



Marlow Park Destination Playground Upgrade



Outline of workshop

- Introductions
- History of the playground
- Project background
- Budget and timeframes
- Previous feedback
- Design principles
- Narrative
- Equipment and furniture
- The dinosaur slide options
- Draft playground details





Whakapapa of place

- Marlow Park, as part of the broader coastal dune system protecting the low-lying South Dunedin area, connects Ōtepoti to the South Pacific
- Prior to the arrival of Europeans, the area around Marlow Park was a coastal wetland
- It was an important site for mahika kai species for mana whenua, a site for mooring canoes for tuna gathering trips to the Taiari, and there were nearby nohoaka (camp sites) near the head of Moreau Street





Whakapapa of place

- Early Pākehā settlers regarded the area as a “waste” land and set about re-shaping it, gradually transforming an area they coined the sandhills.
- The opening of the Peninsula and Ocean Beach Railway in 1876 set in motion more invasive mining of the landward dunes.
- One of the unintended consequences of this work was more regular inundation of the developing residential areas.
- In 1892 Ocean Beach Domain Board set up in response to manage dunes.
- In 1929 licence was issued to the St Kilda Beach Improvement Society.
- Their developments included a pavilion for bathers, refreshment shop, caretaker residence, wading pool for children, multiple iterations of play equipment and tennis courts.



