

20. COASTAL PARKS STRATEGY 2000-2010

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The purpose of this report is to present to Community Boards, Council and submitters a summary of submissions to the Coastal Parks Strategy 2000-2010 and make recommendations for amendments to that strategy.

**SUMMARY**

Seventy-seven submissions were received on the Coastal Parks Strategy.

By far the most important role Coast Care is seen to play is in protecting, enhancing and restoring the ecology of our coastline. In addition to this, there is strong support for planting and habitat enhancement, weed control and improving water quality (a related issue, although not within the responsibilities of Coast Care). Sand management is seen to be very important, and imperative for the sandy coast of Pegasus Bay. Many commented that maintenance is still an issue, including rubbish collection and dog control. More picnic areas, some with facilities such as barbecues, showers and drinking fountains, are popular requested developments. More walkways along the coast and linking of natural areas are important projects for many. Further enhancement of pedestrian access to the beach from car parks and roads is important, with the need for better wheelchair access.

The proposed surf reef received a lot of positive comment and there is interest in investigating the idea further. Some think the concept could be extended to other beach parks along the coastline. The current budget allocation is seen as insufficient, and the coastal environment is seen as neglected, in terms of resources allocated.

There is strong support for Coast Care and the work it does along the coast, and agreement with the vision spelled out in the Strategy document for continued enhancement of the coastal environment. The relationship that has built up between Coast Care and the public is seen as very important. There is an expression of interest for increased involvement with the community, particularly in a practical sense. Nearly all submitters think work should continue, and that the draft ten-year programme should be implemented. Most of the proposed projects are supported, with priority showing for some projects over others. There is a clear priority to complete landscape plans and projects that have been started.

**TOP PRIORITY PROJECTS FOR THE WHOLE COASTAL AREA**

The following is a summary of all the comments received. Ecological enhancement received the strongest support, planting was the next most supported project, and so on down the list. Although education is last, it is still an element of the programme that is thought to be very important. It is not possible here to present all comments and suggestions.

**Ecological Protection, Enhancement and Restoration**

The most important aspect of the programme is considered to be that ecological values in the coastal environment are enhanced, protected and restored. When comments supporting related activities, such as native planting, weed and pest control, penguin (and other marine birds) protection and protecting the natural scenic values, are added together, the majority of submissions would be included.

There is a lot of support for planting, as this will enhance wildlife habitat and scenic values. Weed and pest control is also considered to be very important, with particular references made to rabbits, ferrets and boneseed. Water quality is a concern, in reference to Avon/Heathcote estuary output (and sewerage treatment), outflow from stormwater pipes and leachate from the landfill in Bottle Lake.

**Planting**

There is strong support for native planting, as the major component. However, there is a desire for a variety of exotics and natives to be used as feature trees, shade trees and amenity plants. It is thought more trees are needed around picnic areas, along roadsides and walkways and to enhance developed areas such as car parks and surf clubs.

### **Sand Management**

Continued sand management is considered a top priority project, particularly in Areas One and Two (Brooklands Spit to Southshore Spit). This includes recontouring/regrading, sand-binder planting and fencing. Good sand management is considered essential when developing the back dune environment, adding assets that need protection, such as plants, picnic areas and walkways.

A few submissions suggest there is a need to revisit the allowable dune height given in resource consent. These submissions generally suggest a lower dune, particularly in reference to the North Beach area.

### **Complete Projects**

There are many that would like to see projects completed. Of particular note are Sumner promenade extension, New Brighton landscaping, North Beach landscaping and Broad Park. The general opinion is that resources need to be allocated to completing existing unfinished projects first.

### **Artificial Surf Reef**

There is a lot of interest in the development of a surf reef in Sumner Bay. Many comments were supportive of further investigation, and one submission included 88 signatures from those supporting the proposal. There were a number of comments expressing concern, recommending that the idea be thoroughly investigated, and a few who thought it may be another artificial structure to add to an already too artificial beach. There were a number of submitters who suggested the idea could be extended to other beach parks, especially North Beach and New Brighton.

### **Maintenance and Rubbish Collection**

Many commented that the regular collecting and disposal of rubbish needs increasing. There were suggestions for more rubbish bins and wardens to collect rubbish or police problematic areas. General maintenance is not regular enough for some, these comments relate to a number of activities such as plant maintenance and roadside maintenance. Vandalism is perceived as a problem, and a greater response is requested.

### **Dog Control**

There were a number of comments that enforcement of the dog control bylaws needs to be improved. Some thought improved signs would help, others requested more policing of dog free areas. Dog droppings are also seen as an ongoing problem that needs addressing.

### **Walkways and Pedestrian Access**

Walkway developments that enable linking to other natural areas and loop walks are seen as important. Access to the beach is a priority, with a number of comments on the need for better wheelchair access.

### **Picnic Areas**

Walkways should include more picnic areas. There is interest for installed barbecues, showers and drinking fountains near high use picnic areas/car parks and surf clubs. More shade trees are also desired.

### **Signs and Education**

A number of respondents consider there is a need for more signs depicting interpretive and walkway information. More coastal education is desired, to encourage better care and respect for the environment.

## **TOP PRIORITY PROJECTS BY AREA**

### **Area One**

(Brooklands Spit south to Bottle Lake Beach Parks)

1. Enhance, protect and restore the ecological values, particularly for Brooklands Spit as it has an important interface with the lagoon. This includes weed and pest control and planting.
2. Develop more picnic opportunities. The suggestion was made that this area could be developed to provide for a lot more people, therefore reducing the pressure down the coast.
3. Develop better walkway links between Bottle Lake and Brooklands in conjunction with informative signs.
4. Address concerns over the landfill area, leachates and contamination of high natural values in the coastal area.

