

WATSON PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Prepared by the Community and Recreation Planning Department Dunedin City Council.

5 August 1998

PREFACE

This management plan has been prepared by the Dunedin City Council, in association with members of the Port Chalmers community, for Watson Park in Port Chalmers.

In preparing the plan, the Dunedin City Council has followed the process set down in Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977, and includes input from members of the public.

The Dunedin City Council approved and adopted the Watson Park Management Plan on 28 April 1997. This plan is intended to cover the management of the reserve for the next 10 years.

Chief Executive

August 1998

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1. INTRODUCTION

Management planning is the process of determining the management direction that the community and the Dunedin City Council would like to apply to reserves. The planning process involves identification of issues and options, formulation of goals, objectives and policies, consultation on these goals, objectives and policies, and evaluation of the resulting plan. The plan provides a framework, obtained through research and public consultation, that will guide management decisions over the next ten years.

This reserve management plan contains the goals, objectives and policies that will guide the management of Watson Park, Port Chalmers. The plan contains a description of the resources present and the issues affecting these resources. Ongoing review and regular, comprehensive reconsideration at ten-yearly intervals will ensure the plan continues to meet management needs in the future.

The plan provides an overall direction for management. Day-to-day management is controlled via a programme of works which covers a much shorter time span and allows for more immediate contingencies. These day-to-day works are specified in the management contracts prepared by the Dunedin City Council.

The Dunedin City Council's emphasises 'management' rather than 'development'. Accordingly policies to be adopted are general in nature rather than providing a literal 'blueprint' for development. This allows the management plan to be flexible enough to cope with changing circumstances. Management plans that set out a blueprint for future development can be rendered invalid by changing circumstances such as the introduction of new activities.

To ensure that management plans remain flexible, the Dunedin City Council focuses on general management objectives and goals rather than specific development plans. Specific proposals, which may arise at any time, are assessed in terms of the objectives or goals of the management plan. Ideas consistent with the management plan for the reserve are treated as projects and are managed through a separate project process.

Reserve management plans contain policies that relate to the objectives and goals for the specific reserve. Each plan also contains policies for issues that relate to all reserves in the City. These general policies need to be considered in the management plans for individual reserves, but are part of a separate set of documents.

This management plan is being prepared because the Dunedin City Council recognises the public accountability that a management plan offers. The public is involved in, firstly, formulating the policies that guide the Dunedin City Council's management of the reserve and, secondly, monitoring the implementation of these policies through their feedback.

2. RESOURCE DATA

2.1 *Location and Access*

Watson Park is located on Albertson Avenue, Port Chalmers (Figure 1). Vehicle access to Albertson Avenue is via Wickliffe Terrace. Some carparking is available along Albertson Avenue and in the Port Chalmers Primary School carpark, adjacent to the reserve.

Pedestrian access to Watson Park is possible from Albertson Avenue and from the shoreline of Mussel Bay. Access from Mussel Bay can be difficult because of the steep bank. Informal pedestrian access occurs alongside the railway tracks, however, this is not encouraged by the Dunedin City Council.

A public transport service runs between Port Chalmers and Dunedin. The closest stop is on the corner of Wickliffe Terrace and State Highway 88.

2.2 *Legal Description*

Watson Park has a total area of 2.1365 hectares in two parcels. These are Lot 51 DP 7074 Town of Port Chalmers and Lot 1 DP 19812 Town of Port Chalmers. Lot 51 has an area of 2.0429 hectares while Lot 1 has an area of 936 metres². Both parcels are classified as recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977.

(See Figure 1 Location of Watson Park, Port Chalmers)

2.3 District Plan Considerations

Watson Park lies within Dunedin City and is subject to the Dunedin City District Plan under the Resource Management Act 1991.

Under the Transitional District Plan, Port Chalmers Borough Section, the reserve lies within a recreation zone. The site is designated as a Recreational Reserve (existing) in that plan.

Under the proposed District Plan the reserve is zoned Residential 1. An Urban Landscape area overlies this zoning.

2.4 Control and Management

Control and management of the reserve became the Dunedin City Council's responsibility in 1989, upon amalgamation of the former Port Chalmers Borough with the Dunedin City Council.