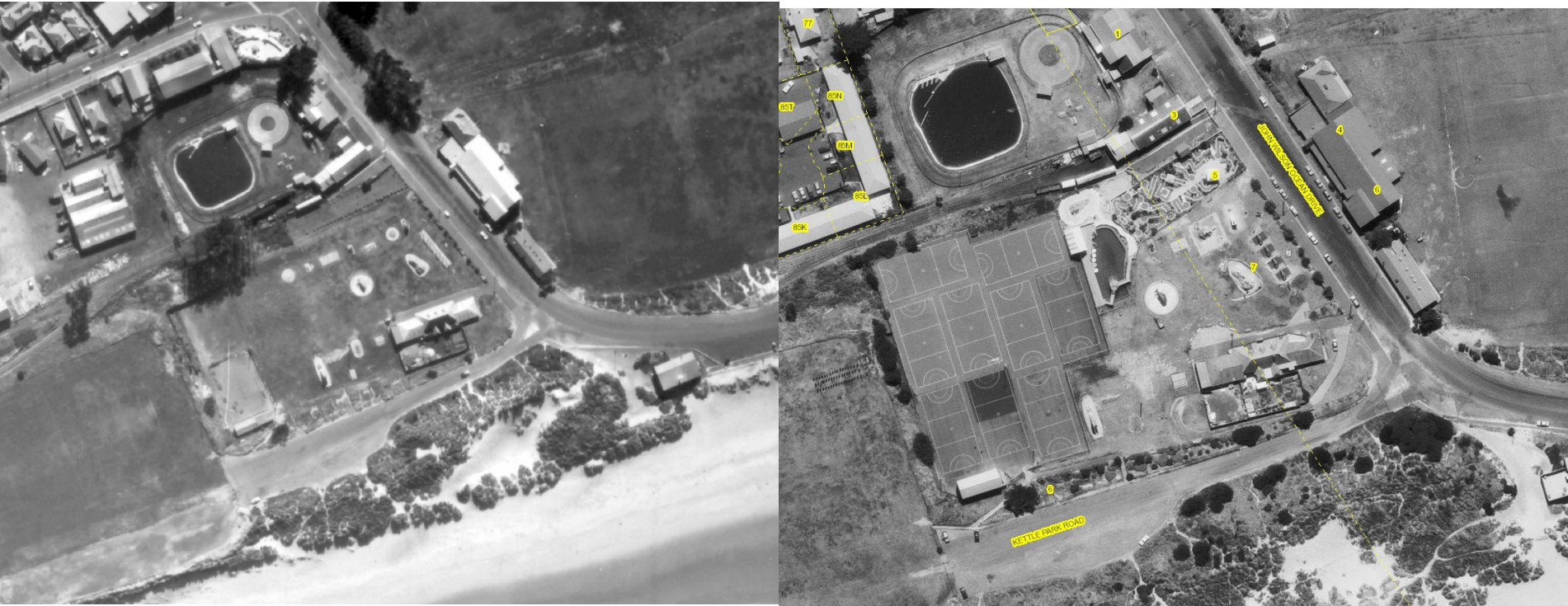


Whakapapa of place





Whakapapa of place





Whakapapa of place

- The St Kilda Beach Improvement Society disbanded in 1961, but the Domain Board continued to maintain and develop the playground often in partnership with local Lions and Rotary groups
- In the 1970s the area became known as Marlow Park, named after James John Marlow, Mayor of St Kilda.
- In 1985 Noah's Ark was established in the pavilion
- 1989 amalgamation DCC took over management of the park
- Upgraded in 2001 with new play equipment installed
- 2009 Noah's Ark closed





Project Background

- Feedback in the Play Spaces Plan 2021 and the 10-year plan 2021 - 2031 indicated that many did not consider Dunedin to have a Destination Playground
- In 2023, DCC engaged a consultant to develop a concept design for a new Destination Playground.
- In 2024, a community consultation process informed changes to the concept design.
- The DCC has now initiated a co-design process with mana whenua through Aukaha to develop a theme for the new playground.
- The DCC and Aukaha have produced developed spatial layouts through this co-design process.
- Working closely with user groups on parkour, pump track and skate areas.





Budget and Timeframes

- \$4.6m* budget has been allocated for procurement and construction in 2026/2027 financial year.
- About to go to market for a lead contractor to support detailed design, QS, procurement, fabrication, installation and construction.
- Will bring detailed design to Council for approval before construction starts
- Aim to begin construction in as early in 2026/2027 financial year as possible and investigate opportunities for staged reopening to commence in Summer 2026/2027.





Previous Feedback

Play Spaces Plan

Destination Playgrounds

- The most requested type of play was water play – paddling pools, fountains and splash pads.
- Play for all ages, from toddlers to teens and adults.
- Supporting infrastructure: shading, weather shelters, toilets, seating, tables, fencing and barbecues.





Previous Feedback

Marlow Park

- Support for the proposed parkour area
- Support for nature-based play elements and flexible spaces that could accommodate food trucks, markets and other activities.
- Some wanted to retain and refurbish the iconic features of the park, such as the dinosaur slide and whale, in particular.
- Concerns about too much sand and too much open space/isolation of dinosaur
- Concern that the toddler area lacked a range of equipment, reducing play opportunities for this age group.
- More colour
- Using the topography of the site
- More accessible play equipment
- More challenging play elements for older age groups
- More areas for social gathering and protection from the weather





Design Principles

The Dunedin Play Spaces Plan adopted in 2021 identified that play was for everyone, with the key goals being:

- Play is varied – our tamariki and rangatahi can explore, challenge themselves and learn new skills while having fun.
- Play is for all – our playgrounds are fully accessible for all ages, abilities, and cultures.
- Play is freedom – providing fun and safe facilities that provide free play opportunities like biking, skating, parkour and outdoor ball games.
- Play is natural – our playgrounds are sustainable and encourage play in natural environments.





