

16. SITING OF TOILET AT BOULDER BAY

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Corporate Plan Output: Environmental	

The purpose of this report is for the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board to consider and recommend to the Council the preferred location of proposed toilets for Boulder Bay.

INTRODUCTION

The need for public toilets on the track which takes a route from Taylors Mistake to Godley Head via Boulder Bay, was raised by a bach owner at Boulder Bay in recent years. A sum of \$33,000 is provided on the Parks and Waterways Capital programme for 2001/2002.

THE PROPOSAL

The proposal to locate a toilet at Boulder Bay, Godley Head Farm Park, has been assessed by Alan Cutler, landscape architect of City Solutions, in terms of its landscape/visual impact and three possible sites have been identified. All three sites are located on Department of Conservation land.

CRITERIA

The sites identified are shown on the attached aerial photo and topo map. Four principle criteria were used in the selection of these sites. These are:

1. Being located above the bay so that it is identifiable, accessible and safe for those people using the coastal track.
2. A site that has the potential for a stable building platform, ie to bedrock or a firm boulder field.
3. Being either close to a power supply or a sunny location for effective operation of solar panels.
4. A site that does not undermine or contribute to the erosion of the bays natural values, particularly the high quality visual values of this coastal environment.

SITE ASSESSMENT

Site 1

Site 1 is located within a gentle hollow or depression in the hillside inside the corner of the walking track as it takes a dog leg up the hill to the Godley Head car park. It is well above the bay and is clearly identifiable with easy accessibility and good safety. Excavation of the relatively shallow loess cover would be required to expose the boulder/bedrock foundation that could be levelled as a building platform. Power lines traverse the site, therefore it would be cost effective to connect to this supply.

The site is visible from short sections of the track descending from Godley Head as well as much of the track that sidles Boulder Bay. Excavation for the building platform down to approximately 1.0 m below the existing ground surface will ensure the structure rarely protrudes above the ridgelines of the hill.

The site is visible from sections of the Godley Head Road, Scarborough Hill and the Whitewash head track. If located here the screen planting of endemic shrubs around the structure would be required to soften its impact on the open hillside. In terms of its visibility this is the least preferred site.

Site 2

Site 2 is located at the lower end of the small fenced off plot of natives and exotic shrubs in the gully below the coastal track. It is clearly visible being and very close to the formed track that provides access to Boulder Bay. Significant excavation of the loess cover would be required, however, it appears a solid bedrock foundation exists approximately 1.0 m below ground level. Extra structural requirements would be necessary for a boardwalk to cross the tunnel gully and for the toilet foundation.

The site is close to the power supply to Boulder Bay while it also has the potential for good solar capture. The location is visible from sections of the track descending from Godley Head, however, with the growth of the young plants in the foreground and the existing conifers as a backdrop the visual impact will be negligible.

Site 3

Site 3 is above the coastal track as it enters the main gully that drains into Boulder Bay. It is an identifiable, accessible and safe location. Further investigation of ground conditions is advisable, however, the relatively shallow loess cover reveals that a stable boulder field with outcrops of bedrock occurs throughout the area.

The site is too far for cost effective connection to the power supply, however, its orientation to the north would provide adequate sunshine for solar panels. The toilet and the solar panels would be visible from a short section of the coastal track when walking towards the gully, however, the preferred outlook from this section of track is towards the bay and the coastal hillsides rather than into the gully. Some planting in the foreground would reduce the visual impact of the proposed toilet.

SUMMARY

The most visible site with the greatest potential to negatively impact on the natural values of this coastal environment is Site 1. Of the two remaining sites the visual impact would not be significant therefore the site selection primarily relates to other factors such as proximity to Boulder Bay and its power supply and the structural implications related to ground conditions.

Recommendation: That site 2, adjacent to the Boulder Bay access track is approved, subject to the proposed toilets being clear of any penguin nesting sites.

Chairman's Recommendation: For discussion.