

SUMMIT ROAD SOCIETY (INC.)

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Working to enhance, preserve and protect the natural environment, beauty and open character of the Port Hills of Banks Peninsula for people to enjoy.

29 April 2004

Our Community Plan Christchurch Otautahi,
Christchurch City Council,
PO Box 237,
Christchurch.

Dear Sir/Madam,

[REDACTED]

that the Society does wish to talk to the main points in the submission [REDACTED]

Introduction:

“Without the Port Hills giving distinction to its southern skyline, Christchurch would be a scenic disaster; merely another sprawling metropolis helped out by a cute little river, some nice parks and a few neo-gothic buildings – the hills are its salvation”. (Gordon Ogilvie, ‘Port Hills of Christchurch’ 1978)

In line with the sentiments expressed above, we are concerned about the lack of references to the Port Hills. We believe that this area merits specific reference, and fail to understand why such an important feature and asset of the city, is not given the prominence it deserves. Whilst we appreciate that the Community Plan seeks to identify ‘community outcomes’, we believe that a number should be ‘Port Hills specific’, particularly relating to the sustainable natural environment, health and recreation, and prosperity. Whilst a number of outcomes can apply to the city as a whole, the Port Hills are sufficiently different in character to warrant individual treatment. The inclusion of the Council’s land on the Port Hills in the general ‘Parks and Open Spaces’ category is we feel, confusing, misleading, and fails to recognise the special characteristics.

Specific Comments:

Volume 1, p. 51:

Under ‘Description of Services Provided’, Port Hills Reserves should be included as one of the “...large regional parks...”. The City Council manages 1747 ha (Port Hills Recreation Strategy, p. 39), including co-management of Godley Head. The remainder of the 2,400 ha of reserves is managed by Trusts, DoC and Banks Peninsula District Council, all of which receive assistance and advice from the Ranger Service.

Volume 1, pp. 68, 69:

Again, there is no specific mention of expenditure specific to the Port Hills. We would like some reassurance that the capital programme includes funding for the ongoing acquisitions strategy, the further development of reserves, and for maintenance.



Volume 2, p. 23:

We should be pleased if you would consider adding the Summit Road Society as an example of collaboration. We have worked closely with the Council over a number of years, particularly the Ranger Service, and contributed 3,000 volunteer hours to work on tracks and reserves in 2003.

Volume 2, pp. 80-91:

On page 80, Port Hills reserves should be included at the third bullet point under 'Environmental'.

On page 81, we believe that a separate performance measure should be included for Port Hills reserves along the lines of:

"The development of walking and mountain-bike tracks on the Port Hills Reserves to provide leisure and recreational opportunities, and to allow the enjoyment of the spectacular views over Lyttelton Harbour, the city and the Canterbury Plains, for residents and tourists."

On page 86, the 1747 ha of Port Hills reserves should be included as a separate 'Park Category' under Asset Information.

Volume 3, pp. 60-61:

We are pleased to note the comment that "...the Port Hills Acquisition Programme is leading the purchase programme."

General Comments:

In making the above comments, as I am sure you appreciate, the Society is a great supporter of the City Council's initiatives for the Port Hills and the work of the Ranger Service. In the recent past, there have been a number of reports and papers produced by the Council that have made suggestions or recommendations on the Port Hills reserves and their management. We believe that these support our view that the Port Hills merit specific inclusion in the Plan, and that reference should be made to them. These include:

- Port Hills Regional Park: Acquisition Strategy (K McMillan).
- Grazing Management of Christchurch City Council reserves on the Port Hills (Draft strategy, K McMillan).
- Port Hills Recreation Strategy (Greenaway and Associates, R Barker, P Devlin, K McMillan).
- Awaroa/Godley Head Coastal Park – a development concept.

An outcome of the consultation carried out on the Port Hills Recreation Strategy was a commitment by Council officers to work more closely with the other local councils and voluntary land-holding organisations such as ourselves, in what has been provisionally called an 'inter-agency forum'. The objective of this group will be to look at common management issues and objectives, with a view to progressing the concept of a 'Port Hills Regional Park'. We believe that this is another element in our argument that within the Community Plan, the Port Hills should be mentioned specifically, with its own set of outcomes.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Goodrich", with a small upward-pointing arrow above the end of the signature.

John Goodrich (Executive Secretary)