

4. DRAFT TRAVIS WETLAND LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT PLAN- SUBMISSIONS REPORT

RR 8839

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Corporate Plan Output: Parks Plans and Policy Statements	

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the recommended alterations outlined in this report as a result of submissions received to the above plan for inclusion in the final edition.

INTRODUCTION

Travis Wetland is the largest and most valuable wetland in the Christchurch area. It provides a refuge for a large number of native birds and animals. However over 700 years of human impact has altered and reduced its indigenous values. The Council's purchase of the wetland has now made possible, through a judicious mix of conservation and enhancement policies, the restoration of many of the ecological values lost from Christchurch.

LIST OF SUBMITTERS

1.	Elizabeth Clark	7 Mahars Road
2.	Jonathon Clease	Environmental Policy and Planning Unit, CCC
3.	Annette Hamblett	NZ Association for Environmental Education
4.	John Thacker	11a Weston Road
5.	Alan Cutler	City Design Unit, CCC
6.	Peggy Kelly	115 Packe St
7.	W R Sykes	115 Packe St
8.	Jonathon Banks	78 Vivian St
9.	Rachel Barker	Water Services Unit, CCC
10.	Greg Comfort	147 Marshlands Road
11.	Tom Hay	Travis Wetland Trust, 48 Park Terrace, Corsair Bay
12.	Zefanja Potgieter	70 Blighs Road
13.	Linda Constable	Ngai Tahu
14.	Pam Blackler	Queenspark School
15.	Alan Burlton	21b Beauford Place, Parklands
16.	Stephen Urlich	PO Box 154, Lincoln University
17.	Bernard Hansen	86 Wiggins St

The Draft Plan, released for public comment in December 1997, outlines the policies and proposals intended to guide works into the next millennium. Submissions on the plan closed on 6 March 1998.

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Since the preparation and advertisement of the plan, the Council received a \$225,000 grant from the Lottery Commission for construction of the central ponding area (CPA) and Travis Stream realignment.

It was decided in October 1998 in consultation with the Travis Wetland Trust to proceed with this work as soon as possible for the following reasons:

- (a) The unanimous support for the landscape development concept (lack of objection) expressed by submitters on the plan, and
- (b) The opportunity to dispose of excess soil from the CPA at minimal cost which enabled substantial project cost savings.

Other matters that have been resolved or have furthered development of wetland planning since advertisement of the plan are:

- Purchase of the Lea's property.
- Completion of the Anne Flanagan walkway along Mairehau Road.
- Completion of the Angela Stream link to Corsers Stream beside Travis Road.
- A grant from WestpacTrust of \$150,000 for a visitors centre in the wetland.
- A grant from the Pacific Development Corporation of \$17,500 for a walkway in the Clarevale Park end of the wetland.
- Granting of a resource consent for waterway enhancement work in the wetland.

In addition the Travis Wetland Trust, City Council and Waiora Trust continue to eradicate weed species in the wetland and restore ecological communities that have been damaged by years of adverse activities. Ongoing planting projects underway include a kahikatea forest planting in the central willow area by Forest and Bird Society, an experimental restoration planting project by Lincoln University students in the Clarevale end and ongoing Travis Wetland Trust planting activities in the "Manuka area" and along Mairehau Road.

Our knowledge of the hydrological dynamics of the wetland has also increased with greater understanding of the possibilities of surface water level control.

SUMMARY OF SUBMISSIONS

Submissions range from minor points of detail to major issues of partnership with tangata whenua. Submissions and comments relating to matters of fact or of minor nature in Section I - Background Overview, will be amended in the final report as required. These matters are not dealt with in this report.

Support for the Draft Plan

Sixteen of the 17 submissions wholly support the essence of the concept plan; four unconditionally.

Potential Wildlife Conflicts

Submission Nos: 4, 15.