Watson Park is a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. The purpose of the Reserves Act 1977¹ is to provide:

3(1)(a) ... for the preservation and management for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand possessing-

- (i) Recreational use or potential, whether active or passive; or*
- (ii) Wildlife; or*
- (iii) Indigenous flora or fauna; or*
- (iv) Environmental and landscape amenity or interest; or*
- (v) Natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, biological, geological, scientific, educational, community, or other special features or value.*

Under this general purpose recreation reserves have the following specific purpose:

¹ Boxed text does not form part of this management plan. This text is usually an excerpt from another document and can change if that document changes.

17(1) [the provision of] areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.

Additional management guidance is given in clause 2 of Section 17:

17(2)(a) The public shall have freedom of entry and access to the reserve ...

- (b) Where scenic, historic, archaeological, biological, geological, or other scientific features or indigenous flora or fauna or wildlife are present on the reserve, those features or that flora or fauna or wildlife shall be managed and protected to the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve*
- (c) Those qualities of the reserve which contribute to the pleasantness, harmony, and cohesion of the natural environment and to the better use and enjoyment of the reserve shall be conserved:*
- (d) To the extent compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve, its value as a soil, water, and forest conservation area shall be maintained.*

2.5 Present Use of the Reserve

Watson Park is used for sport all year round with cricket played in the summer and rugby in the winter. A sports pavilion and changing facilities are located on the site. The pavilion, part of which is known as the Armstrong Pavilion, is owned by the Harbour Rugby Football Club. The Dunedin City Council own the adjoining changing and shower facilities completed in 1991. A financial contribution of \$60,000 was made by the Harbour Rugby Football Club to assist in the construction of the shower and change facilities.

Other reserve users include the Port Chalmers School, St. Joseph's School, the Port Chalmers Play Group and event organisers (e.g., kite-flying festival).

2.6 Adjacent Land Use

Port Chalmers Primary School is located adjacent to the south-east boundary of Watson Park. Mussel Bay lies to the south-west, with access to the water possible along this boundary. Railway tracks and sidings lie to the north-west of the Park. A platform on the site marks the position of the old Port Chalmers station. The north-east boundary of the reserve consists of private residences and Albertson Avenue. Noise from the park and limited parking may have adverse effects on those living in these residences and those using Albertson Avenue.

2.7 *Physical Description*

Watson Park forms part of one of the few flat areas in Port Chalmers. It lies adjacent to Mussel Bay, with access to the foreshore possible from the Park. Trees have been planted along the boundary with the railway and these offer some protection from norwesterly winds. The park is open to the south and, although Roseneath offers some protection from winds in that quarter, southerlies adversely affect use of the ground.

Drainage is a problem on the reserve. According to a 1960 drainage study, the reclamation of Mussel Bay in the 1930s and 1940s used a mixture of materials, including stones, shells, sand, silts and blue harbour mud. In addition, the topsoil that was used to dress the field in 1953 apparently was high in clay and proved to be impervious. Various responses to this problem have been taken over the years, but the drainage is still poor.

2.8 *History*

The Recreation Ground at the end of George Street was the original sports field area for Port Chalmers and consisted of a single rugby field and a pavilion. This area was 'lost' during the 1950s construction of the highway and realignment of the railway.

Watson Park was established in 1950 on land reclaimed from Mussel Bay during the 1930s and 1940s. The reclamation involved the pumping of material through a tunnel, discharging near the present Port Chalmers Bowling Club. Herbert Spencer Watson, mayor of Port Chalmers from 1941 to 1947, had secured the use of the land as a reserve, so the Park was named after him². At

² Ian Church's Book

first the ground consisted of two sports fields, however, one of these was latter used as the site of Port Chalmers school.

A pavilion was constructed on Watson Park in 1951 under the leadership of Tom Armstrong, with the help of Club members who were predominantly “locked-out” watersiders. The Borough Council contributed corrugated iron from the previous pavilion which had stood on the old ‘Rec’ ground.

In 1965, the Council approved the construction of a small hall as an addition to the pavilion, financed by the rugby club and constructed with its members’ voluntary labour. In 1976, a larger hall was added using Club funds and labour. In 1988, still further development to the pavilion occurred, financed by the Club, which permitted an occupancy of 190. The showers, toilets and changing facilities for the reserve were upgraded by Council in 1991.