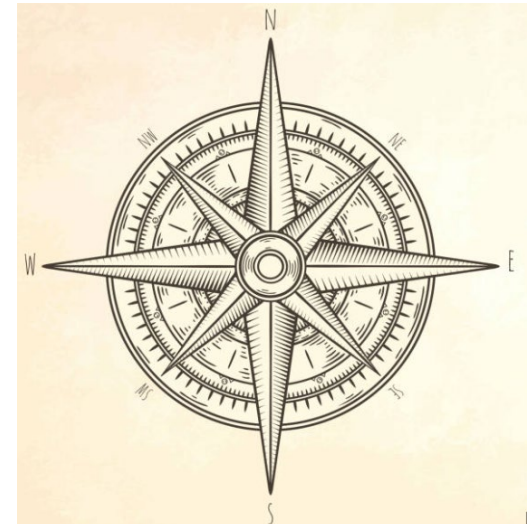
Design Principles

- Ako: Learning Opportunities
- Auahataka: Creativity and Imagination
- Hautūtū: Mischief and Risk Taking
- Te Reo Māori
- Taoka: Making it special
- Wānaka: Long stay spaces for enjoyment and learning
- Whakapapa: Honouring the site and history
- Manaakitaka: Welcoming and well-provisioned
- Whakawhānaukataka: Creating great memories
- Whānau whānui: Inclusive
- Mātauraka: Sharing stories and knowledge
- Mauri: Energetic and fun
- Oraka: Encouraging healthy outcomes
- Kā hua o te tau: Connected to nature and the seasons
- Aroha tētahi ki tētahi: Opportunities to connect and share
- Aroha ki te tākata: Positive community building space



Narrative

- Maui and Moana
- Navigation through the Pacific to Aotearoa
 - He Tohu – Navigational indicators
 - He Toki – Tools of navigation
 - Tohorā – Whales, Whaling and Paieka
 - Arrival in Aotearoa





Narrative

Illustration depicting application of cultural narrative.

Leading visitors on a 'voyage' from the main entrance of the playground, across the Pacific to Aotearoa (direction provided by Aukaha).





Design Overview





Equipment and Furniture

Our design will include:

- Off-the-shelf play equipment (types of activity rather than specific models)
- Bespoke play equipment
- Iconic play elements
 - Rehabilitation or replacement of the historic dinosaur slide*
 - Installation of a new, larger whale
- Accessible play equipment
- Shade and shelter elements
- New paths and surfacing
- Various soft fall elements
- A new pump track, skate area and parkour equipment
- New furniture including seating, BBQs, tables, drinking fountains, bins, bike parking etc.
- New fencing, entrances and other landscaping

A new toilet block is being installed under a separate contract





Testing

Earlier condition assessments of all playgrounds included Marlow Park equipment

Concrete testing on Dinosaur to test condition (chloride levels and carbonation) and compressive strength

Soil testing commences today.





Dinosaur Slide

- Iconic feature
- Things to consider
 - Age/construction/longevity
 - Play value
 - Accessibility
 - Currently does not meet standards
 - How will it look next to new equipment?
- Material assessments undertaken





Dinosaur Slide

Options to discuss:

- Incorporating it within a new setting aligned with the overall narrative with some upgrades