Two submissions question potential wildlife and people conflicts. One related to human activity within the wetland (4) and one to pukeko deaths on Travis Road (15). The draft plan has considered the former point in terms of making screen planting a priority particularly in the central ponding area.

In respect of the second point tall shrubs will be planted at intervals along the Travis Road boundary forcing pukeko and other birds up and over the road rather than crossing by foot. Experiments with grit within the wetland will be tried to avoid the need for pukeko to venture to the roadside to gather grit/shingle to use as a grinding tool.

Officer's recommendation: That no plan change be made.

Visitors Centre (VC)

Submission Nos: 1, 3, 6, 10 ,11.

All the above submissions are in favour of the concept and siting. A new purpose built centre will now be constructed. An exact location has yet to be chosen. It is likely to be sited immediately to the south of the existing house. The VC details will be known by the time the final plan produced.

Submission 3 asks that the VC blend in with the landscape, that access is available to all and the VC facilities are appropriate to the educational needs of users and are of a high standard. These points are all listed as intentions of the draft plan. VC design and uses are currently being investigated and will include the above points in the design brief.

Officer's recommendation: That the plan be modified by including up to date Visitors Centre information.

Early Start to Development

Submission Nos: 1, 8.

Both submissions call for development to get underway as soon as possible. It is the intention of the draft plan to do so given the various constraints listed within it.

Officer's recommendation: That no plan change be made.

Public Access

Submission Nos: 7, 8.

The first submission generally supports walkway construction.

The second suggests construction of perimeter walkways as a priority. This has largely been achieved with the exception of the western walkway which is listed in the plan as a secondary priority (sections 5.1, 5.2). It also suggests that it is not necessary to wait for screen planting to mature in all areas before public use of each area. The draft plan states that screen planting is mostly only necessary adjacent to the central ponding area (CPA). Only two sections of the perimeter walkway require screen planting.

The north-east walkway between Mairehau and Beach Roads is being constructed at present. Additional screen planting will be synchronised with the removal of willows along this track.

Officer's recommendation: That no plan change be made.

Clarevale Park

Submission No: 16.

This submission supported the planting study being carried out by a group from Lincoln University and proposed that any work should be done in consultation with them and the Travis Wetland Trust. This proposal is currently being conducted in co-operation with the Parks Unit and is compatible with draft plan policies set out in section 4.4.4.

Officer's recommendation: That no plan change be made.

Expressway Designation

Submission Nos: 2.

The Environmental Policy and Planning Unit (EPPU) of the Council relayed that the officers report to the hearings panel, supported by the Environmental Committee resolution is that the designation be uplifted. Results will be known January 1999.

Officer's recommendation: That the plan be modified accordingly dependent upon hearing results.

Plan Objectives

Submission Nos: 3, 11, 16.

All three submissions are in favour of the objectives except:

- Submission 3 highlights objective 3 as being particularly important.
- Submission 11 asked that “recreation” in Objective 4 be clarified to mean “passive recreation”.

Sections 1.0, 2.3.2 and Appendix F imply that only passive recreation is appropriate, however for reasons of clarity Objective 4 could be modified to read “passive recreation” (p15).

Officer’s recommendation: That Objective 4 be modified to read “passive recreation”.

Cultural Values

Submission Nos: 3, 13.

Submission 3 supports the educational use of the site (2.3.1).

Ngai Tahu (13) have submitted interests in a number of cultural issues. A tangata whenua working party has been set up with which the Council will liaise regarding an agreed range of developments at the wetland. Two reports covering these cultural issues from the point of view of both Ngai Tahu and Waitaha will be incorporated into the final plan.

Officer’s recommendation: That the results of the Ngai Tahu and Waitaha reports be incorporated into the final plan in consultation with the working party and the Parks Unit.

Wheelchair Access

Submission Nos: 3, 12, 17.

Submission 3 states that wheelchair access to viewing platforms and hides is important.

