age group of respondents

Table 8 shows the age groups of respondents to the survey.

Table 8

Age Group Of Respondents	# of Households
20 – 29 years	4
30 – 44 years	31
45 – 59 years	36
60 years & over	29
Missing	3

Appendix G
Brochure - Is this your image of country living?



Appendix H

Hucka McLeod Personal History

Recollections Of Days Gone By

South Head residents have witnessed significant change to the peninsula in recent years, especially those changes resulting from the subdivision of properties. Whilst we all accept change is a necessary part of life, it is also worthwhile to reflect on the past to understand what life was like for the earlier settlers. I have taken the opportunity to talk to eighty-three year old Hucka McLeod, to learn something of those early settler days, as Hucka spent all his life at South Head until retiring to Helensville and now residing at Parakai. These are Hucka's recollections of those early years at South Head.

I was born in 1921 the youngest of eight children of Harold and Elizabeth McLeod. I spent my early life on a dairy farm up Evans Road where my parents ran two farms. One a 200-acre freehold property and the other a 200-acre Maori lease property. We ran two herds of Shorthorn dairy cows and some sheep.

In the late 1920's the metal use to stop at Haranui Road. North of Haranui Road there was only about six or eight very large properties with few paddocks. There were three gates across the South Head Road. One just on the southern side of Slater Road, with the next gate between Crosland Road and Tupare Road, and the third gate at the bottom of the Mairetahi hill on the southern side of Mairetahi Road.

We got electricity in Evans Road about 1926. I had just started school and I can remember them digging the power pole holes. I would stop and watch them working as I was going home from school. Before that we used candles and we also had a gas outfit that ran 3 or 4 lights and you'd have to pump up the tank every night to pressurise it.

Before electricity petrol engines drove the milking machines. In those days the main milking shed design were called race sheds, with about six cows on each side and you worked in the middle, similar to herringbone sheds used today, though the cows were not on an angle. In later years the "walk through" design became popular before a move back to the Herringbone design. We use to separate the milk and get the cream off which then went to the Kaipara Dairy factory in Helensville and we would feed the skim milk to the pigs. The factory collected the cream every day, barring Sunday. It used to go a bit sour but it never use to matter as they only made butter. Later they started the tanker, and it came to collect the milk.

I went to Parkhurst School, which was located just on the southern side of Evans Road. The roll would vary between 30 and 40, half Maori children and half Pakeha children. Most of us walked to school although the Maori children on Alf McLeod's (the Otakanini property) use to ride horses. There were no pushbikes in those days. We had one teacher for all the classes

from Primer One to Standard Six. At playtime we climbed trees and played marbles. Though for the boys football was the main game played. There was a tennis court but we never had a net or anything and the girls use to play a bit of basketball. I don't remember ever playing cricket or anything like that. I was in Standard Four when the school closed. We then went to Helensville and Harold Pengelly drove the bus.

We never had mail delivered when I was young. You had to collect your own mail from the Post Office in Helensville. I think the first mail run came with the Kaipara Dairy cream truck. It was after the war that the rural mail delivery first started.

We would kill our own sheep and also make our own bacon. However the butcher and the baker would make home deliveries by horse and cart about twice a week. Tom Dwerryhouse had the butchery on the corner of Karaka Street in Helensville. Mum would ring up on the day he came and order what meat she wanted.

When I lived at Evans Road we used to regularly ride our horses out to Muriwai over the sand hills for Toheroas. We'd take a packhorse. Toheroas were plentiful then, there were acres and acres of good sized ones. Nobody ever sold them in those days, but whenever you went to the coast you would chuck your neighbours some on the way home. Every neighbour down the road got a feed.

In those days the only transport was the harbour. There weren't any trucks so when the animals were ready for slaughter, using a horse and dogs, you had to drive them to Helensville where there were two sets of yards, one at each end of the town. The animals were then put on trains to the Westfield works. Buckland's owned one of the largest holdings at the northern end of the peninsula. James Hunter used to do most of Buckland's droving. He would go out the day before, stay the night and bring the cattle in the next day. Buckland's had a holding paddock below the Haranui homestead where Heta Tamahori now lives.