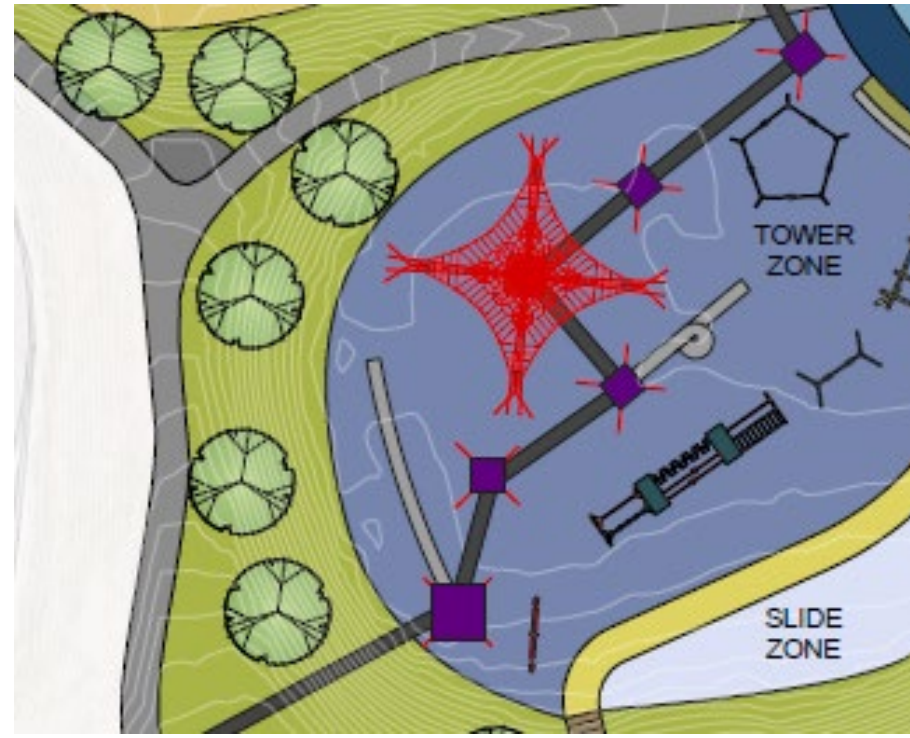
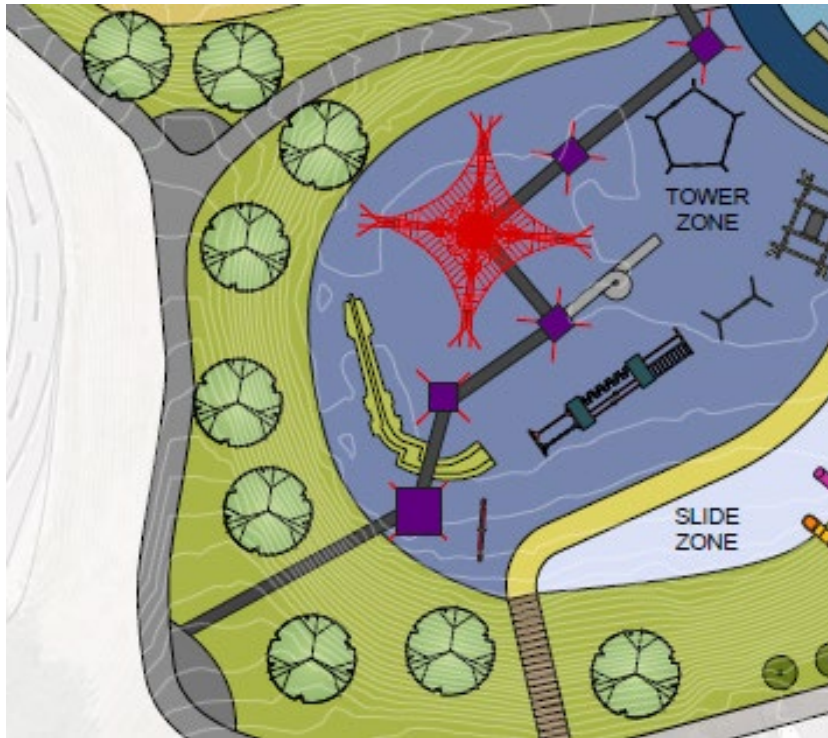
Or:

- Replace entirely with a new inclusive dinosaur slide





Dinosaur Slide





Dinosaur Slide – incorporate?