Lot 1, DP 19812, was transferred from the Housing Corporation to Port Chalmers Borough Council in 1986. This transfer was the result of arrangements in 1985-1986 between the Housing Corporation, Port Chalmers Borough Council, and the Port Chalmers Rugby Football Club. Council agreed to accept the land and credit the Housing Corporation for \$500 toward any future reserve contributions. The Club paid \$500, plus legal costs and the costs of fencing and surveying the land, in exchange for “full use of the land.” This land was used for an upgrading of shower, toilet and changing facilities.

2.9 *Other Reserves in the Area*

There are twenty-four reserves, with a combined area of 275.7 hectares in the Port Chalmers area (see Appendices 2 and 3). Watson Park and the Sawyers Bay Recreation Reserve³ are the only reserves classified as sports grounds, with Watson Park being the only reserve used for organised field sports. Watson Park, therefore, plays an important role in the Port Chalmers community as the only space for organised field sports.

³ Most of the Sawyers Bay Recreation Reserve is in the process of being leased to the West Harbour Pony Club for equestrian purposes. The other sport on the Sawyers Bay Recreation Reserve is tennis.

2.10 Analysis of Reserve Values

As it is the only space in the Port Chalmers community for the playing of organised field sports, Watson Park has high community recreation value. This value is also important at the city-wide level, as Watson Park is part of the sports-field system. Additional recreation value at the community level comes from its use for informal recreation such as children's play, running and walking and from the possibilities for access to Mussel Bay. The buildings on Watson Park are also important as they provide opportunities for community recreation.

Watson Park has high landscape value as one of the few areas of open flat ground in Port Chalmers. These values have been supported by the urban landscape overlay in the proposed District Plan.

The park has some heritage value due to its links to a previous mayor of Port Chalmers Borough and to the Mussel Bay reclamation. These values are not considered significant for management purposes. Likewise the reserve has limited ecological value, as a food source for birds of various species, but these values are not significant. No other values are highly significant for the management of Watson Park.

2.11 Issues

The major issues that affect Watson Park and its management are:

- the occupancy of Watson Park by club-owned buildings has never been formalised;
- the Port Chalmers Play Group wish to use part of the pavilion for their activity;
- access arrangements for the public changing and toilet facilities at Watson Park needs to be improved;
- the playing surface at Watson Park has drainage and deformation problems;
- the integration of use of Watson Park is required so that facilities are utilised.
- activities at Watson Park and the nearby Port Chalmers Recreation Reserve cause significant carparking problems (the existing Albertson Avenue carpark is located on Port Chalmers School land);

- Watson Park is exposed to southerlies; and
- there is a lack of facilities for spectators.

3. MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Vision

Watson Park will be the main reserve for organised field sports and recreation in Port Chalmers.

3.2 Goals

The primary goal for the Dunedin City Council with respect to Watson Park is:

1. *to manage Watson Park as a sports-field.*

Secondary goals for Watson Park are:

1. *to ensure opportunities for forms of recreation other than organised field sports; and*
2. *to provide public access to the Mussel Bay shoreline.*

These goals are ranked in order of importance.

3.3 Objectives

Management objectives relating to Goal 1 are:

1. to allow the use of Watson Park for organised field sports, 'events' and recreation;
2. to manage Watson Park as a unit of the Dunedin City Council's sports-fields system;
3. to maintain and enhance the landscape values of the site; and

4. to remedy or mitigate any significant adverse effects on the environment or local community that could result from the use and management of Watson Park.

Management objectives relating to Secondary Goal 1 are:

1. to allow the use of buildings on Watson Park for recreational purposes not directly related to outdoor recreation or sport; and
2. to develop Watson Park, in association with other reserves nearby, as a recreation area for the use and enjoyment of the public.

Management objectives relating to Secondary Goal 2 are:

1. to develop opportunities for on-foot public access to Mussel Bay; and
2. to maintain and enhance the Mussel Bay shoreline;

4. SPECIFIC POLICIES

4.1 Administration

4.1.1 Administration and Control

- Policy 1. The administration and control of Watson Park shall be retained by the Dunedin City Council.
- Policy 2. The Reserve shall be known as Watson Park.
- Policy 3. Under the Reserves Act 1977, Watson Park is, and shall continue to be, classified as a Recreation Reserve.
- Policy 4. Liaison and co-operation with and between organisations, groups and individuals interested in Watson Park shall be encouraged and maintained.