The countryside was quite different in the early days. The last grass paddock was at Gregory's Flat, before Shelly Beach turnoff and the next grass paddock was out at the Waioneke School. The rest was bracken fern, tea tree and Ake Ake, acres and acres of it, but now you would hardly find a plant out there. It was easy to get rid of it because it didn't like top dressing. Once you started to topdress the Ake Ake would just disappear. There was also a lot of kumarahou, which was a mass of yellow in the springtime.

They would fertilise paddocks by hand or by horse and top dresser. Although there wasn't very much fertiliser put on much in those days. Most of the fertiliser would come from Auckland and the Waikiekie Lime Company, which was out of Whangarei, near Portland. It used to come in bags by rail to Helensville where the Kaipara Dairy Co. had a siding and it was unloaded.

When they metalled the South Head Road there was a landing at the creek south of Haranui Road. Archie Currel would bring his barges up there to unload the metal. There were several other landings, with one at Gregory's Flat and another at the bottom of Lupton's hill, past Waioneke School that's Karangatai Creek, as well as Bishops Landing by Hec Nicholls property.

In the early days the bridge just south of McLeod Road was wooden. To clear the land farmers used to do what they called "match farm" and they would chuck a match in, there weren't any fences for miles anyway. Somebody chucked a match in and it burnt half of the bridge. It had been quite a decent sized bridge but it burnt one section and there was just enough room to get a motorcar over it. It was like that for sometime and for that reason became well known as "Burnt Bridge".

When I shifted out to my farm at Shelly Beach in 1952 the "rehab" boys were already out there with the first block settled at Ototoa. There were about 34 "rehab" farms at South Head. They never got power further out South Head until after the war in the late 40's or early 50's. I was living at Shelly Beach when we got it there. We were one of the last to get it. I had the house wired when it was built but it never had the power so I got a little generating plant, which ran the lights but nothing else. We had a coal range, which gave us plenty of hot water and there was no shortage of firewood with all the tea tree around. You couldn't even give it away in those days.

The locals built the South Head Hall about the same time as I shifted out there. We used to have a big New Years at the South Head Hall – an all night job. We'd go home in the morning in the daylight. We were all young in those days. That was really the only entertainment they had you know. The hall was also the centre for badminton and all sorts of things. We used to go to quite a few dances all around including Helensville and the Hinemoa Hall and travelling as far as Kaukapakapa, Woodhill, Waimauku and even Kumeu. They used to run buses in those days.

Our Grandfather, Jim McLeod, owned a lot of land stretching from Rod Hedley's around the harbour's edge to South Creek at Shelly Beach. He gifted 30 acres at Shelly Beach to the Crown for a public reserve. However the Waitemata County sold some blocks off as they didn't have the money to develop it and the wharf was falling down.

The Kaipara Harbour used to be a real fish basket once with fish and scallops everywhere. We would walk out from down the end of Mairerahi Road at low tide with a sack over our shoulder and pick scallops up by hand.

People worked hard in those days. There was no dole or any handouts, you either worked or starved. Though I reckon it was a better life yesterday.

Compiled by Dianne McLeod

Appendix I

Bruce Cochrane Personal History

Reminiscing Of The Rehab Days

Bruce Cochrane is the only remaining “Rehab” farmer still living on his balloted farm at the northern end of South Head. He shared with me his recollections about his arrival as a “rehab” settler to South Head.

In a bid to get the economy going again and rehabilitate the returned servicemen following World War II the Government identified any big areas of land all through the North Island that they considered was not being farmed to full capacity making compulsory purchases of these lands.

There were three rehabilitation blocks established South Head. The first known as Croslands at the southern end of the peninsula, the second known as the Ototoa block around the Donohue and Fuller road area, and the third north of Trig Road known as the Te Kawau block. The Lands and Survey Department subdivided the land. While there were a few sheep and beef farms most were developed for dairy farming, and subdivided into six paddocks. The dairy farms ranged in size from just under 100 acres to about 185 acres.

The ballots for these farms came out in the paper each March. In my case I didn't get a Grade A in the beginning and I had to do two years training. I did that and I got my Grade A in 1948. I then applied for every farm that was available.

