

8. AKAROA SKATEPARK LANDSCAPE ENHANCEMENT - PLAN APPROVAL

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment, DDI 941-8656
Officer responsible:	Manager Transport & Greenspace DDI 941 6287
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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the Board's approval of the plan for landscape enhancement of the Skatepark and BMX areas at the Akaroa Recreation Ground following consultation with the local community. The report also contains a recommendation to address the current legal status of the Akaroa Recreation Ground and surrounding areas at a later date as a separate and subsequent matter.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Board members will recall that the concept plan for landscape enhancement of the Akaroa Skatepark was presented to the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board on Wednesday 23 August 2006, prior to carrying out consultation with the local community.
3. The plan was circulated to approximately 160 residential properties within the general catchment area of Recreation Ground including a number of sports groups currently operating on or near the reserve. In addition to this, the plan was also sent to a number of external organisations such as the Police, Historic Places Trust, Akaroa Civic Trust, Scouts etc.
4. There was a good response from the local community with a total of twenty one (21) individual residents returning the comment form providing feedback on the proposed plan (See attached comments). Overall the response from the local community was very positive and supportive of the proposed plan.
5. Any concerns with the proposed plan generally fell into one of the three areas shown below. They are not listed in any order of priority.

Planting and potential shading from the new trees.

- (a) This aspect had already been considered at the design stage and a key consideration with species selection was based around causing minimal adverse shade. This can be further mitigated through a combination of reducing the number of trees originally proposed and increasing the spacing between trees.

Reduction of the BMX area.

- (b) The small loss in total area can be mitigated through re-contouring and reshaping of the remaining area. This will provide more interesting and variable terrain of the existing facility thereby increasing the usability of the facility to a wider age group.

Casual car parking restrictions.

- (c) Feedback has indicated that this area has previously been used for car parking by patrons of the mini golf complex and there is a desire for this practice to continue.
- (d) The use of parks or reserve areas for occasional overflow car parking supporting major sporting or community events is not an uncommon practice and can generally be accommodated without unreasonably compromising recreational use of the park due to the infrequent nature of these occurrences.
- (e) However regular informal (uncontrolled) parking in this area is more difficult to justify given the location of the cricket practice nets and BMX area. Parked vehicles would limit or prevent use of the cricket nets and potentially creates a conflict between vehicle movements and pedestrians or park users. Provision of casual parking is not considered to be a core function of this part of the reserve, especially given the provision of car parking adjacent to the skatepark, boat compound, tennis courts and "on street" parking along Rue Jolie.

6. These matters can be addressed through some minor alterations to the original plan. In recognition of the residents' feedback, the City Environment Group proposes to make a number of minor changes to the original plan (see attached plan). The changes are listed below.

Proposed Changes

- (a) Reducing the number of Oaks along the Rue Jolie frontage from seven to five.
 - (b) Reducing the number of Red Flowing Gums along the pathway from fourteen to twelve.
 - (c) Installation of drinking fountain donated by Akaroa Wairewa Community Trust.
 - (d) Reshaping and contouring of the BMX area to provide more diverse and interesting terrain.
 - (e) Installation of another picnic table beside the pathway and stream adjacent to the BMX area
7. All respondents have been sent a final reply letter thanking them for their input, including an A3 colour copy of the finalised plan. The letter informed respondents that the plan would be presented to the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board for approval. Details of the meeting (time, date, venue etc) were also provided so that any interested people could attend.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

8. The City Environment Groups Capital Works Programme has funding available in the current 2006/07 financial year to undertake the Akaroa Skatepark Landscape Enhancement. The cost of stabilising the stream bank is likely to be the most costly part of the proposed plan and this will be treated as a separate project. The stream bank work can be undertaken at a later date without impacting on the other work.
9. Due to time constraints around the time of amalgamation the Capital Programme Team primarily concentrated on year one of the programme. Capital Programme staff will be addressing the Board at the conclusion of the meeting to discuss and further develop the Capital Works Programme for the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board area for the next 3 years. This will take it through to 2009 and bring it into line when the Council commences the next 2009-2019 LTCCP process.
10. The current "status" of the land area is also worth consideration. The Akaroa Recreation Ground currently sits within a larger 4.4150 hectare fee simple title owned by the Council for the purpose of Reclamation and Public Recreation pursuant to the "Akaroa Borough Council Reserves Vesting and Reclamation Act 1887". In addition to this the Akaroa Recreation Ground has a legal road (Rue Jolie) running right through the centre of the area.
11. Staff believe this matter should be "tidied up" by taking out Road Stopping Procedure on the appropriate portion of road and Gazetting the Recreation Ground and other appropriate areas as Recreation Reserve to protect and more accurately reflect the current use of these areas. This matter would be addressed at a later date through a separate and subsequent report to the Board on this specific issue.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that:

1. The Akaroa Wairewa Community Board approve the attached plan for landscape enhancement of the Akaroa Skatepark and that the City Environment Group commence work on implementing the construction programme.
2. The City Environment Group provide a further report to the Akaroa Wairewa Community Board at the appropriate time to address the current “land ownership” and “legal road” issues within the Akaroa Recreation Ground and surrounding areas.

Following the meeting the Board will meet with Brent Smith and Rod Whearty to further develop the One to Three Year Transport and Greenspace Capital Works Programme.