

19 December 2013

Media Release: Confusion regarding closing date for Auckland Plan clarified

The confusion regarding the closing date for submissions on Auckland's proposed Unitary plan has been clarified.

"The confusion has arisen because the time allowed for submissions to be received in the Act is 60 days after notification whereas the actual closing date for submissions is 90 days after notification," said EDS Chairman Gary Taylor.

"Some submitters have been considering whether to make a "holding position" submission by 14 January to protect the status of their involvement in the process.

"Now the recently appointed Hearings Panel Chairman, David Kirkpatrick, has issued a statement making it clear that submitters can safely work to the 90 days timeframe which means that submissions will close on 28 February. He says that he intends to allow all submissions received by that date.

"This clarifies a confusing anomaly and means from a practical point of view that Aucklanders will have more time to prepare and lodge submissions – which the Auckland Council intended.

"The Auckland Unitary Plan will determine the shape of Auckland for the next several decades and is a very important document to get right. Allowing enough time for people to provide their input is therefore a good thing. A rushed process is not necessarily a good process.

"We welcome the pragmatic and sensible proposal from Mr Kirkpatrick and will be filing our submission by 28 February.

"We hope to have a draft version of our submission available on our website for informal feedback from any interested people by the middle of that month," Mr Taylor concluded.

The full memorandum from the Auckland Unitary Plan Panel is available at <http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/planspoliciesprojects/plansstrategies/unitaryplan/Documents/proposedaucklandunitaryplanproceduralminute20131217.pdf>