## **Area Two**

(Waimairi south to the Spit Beach Parks)

1. A great number of submissions were received for this area and the top priority project is seen to be sand management (recontouring, planting and fencing). Many see the connection between good sand management resulting in an improved back dune environment, which enables planting, walkways and picnic areas.
2. Planting for ecological enhancement and shade.
3. Maintenance, rubbish collection and dog control.
4. Projects need to be completed. Of particular importance: central New Brighton landscaping, roadside enhancement, the Spit landscaping, Broad Park landscaping and North Beach carpark and buildings.
5. Picnic areas with shade, some with water, barbecue, wash down facilities.
6. Walkways and links developed, with good signs.

## **Area Three**

(Sumner, Scarborough, Taylors Mistake and Godley Head Beach Parks)

### *Sumner/Scarborough*

1. The top priority project in Sumner is to proceed with investigations into the artificial surf reef, and to create a high tide beach.
2. Complete the projects which have been started, especially the promenade extension/upgrade and Cave Rock landscaping.
3. Improve the quality of visitor assets, including pedestrian access and providing for wheelchairs, to enhance the area and make it more aesthetically pleasing. Safe pedestrian access along the coast from Shag Rock to the Surf Club needs to be provided.
4. Maintenance, rubbish collection and dog control.

### *Taylors Mistake*

1. Protect and enhance ecological values with a focus on weed and pest control and planting.
2. Give priority to completion of projects, such as landscaping around the surf club and the carpark, of particular note providing a shower and a drinking fountain.
3. Develop a playground.
4. Improve signs.

### *Godley Head*

1. Protecting and enhancing ecological values, in particular the penguin colony. Some conflict as to whether there should be a commercial aspect to the penguin colony.
2. Upgrading of the Godley Head walkway entrance is a top priority project.
3. Signs depicting track and interpretive information is also a priority.
4. Planting in gullies and weed and pest control.

## **BUDGET ALLOCATION**

Submissions are strongly in favour of completing the draft programme set out in the Coastal Parks Strategy. The budget is seen as insufficient, and there is a call for more funds to be allocated.

Of 77 submissions, 41 consider more funds are required to enable effective management of the coastal resource so it can be developed for use in a safe and sustainable way. Eleven consider sufficient funds are currently allocated.

For Coast Care to complete the draft ten year programme set out in the Coastal Parks Strategy, a further \$1 million is required.

**Recommendation:** That the Board recommend to the Parks and Recreation Committee:

1. That the vision statement shown in the Coastal Strategy Document be adopted as the thrust of coastal development over the next ten years, and that the draft ten year programme, set out in the Coastal Parks Strategy document be adopted, dependent on budget allocation.

**Note:** It is clear the people of Christchurch are most concerned that the ecological values of the coastal environment are protected, enhanced and restored. To this end all projects should be given consideration as to their impacts on the ecology. It is recommended that high value ecological areas/assets are identified and given consideration as to the level of protection, enhancement or restoration they warrant. The programme identifies nearly all other top priority projects and issues raised through submissions.

2. That a comprehensive planting programme be adopted, which includes: a backbone of native plantings along the coast as ecological enhancement; a number of shade, feature tree and amenity plantings for users and scenic enhancement, using a mix of native and exotic species where appropriate; and a good weed and pest control programme to protect new plants and establish bird and invertebrate communities, supported by planting.

**Note:** A comprehensive planting programme has been undertaken by Coast Care over the last five years. It is pleasing that this is well supported as it does consume a portion of the annual budget. Much of the work done goes unnoticed, since plants are small and not yet showing very much over marram grass. However, as the next five years unfold these seedlings will show much more, and will start to change the ecological habitat

3. That sand management policies be retained. This includes recontouring, planting (using a mix of exotic and native species) and fencing.

**Note:** The positive feedback regarding sand management is seen as a sign that education has been successful. An understanding of coastal processes and the techniques used to protect the dunes has been achieved. The need for recontouring will decline as better dune management reduces sand movement. Planting of sand-binders is still a core activity in terms of sand management. More native sand-binders will be used, as stock becomes available. Fences are seen as a necessary evil, and offer good protection for our fragile dunes.

4. That quality in project planning and development be emphasised and that incomplete projects be completed, as a priority over starting new projects; and that projects be prioritised according to submissions received and according to budget constraints.

**Note:** The current budget will not be sufficient to cover the costs of completing all incomplete projects. There is a need to seek increased funding from Council. However, for each management area, there has been an indication given through submissions of the most important projects. These will be completed first. Although there may be budget constraints, it is possible to ensure projects can be completed, and to a good standard within a budget limit.

5. That a better rubbish collection system be found.

**Note:** Although the number of rubbish receptacles has increased, there is an ongoing problem. Whether they need more regular emptying or perhaps more people on the ground collecting from the beach needs identifying, and the appropriate management applied.

6. That an increased funding allocation of \$1 million be sought from Council over the ten year period of the strategy, 2000-2010.

**Note:** There will always be a limit to the resources allocated to enhancement of the coast. It is for the community with Coast Care to decide how these resources should be utilised. However, the current projected ten year budget of \$1.9 million is insufficient to achieve what the community desires. The priorities shown for ecological enhancement, planting and sand management will deplete the existing budget significantly. The result will be that completion of projects will be delayed or postponed. An extra \$1 million over ten years, or \$100,000 per year, will enable significantly more to be done, and over a shorter period.

7. That an interest group be formed with the assistance of Coast Care to adopt the artificial reef proposal and a feasibility study be undertaken of the proposal.
8. That Animal Control be informed of submissions received, and be requested to find a better enforcement procedure.

**Chairperson's  
Recommendation:**

That the recommendations be adopted and the officers thanked for their report.