Submission 12 makes a number of points regarding wheelchair accessibility. The draft plan makes mention that facilities will be wheelchair accessible by implication only. The plan could be amended to make it clearer that most facilities will be made wheelchair accessible. Future development of relevant facilities will be designed after liaison with Parafed (Canterbury).

Submission 17 supported accessways suitable for the “elderly and the infirm”.

Officer’s recommendation: That the plan be amended to make it clearer which facilities will be made wheelchair accessible.

Priorities

Submission Nos: 3, 11.

Submission 3 expressed support for screen planting as a priority as outlined in the plan. It also suggested the development of an interpretation plan should be a high priority along with the placing of signs as soon as public access is gained in order to raise public awareness. An interpretation plan is currently being developed and some road signage has already been installed.

Submission 11 is in favour of the priorities as outlined in the plan.

Officer's recommendation: That the plan be amended to emphasise that signage will be based on the interpretation plan.

Naming

Submission No: 5.

This submission suggested that wetland features such as streams should have names that are in context with the natural environment. In order to gain sufficient funding some of the wetland's features will be available for corporate sponsorship naming rights. These, as with other wetland features, will be encouraged to be in keeping with the above suggestion.

Officer's recommendation: That this statement be added to the funding section of the plan (4.4.5).

Landscape and Ecology

Submission Nos: 5, 16.

Submission 5 asks for stronger emphasis to be placed on screening out enclosing houses and roads. Screening of this nature is outlined in five separate sections of the plan (2.4, 4.2, 4.3.1, 5.2 and Appendix D).

Submission 16 deals with vegetation management. It suggests that active management of planted forests and vegetation should be kept to a minimum and natural successional processes be allowed to occur over time. This is an ideal situation and is already stated in section 4.2. The practicalities of an urban setting and its associated weed control problems mean that active management will remain a necessity to a large extent however.

Officer's recommendation: That no plan change be made.

Southpower Land

Submission Nos: 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.

All five submissions are in favour of acquisition of the Southpower land for inclusion in Travis Wetland. Three of them state that the preferred method should be by donation or some form of negotiated deal in favour of the wetland.

Officer's recommendation: That negotiations be entered into with Southpower to acquire the (0.57ha) for inclusion in the reserve.

Telecom Land

Submission Nos: 6, 9, 10, 11.

All four submissions call for the acquisition of all or part of the Telecom land.

Officer's recommendation: That negotiations be entered into with Telecom toward coming to an agreement to purchase and/or use the eastern fringe of the Telecom land as a walkway and planted area.

Cycling

Submission Nos: 8, 9, 10, 11.

Submission 9 suggested a cycleway should follow the proposed Green Corridor route as a part of the city wide walkway.

The remaining three submissions were all totally opposed to any cycling within the wetland for reasons of incompatibility with pedestrians and wildlife.

Officer's recommendation: That cycleways be excluded from within the wetland, but that provision for a cycling route parallel and adjacent to Frosts Road be investigated. Appropriate plan changes be made to reflect these changes.

Community Involvement

Submission Nos: 9, 11.

Submission 9 suggested emphasising all the goodwill that exists in the neighbourhood, in other words, community involvement should be encouraged to take advantage of this resource. This is already stated in the draft plan (section 4.4.4).

The Travis Wetland Trust (Submission 11) would like to continue their involvement in future planning and development of the park. This is outlined in the plan and is the intention of the Parks Unit to continue to do so. A more detailed addition to the Adopt a Park agreement is planned and will set out Trust involvement and responsibilities.

Officer's recommendation: That no plan change be made.

Fish

Submission No: 9.

The above submitter promotes the ease of access and habitat enhancement for native fish.

Officer's recommendation: That alternatives for aiding passage through/over weirs be investigated and a statement to this effect be included in the updated plan.

Pest Control

Submission No: 9.

The above submitter asks that rats be included in pest control. This policy already exists and is mentioned in Appendix E of the Draft Plan.

Officer's recommendation: That no plan change be made.

Recommendation: That the above recommendations be adopted.