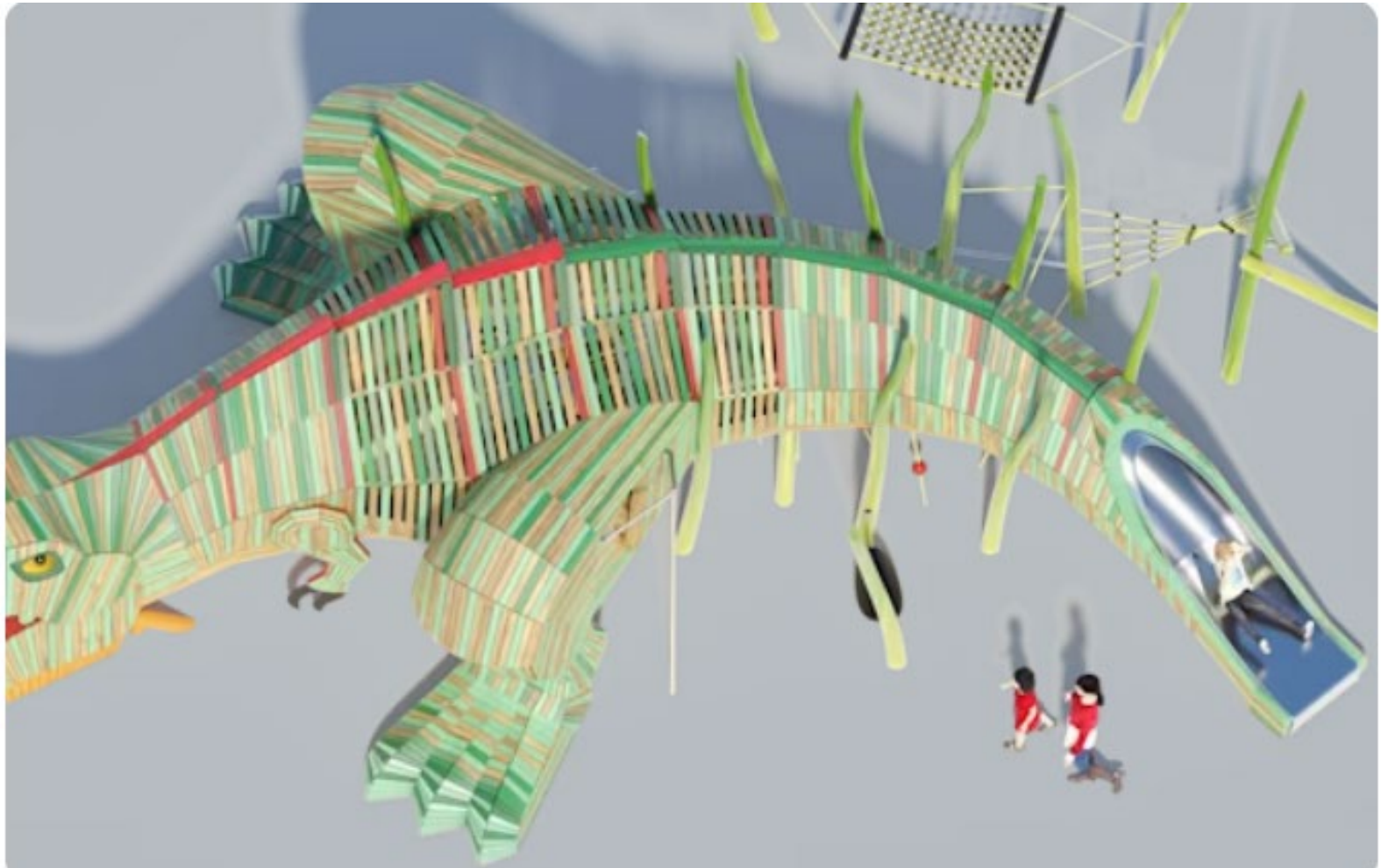


Dinosaur Slide – replace?





Dinosaur Slide – replace?



Dinosaur Slide – Options





New Bespoke Play Equipment

Current whale popular, but requires too much upgrade and has limited play opportunities or potential to upgrade

Proposed inclusion of a new, larger, whale with multiple play opportunities





New Bespoke Play Equipment

Proposed inclusion of a new, larger, whale with multiple play opportunities





Accessibility and inclusion

Proposed inclusion of a multiple types of accessible and inclusive play equipment

