

2. RAWHITI DOMAIN AND THOMSON PARK DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN AND LANDSCAPING

General Manager responsible:	General Manager City Environment
Officer responsible:	Greenspace Manager
Author:	Kelly Hansen, Parks and Waterways Planner, DDI 941-8688

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is seek Council approval to release the Rawhiti Domain and Thomson Park Draft Management Plan for public consultation. Approval is also being sought to consult on a proposed picnic and volleyball area for this year's financial programme in conjunction with the management plan process.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. On Wednesday 13 June 2001, the Council publicly notified, with advertisements in the public notices in The Press and the Star, its intention to review the Rawhiti Park Management Plan in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977. A discussion document was distributed to stakeholders and their ideas and comments invited.
3. At its meeting on 2 July 2001, the Board was informed of the process being undertaken by the Parks and Waterways Unit to review the 1988 Rawhiti Park Management Plan and was invited to submit comments and suggestions in developing a draft plan. The Board decided:
 - (a) That the information be received.
 - (b) That the North New Brighton Residents' Association, New Brighton Residents' Association, and Ascot/ Freeville Residents' Group be included as key stakeholders.
 - (c) That key stakeholders, including the Community Board, be given an opportunity to meet together before a draft management plan is prepared.
4. During July-August 2001, Council staff met with many of the sport and community groups who use Rawhiti Domain and Thomson Park to discuss their specific needs or issues in the reserve.
5. On 25 September 2001, a public workshop was held at the Rawhiti Golf Clubrooms to provide an opportunity for stakeholders to share ideas and agree on a direction for future management of the reserve, and for staff to outline the process for development of the management plan. Comments from this workshop and from various groups and individuals have been incorporated into the draft plan.
6. In March 2002, stakeholders were informed of a delay in development of the management plan when it was discovered that the reserve was incorrectly vested and classified under the Reserves Act 1977. Following a resolution by the Council on 28 August 2002, classification of the reserve was advertised in the New Zealand Gazette on 25 August 2005 and the draft management plan was subsequently completed (attached).
7. Funding is available in the current financial year to begin landscaping of Rawhiti Domain. It is proposed to use this funding to enhance the picnic opportunities between the community garden and tennis courts with planting, furniture, and a grass or sand volleyball court. Both for efficiency and to illustrate how the picnic and volleyball area fits in with the bigger picture for the reserve, it is intended to consult on the proposed landscaping for this year simultaneously with consultation on the longer term management plan, rather than conduct two separate consultation procedures.
8. The planned consultation process will involve the following:
 - (a) Public notification of the draft management plan in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977.
 - (b) Information regarding the draft management plan and the proposed picnic and volleyball area displayed on a notice board on site.

- (c) The draft management plan and information about the proposed picnic and volleyball area displayed on the Council's 'Have Your Say' website inviting comment.
 - (d) A letterbox drop to approximately 1,000 households neighbouring the reserve with a leaflet (attached) advising of the availability of and highlighting key points of the draft management plan. Included in the flyer will be information about the proposed picnic and volleyball area will and public comment invited.
 - (e) A leaflet and a complete copy of the management plan sent to all key stakeholders (including groups with a lease or licence on the reserve, three residents' associations, honorary wardens, and individuals who have previously expressed interest in the process) inviting comment.
9. Results of consultation on the proposed picnic and volleyball area will be reported back to the Board in May so that work may begin this financial year if approved.
 10. Consultation on the management plan must follow the procedures set out in the Reserves Act 1977 which requires that the plan be publicly notified and that interested parties be given at least two months to make submissions. The Act also allows for a hearing if required. All written submissions and hearings will be considered in development of the final plan which will be reported to the Council for approval.
 11. As Rawhiti Domain and Thomson Park together are categorised as a metropolitan park, the Council must approve the management plan.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

12. Limited funding has been allocated to progressively develop Rawhiti Domain over the next five years (including this financial year). It is intended to spend the 2005/06 and 2006/07 allocation, a combined total of \$68,700 on the proposed picnic and volleyball area in accordance with the Rawhiti Domain Landscape Plan included in the management plan.
13. A proposed development programme and budget for the remainder of the reserve is included in the management plan. It is anticipated that, following approval of the final management plan, this will be considered for future budget allocation.

BACKGROUND ON RAWHITI DOMAIN AND THOMSON PARK DRAFT MANAGEMENT PLAN

14. The Council is required to keep reserve management plans under continuous review. Generally, a minimum of ten years is accepted as an appropriate review period. As the 1988 Rawhiti Park Management Plan was becoming out of date and obsolete, and a number of new initiatives were being proposed in the reserve, the Board requested that it be updated.

OPTIONS

15. As an alternative to approving the draft management plan for public release, the Council could require changes to the current document before it is released for public comment. Unless significant gaps or incorrect information are identified in the document, this would be an unnecessary delay in the consultation process. Should the Council have suggestions or comments on the draft management plan, it would be more appropriate to submit those comments through the consultation process so that they can be considered when preparing the final document. All submitters will also have the opportunity to speak at a hearing should they so desire.
16. The second alternative is to discontinue the management plan review entirely. However, this would contravene the Reserves Act 1977 and is therefore unacceptable.

PREFERRED OPTION

17. The preferred option is that the Council approves the Rawhiti Domain and Thomson Park Draft Management Plan for public release together with the landscape proposal for a picnic and volleyball area.

BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Council approve the Rawhiti Domain and Thomson Park draft Management Plan, and information about the proposed picnic and volleyball area be released for public consultation.
2. That the consultation process in paragraph 8(e) of the staff report be amended to include presenting the plan to a meeting of key stakeholders.
3. That two on-site meetings be held on days of high public usage of the domain and park.
4. That the Board host a public meeting, as part of the consultation process.