In 1950 I was working at Maungakarama near Whangarei when I learned through a phoned telegram that I had won the third draw for a 134-acre dairy farm at South Head, Helensville. The next day my wife, Rene and I drove down to look at the property. We were keen to get started on our own farm so we telegraphed them on Monday to say we accepted and we were shifting down in a week. Besides John Harmer who was overseeing the development of these farms wanted someone at this northern end to feed out hay and care for the animals.

With a State Advances Corporation of New Zealand loan and no deposit required we took leasehold over the land, as it was free, all we had to do was just arrive. If you wanted to take freehold you had to pay 300 pound deposit, which few of us had. The loans had a number of conditions attached, including ensuring good husbandry were applied and a requirement to apply not less than 12 tons of suitable phosphatic fertiliser plus necessary lime to be applied annually to the grassed lands.

We were the first settlers on the Te Kawau block to arrive coming on the 3 July 1950 to find it was a catastrophe. Cows were calving and none of the accommodation was ready. The implement sheds were made into makeshift accommodation, as the houses were nowhere near finished. There was no power, no water, no toilet, no nothing! But somehow we survived.

Unlike the other implement sheds, which had electric cookers ours had provision in the back for a wood stove. The implement shed was our home for 14 months.

There were haystacks in every section and we spent our time feeding out hay until other settlers started to arrive. At first there were only three sheds ready, Riddles, Standings and Fitzpatrick's. So all the cows went up there as they calved. We used to have to go up and feed the calves. They put all the calves in one big pen out on the roadside. They didn't keep any of the calves. Every calf went away on the bobby calf truck.

One by one they got the power on and the cowsheds operating. Stockman brought the newly calved heifers down here without their calves. My shed wasn't ready when they brought 120 heifers for Arthur Hayes' and myself, to put through a three-cow plant in Arthur's shed across the road. There were 4 or 5 of us settlers here by this time and we all had to try and break these heifers in, in one milking. They smashed the rails to smithereens! Then of course they all ran back down to the far corner of the paddock looking for their calves. They just ploughed the paddock into mud. Added to this the concrete was so poor over at Hayes' when the cows kicked, they kicked big holes in the concrete.

In hindsight they probably shouldn't have balloted these farms until the next year and they perhaps could have taken the cows somewhere else. When you've got 13 dairy farms and everyone is getting about 50 cows, that's a lot of cows. Some of the houses were badly positioned. They reckon that the houses were put where there was a gate.

When we first arrived this was really a cold place. There was plenty of tea tree on the sidings and in the gullies, however most of the landscape was just bare and we were continually battered by winds. It was a really bitter place. So establishing shelter was a priority. Some tried planting barberry hedging however it never did very well unlike the boxthorn, which did very well and also served well as a fence.

I recall in the early days and a bloke came and asked, "What hedge have you got planted up on the hill?" It was the backlash of the mowing and it was all thistles! The thistles were as high as the fence. I only had the horse mower and I just hadn't been right up to the fence.

During our first couple of years here most of the "Rehab" men also planted marram in the forest out behind Lake Ototoa. A truck picked us up from our gates and returned us home again at nights. We didn't have to go every day but the extra cash was most welcome. The sand was continually moving. Whilst there were no formed roads, over a weekend our tracks would be covered over and new tracks would need to be made.

They landed a lot of the metal ashore at Bishops Landing for this road and they also brought a lot of lime in there at one time. The road was always a hassle. The surface was rough and corrugated and the dust formed a thick fog in the summer.

The South Head Hall was built through a real community effort with community donations and labour. A committee also raised additional funds to complete the project. The hall was well used as we had a social committee that organised regular bowls, badminton, card evenings and dances including farewells and welcoming socials. It was nothing to be going out three or four nights in a week! Everybody joined in.

We had two libraries, with one housed at the hall. In those days the hall key was kept under the mat and you could just go and help yourself. The other library was at Joyce McMurdo's house in Mairetahi Road. A mobile truck would come around every few months to change the books.

South Head has seen considerable changes. Long gone is our very winding metal road and close-knit solely farming community. Today the land is no longer just for beef, sheep and dairy cows. We have lots of small blocks and a more diverse range of people.

Compiled by Dianne McLeod 2004

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