- Policy 5. Dunedin City Council staff will ensure that the requirements of Part 10 of the Dunedin City By-law are complied with.
- Policy 6. Activities on reserves shall operate within the limits of the objectives, policies and rules set out in the Dunedin City District Plan.
- Policy 7. Dunedin City Council staff shall ensure that all practices and materials used in reserve management comply with national legislation, Dunedin City Council policy and practice, and reserve and recreation management best practice.
- Policy 8. All development or changes proposed for reserves or facilities on reserves require written Dunedin City Council approval.

4.1.2 Review

- Policy 9. These policies shall be kept under continuous review, with a comprehensive review being made at ten yearly intervals.
- Policy 10. The process for comprehensively reviewing of these policies or making significant alterations at other times will be consistent with the requirements of Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977.

4.2 Use

4.2.1 Public Access to Facilities

- Policy 11. The Dunedin City Council will negotiate with the Harbour Rugby Football Club to improve access to Watson Park's facilities

4.2.2 Drainage

Policy 12. Watson Park drainage will be maintained to sports-field standard by the Dunedin City Council.

Policy 13. Monitoring of both park usage and drainage problems will be undertaken by the Dunedin City Council.

4.2.3 Buildings

Policy 14. The Harbour Rugby Football Club occupation will be formalised by a lease under the Reserves Act 1977.

Policy 15. The Port Chalmers Play Group occupation will be formalised by a lease under the Reserves Act 1977.

4.3 Development

4.3.1 Carparking

Policy 16. The development and use of additional carparking on the reserve will be allowed subject to it:

- 1.1 not affecting the reasonable foreseeable use of the reserve for organised field sports; and
- 1.2 avoiding, remedying or mitigating any adverse effects.

Policy 17. The location of additional carparking will be approved by the Dunedin City Council.

Note: These policies take precedence over those in the General Policies Section.

4.3.2 Tree Planting

Policy 18. The planting of a shelter belt along the southern boundary of Watson Park will be allowed. The species planted and their location are to be approved by the Dunedin

City Council before planting commences. A landscape plan, approved by the Dunedin City Council, will be required before planting commences.

4.3.3 Alternative Access

Policy 19. The Dunedin City Council will investigate the feasibility of establishing alternative vehicle access into Watson Park.

5. GENERAL POLICIES

General policies apply to all reserves. These policies can be found in the *Dunedin City Council Draft Reserve Management Plans: General Policies Section*, which is attached as a separate document.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Relevant Extracts From Reserves Act 1977

41. Management plans

- (3) The management plan shall provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection, and preservation, as the case may require, and, to the extent that the administering body's resources permit, the development, as appropriate, of the reserve for the purposes for which it is classified, and shall incorporate and ensure compliance with the principles set out in section 17, section 18, section 19, section 20, section 21, section 22, or section 23, as the case may be, of this Act for a reserve of that classification.*
- (4) The administering body of any reserve shall keep its management plan under continuous review, so that, subject to subsection (3) of this section, the plan is adapted to changing circumstances or in accordance with increased knowledge; and the Minister may from time to time require the administering body to review its management plan, whether or not the plan requires the approval of the Minister under this section.*
- (5) Before preparing a management plan for any one or more reserves under its control, the administering body shall-*
 - (a) Give public notice of its intention to do so; and*
 - (b) In that notice, invite persons and organisations interested to send to the administering body at its office written suggestions on the proposed plan within a time specified in the notice; and*

