



New Brighton Pier & Foreshore Promotion Society Inc
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Pier & Foreshore Promotion Society Inc – Carparks and Beach Access, New Brighton

Submission to Draft Annual Plan 2008/09

Pier & Foreshore has as one of its prime objectives, the improvement of New Brighton and surrounds as a 'destination'. As the group instrumental in raising the private donations which made the construction of the New Pier possible, we are naturally very proud of the key focal point which the Pier has become.

We have noticed of late, an increase in Brighton interest: drawn by the ongoing revitalization of the area, the attractions of the Beach Park, the events and spectacles staged at New Brighton, there seem to be more visitors to the area.

This has coincided with a long, mild summer, and with the beginnings of an economic downturn, what might termed the 'explore New Zealand first' phenomenon. At any rate, there are certainly more holiday-makers, families and others who seek to use our unique beaches and their surrounds, than there has been in recent seasons.

This, however, causes issues with parking and related access issues adjacent to the Beach, in general terms, and in the New Brighton Central area, in particular.

The carparks have not altered substantially in area since the 1970's: improvements have been small-scale and incremental. When the car-parks are full (and City buses use the South carpark as a layover), the spill-over parking tends to be across Marine Parade. This raises risks for pedestrians - families and the elderly especially – and generally, for all traffic in the area.

Pier & Foreshore have discussed this matter, and feel that, as the pressure on the present facilities will not decrease – population increases and destination preferences alone ensure this – it is time to extend the Beach Park parking and other related facilities.

To do so, we ask that a specific Annual Plan line item be voted, to begin the necessary works. We are not competent to estimate the amounts required: but even an amount to consider our suggestions, to update existing plans, and to make estimates, will be a good first step.

Scope of Improvements

There are four key improvements that we feel should be addressed:

1. Car parking – and we have decided to focus on the South carpark in Central New Brighton, as it has an already-considered extension plan available (the “Wayne Rimmer 1997” plan) – see URL
http://www.ccc.govt.nz/parks/publications/mp_newbrightonbeachpark.asp
2. Disabled and elderly access to the beach
3. Seating, Shade and Lighting
4. Bus layover parking

The details of these aspects now follow.

1 - South Car Park – New Brighton Central

This carpark is around 66 (Wayne Rimmer Plan) to 70 (site rough count) spaces in extent. In practice, fewer than this marked-out number can be used, as some are disabled-reserved, and as noted, City buses routinely use the area as a layover (having been effectively banned from their former siting of Oram Avenue Central).

It is not well lighted, and is not currently being locked at night (as opposed to the Northern car-park, which is lighted and is currently locked). It affords an excellent view of the Pier and its night lighting (to which Pier and Foreshore contributed), and of the northern reaches of Pegasus Bay (and if that day is a good one, of the Seaward Kaikouras).

The Wayne Rimmer Plan (1997) proposed to extend this carpark by about 45 metres (roughly, as paced out on the ground, to an extension of the northern property boundary line along Hood Street), for a gain of about 40 parking spaces.

This Plan was Council-commissioned, and still reads well today. It has the great advantage of being an historically approved document, and so (we assume) will be able to be actioned without much further ado, once it has been estimated and scheduled.

2 – Disabled and Elderly access to the Beach

This is very much an equity of access issue: the elderly and the disabled are, effectively, locked away from their Beach at present. Work will be needed to create such access.

There have been some minor concessions made to the disabled in terms of car-parks designated, and ramps to the Pier and Library buildings. But the wider point is the one we focus on: there are projected to be many more elderly people (as, for example, the Boomer generation retires), and access to the Beach is presently minimal. There are no places where, for example, a relative with their aged parent in a wheelchair, could get from the present hard-standing areas of car-parks, access-ways and the like, to the firm inter-tidal sand which stretches about 50-150 m wide and 18 kilometres long.

This 'last-50-metres-of-soft-sand' issue also affects families with prams, albeit to a lesser extent.

Beach surveys have been undertaken in the past, and generally reveal a high level of satisfaction with facilities. But these surveys all have a significant methodological flaw: they are surveys of existing Beach users, who have already made it onto the Beach. By definition, they exclude the views of the many who cannot get there.

Pier and Foreshore therefore suggests two related actions be undertaken to remedy this gap in equity of Beach Access:

1. A design principle be established, to ensure that disabled, elderly and similar Beach would-be users, are not disadvantaged in their enjoyment of facilities, by lack of access. The analogous situation is, of course, disabled access to buildings.
2. Standard designs for practical access be created and costed, so that as budgets allow, disabled and elderly access can be rolled out to existing Beach access points without incurring site-specific design costs.

3 – Seating and Shade Planting

Beach Park design principles included the provision of passive seating for users, and of shade via trees. These principles need to be acted upon.

The Beach is, at present, quite informal even along the New Brighton frontage. This is only partly by design. It is somewhat biased towards active recreation, and hence lacks seating. There are few beach-side dune plantings for shade, despite a multitude of contours which afford excellent potential shade spots.

Pier and Foreshore suggests that both aspects be considered and formalized, with a view to costing and scheduling these actions. As neither seats nor trees are expensive items, it is suggested that maintenance budgets should suffice, perhaps with a specific performance target of X seats and Y shade trees. Naturally, the timing and placements need to be planned and incorporated into the various partial Beach Management Plans which currently exist.

Naturally, as in the past, Pier and Foreshore would be favourably inclined to contribute to selected proposals.

4 – Bus layover Parking

It was surely not the intention, when these Central New Brighton carparks were created, that they should become bus layovers. Some idea of the reduction in parking capacity is shown below: one bus and one camper have monopolized around 10 spaces in the South carpark. And up to three buses have, on occasion, been observed.



Pier and Foreshore suggest that specific provision for bus layover (recall that, with New Brighton as a 'destination', tourist buses need to be accommodated) be built in to the extension to the South Carpark pictured.

Yours sincerely
Madeleine Findley

Correspondence Secretary.