

15. RAWHITI PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN REVIEW

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The purpose of this report is to inform Board members of the process being undertaken to review the 1988 Rawhiti Park Management Plan and to invite comments and suggestions for consideration in developing a draft plan.

INTRODUCTION

The Parks and Waterways Unit is currently reviewing the 1988 Rawhiti Park Management Plan. This document contains background information about the reserve, management objectives and policies, and a landscape plan.

Rawhiti Park, including Thomson Park, is a 63.5 hectare recreation reserve located adjacent to the coastline on Marine Parade in New Brighton. The reserve is dominated by a golf course and sports fields with areas available for informal play and recreation. Community buildings are also located on site. Pine and macrocarpa trees together with open grassed areas characterise the landscape.

The management plan is intended to recognise the values of the reserve, enable appropriate use, and to establish development and management policy for the reserve.

Uses

Consideration needs to be given to current and future use of the reserve. Matters to be addressed include space requirements for activities, lease arrangements, use of currently undeveloped areas and development of new facilities. Current classification of the reserve as a recreation reserve requires that new activities on the site must have a significant outdoor component to them and restricts new indoor activities.

A variety of groups currently use the reserve:

- Casual users, for example, walkers, runners, skaters, children playing.
- Rawhiti Golf Club.
- New Brighton Rugby Football Club.
- New Brighton RFC Cricket Club.
- New Brighton Netball Club.
- New Brighton Rugby Touch Club.
- New Brighton Cricket Club.
- New Brighton Silver Band.
- New Brighton Scouts.
- St John Ambulance.
- New Brighton Tennis Club (recently relinquished their lease).
- Shaw Avenue – Scope Women's Bowling Club.
- New Brighton Catholic Primary School.
- Christchurch Archery Club.
- New Brighton Athletic Club.
- New Brighton Fire Brigade.

Some areas of the reserve are under pressure at certain times from high use while other areas are under utilised. Existing facilities may require upgrading, replacement, or relocation to make them more useful and to better meet the needs of park users. The New Brighton Tennis Club has recently relinquished their lease and new proposals for use of the site are invited.

Rawhiti Golf Links Course is one of only two public golf courses in Christchurch. The Rawhiti Golf Club leases the clubrooms and has exclusive use of the course two days per week. The natural seaside features of the links course are to be retained.

There is potential to develop new recreation facilities in the reserve and to enhance some areas with improved landscaping. The reserve could be compartmentalised into different types of areas and designed to relieve pressure on other parks in the area. There is scope for picnic and BBQ areas, fairs, dog park, cycle competency course, fitness course, etc.

Planting

A new landscape plan for Rawhiti Park to illustrate future plantings and planned developments is required. Much of the existing planting in the reserve requires replacement, tidying, or upgrading and there is scope for more plantings. Many of the trees in the reserve are of a uniform age and issues of safety and durability need to be addressed. A planting plan for Thomson Park has begun to be implemented and is due for review in 2003. Other plantations also need to be investigated and aesthetic gardens could be planned.

Campground

The Rawhiti Motor Camp was established in the 1950's and closed in 1975 due to severe tree damage from a storm. Power connections have been removed and the old camp amenity building is currently locked up and not used. Reopening the site as a campground would require a large capital investment and is not considered to be a viable option at this stage. Nearby Spencer Park and South Brighton campgrounds are marginally viable. A campground would necessitate exclusive long-term occupation of a large area of land and alternative uses for the site and building are to be considered.

Access

There are currently sealed pedestrian walkways and cycleways from Marine Parade to Shaw Avenue, from Keyes Road into the Shaw Avenue car park, and along the section of Shaw Avenue within the reserve. Other pedestrian entrances are available along Marine Parade, Bowhill Road, and Keyes Road.

Road access is from Marine Parade to the rugby clubrooms, from Keyes Road to the athletic clubrooms, and from Shaw Avenue to car parking areas adjacent to the golf course, tennis courts and community buildings. Additional roading and car parking is planned from Shaw Avenue to the archery club near the south west corner of the reserve. The appropriateness, adequacy, and possible need for more entrances, pathways, roads and car parks is to be considered.

The need for signage and directions within the reserve will also be investigated.

Thomson Park

The Thomson Park recreation facilities are popular and could be enhanced with additional seating, tables, and shelter. The skate park has been recently upgraded and there are plans to upgrade the playground. Requests have been made to develop an area for events nearby. Future use of the band rotunda also needs to be considered.

Maintenance

The park is maintained by City Care under contract to the Christchurch City Council. Management of the golf course is by way of a contract and Honorary Park Wardens are also involved in the continuing care of the park.

SUMMARY

Rawhiti Park and Thomson Park currently offer a range of formal and informal recreation opportunities. The landscape is characterised by pine and macrocarpa trees and open grassy areas. New management and landscape plans are to be developed with the aim of assessing current and potential use of the reserve to ensure the desired mix of uses and values is established. The management plan will contain policies to guide the overall management of the reserve.

Process

Key stakeholders at Rawhiti Park have been contacted and the Council has publicly notified its intention to review the Rawhiti Park Management Plan. Comments on key issues in the park that need to be addressed in the management plan and any suggestions regarding future direction and development of the reserve are invited.

A draft plan will be prepared for public notification and submissions called for. Submitters will have the opportunity to attend a hearing before a final plan is approved.

- Recommendations:**
1. That the information be received.
 2. That the Board submit comments for consideration in developing a Draft Management Plan for Rawhiti and Thomson Parks.

Chairperson's

- Recommendation:**
1. That the information be received.
 2. That the North New Brighton Residents' Association, New Brighton Residents' Association and Ascot/Freeville Residents' Group be included as key stakeholders.
 3. That key stakeholders, including the Community Board, be given an opportunity to meet together before a draft Management Plan is prepared.