- (c) *In preparing that management plan, give full consideration to any such comments received.*
- (6) *Every management plan shall be prepared by the administering body in draft form in the first place, and the administering body shall-*
 - (a) *Give public notice complying with section 119 of this Act stating that the draft plan is available for inspection at a place and at times specified in the notice, and calling upon persons or organisations interested to lodge with the administering body written objections to or suggestions on the draft plan before a specified date, being not less than 2 months after the date of publication of the notice; and*
 - (aa) *On giving notice in accordance with paragraph (a) of this subsection, send a copy of the draft plan to the Commissioner; and*
 - (b) *Give notice in writing, as far as practicable, to all persons and organisations who or which made suggestions to the administering body under subsection (5) of this section stating that the draft plan has been prepared and is available for inspection at the place and during the times specified in the notice, and requiring any such person or organisation who or which desires to object to or comment on the draft plan to lodge with the administering body a written objection or written comments before a specified date, being not less than 2 months after the date of giving of the notice; and*
 - (c) *Make the draft management plan available for inspection, free of charge, to all interested persons during ordinary office hours at the office of the administering body; and*
 - (d) *Before approving the management plan, or, as the case may require, recommending the management plan to the Minister for his approval, give every person or organisation who or which, in lodging any objection or making any comments under paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) of this subsection, asked to be heard in support of his or its objection or comments, a reasonable opportunity of appearing before the administering body or a committee thereof or a person nominated by the administering body in support of his or its objection or comments; and*
 - (e) *Where the management plan requires the approval of the Minister, attach to the plan submitted to him for approval a summary of the objections and comments received and a statement as to the extent to which they have been allowed or accepted or disallowed or not accepted.*
- (8) *Where in terms of its responsibilities under this Act the administering body of any reserve resolves to undertake a comprehensive review of its management plan, the administering body shall follow the procedure specified in subsections (5) and (6) of this section as if the review were the preparation of a management plan.*
- (9) *Where under subsection (4) of this section the administering body considers any change not involving a comprehensive review to its management plan is required, it may, if it thinks fit, follow the procedure specified in subsections (5) and (6) of this section.*
- (10) *The administering body or committee or person before which or whom any person appears at any hearing in support of any objection or comments shall determine its or his own procedure at the hearing.*
- (11) *The administering body shall in the exercise of its functions comply with the management plan for the reserve and any amendment thereof, being, in the case of a plan or an*

amendment that requires the approval of the Minister, a plan or an amendment so approved.

- (13) *Where a recreation reserve is vested in a local authority or a local authority is appointed to control and manage a recreation reserve, the local authority shall not be required to submit its management plan to the Minister for approval, unless the terms of vesting or of appointment to control and manage the reserve so require:*

Provided that the local authority shall make its management plan available for inspection by or on behalf of the Minister whenever so required.

Appendix 2 Department of Conservation Reserves in the Port Chalmers Community

Reserve	Area (ha)
Aramoana Conservation Area	240.0000
Aramoana Farm Conservation Area	1.1488
Back Beach Recreation Reserve (Aramoana)	
Goat Island	4.5000
Heyward Point Scenic Reserve and Conservation Area	53.7765
Quarantine Island Cemetery	0.0835
Quarantine (St. Martins) Island	14.3000
Sawyers Bay	0.1027
Total	72.7627

Source: Department of Conservation (1995) *Draft Conservation Management Strategy Volume 4 Land Inventory*. Otago Conservancy, Department of Conservation, Dunedin

Appendix 3 Dunedin City Council Reserves in the Port Chalmers Community

Reserve Name ⁴	Area (ha)
Aramoana Domain (including Aramoana Local Purpose Reserve)	1.7598
Aramoana Memorial Reserve	0.6528
Aramoana Plantation Reserve	2.1204
Brickhill Reserve , Sawyers Bay	0.0122
Centennial Gardens	0.3885
Port Chalmers Cemetery (Old and New (Careys Bay))	4.5057
Chalmers Place	0.0531
Port Chalmers Recreation Reserve (Albertson Avenue)	0.7890
Port Chalmers Recreation Reserve (Foreshore)	8.9876
Port Chalmers Town Belt (including Lady Thorn Dell and Daisy Green)	26.0890
Reeves St, Roseneath	0.0608
Roseneath Esplanade Reserve	1.0500
Sawyers Bay Entrance Reserve	0.3019
Sawyers Bay Overbridge	0.1027
Sawyers Bay Recreation Ground	4.3160
The Green, Deborah Bay	0.0523
Watson Park	2.1365
	53.3783

⁴ Tucketts Corner and the Green at Careys Bay are also administered by the Dunedin City Council, but are not formally managed as reserve land.