Focus on opportunities for collective play

Improved accessibility into and across playground





Specialist activities

Replacement of temporary pump track

New skate elements

Parkour equipment

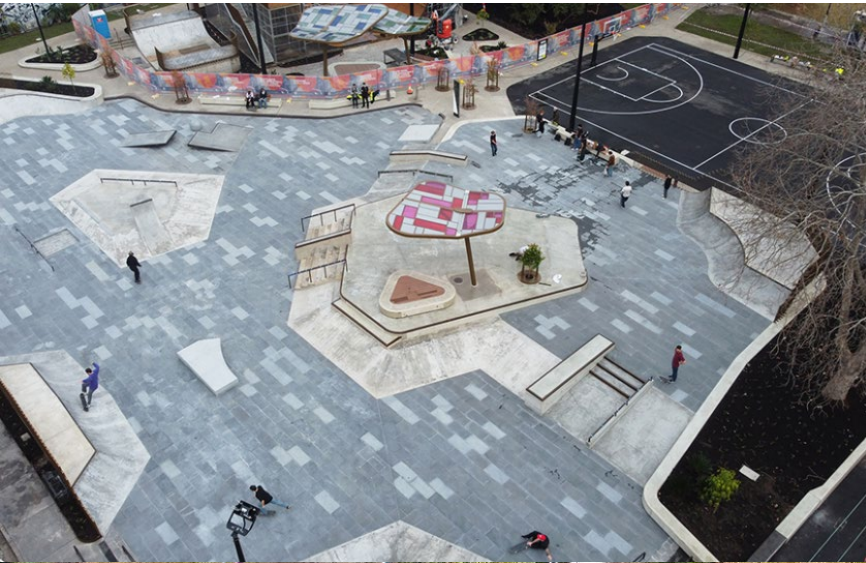
Nature play

Water play





Specialist activities

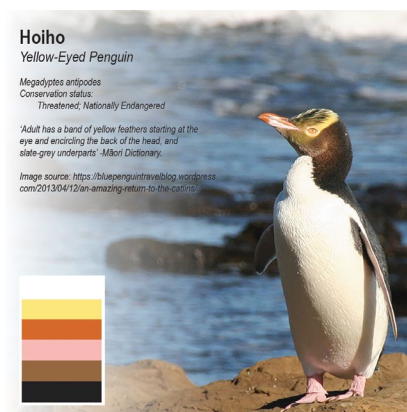




Colour Palette

Echoing the natural environment, ocean and coastlines of the Pacific and Aotearoa, including :

- Ocean blues
- Golds, browns and warm tones of seaweeds
- Browns, golds and a range of greens inspired by forests and dune plants
- A rainbow of highlight colours from animals, particularly Ōtepoti’s endemic fish and bird species





Materials

Balance synthetic soft fall with other natural elements including sand, grass and plantings

Mix of asphalt and concrete surfacing depending on surface required

Use of timber alongside steel for play equipment





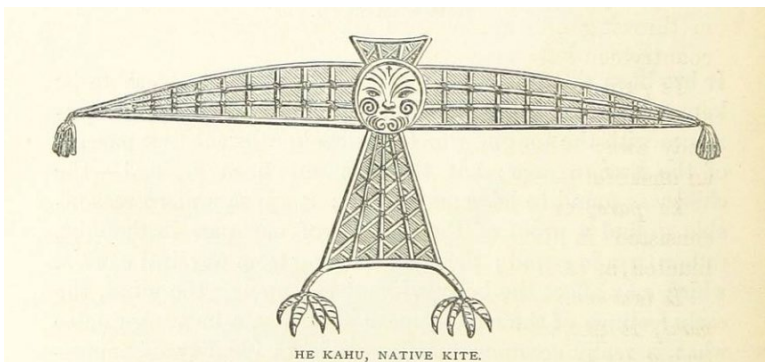
Entrance

Increased visibility of park

New central entrance to create a safer and more welcoming space

Secondary skate/wheeled entrances and links to other areas

New permeable front fence – safety and more welcoming





Shade and shelter

Common feedback is how exposed the site can be

Increased shade and shelter will be provided through a range of measures including:

- Purpose built shade structures
- Shade structures built into play equipment
- Increased tree planting and retaining mature trees
- Low bunds and screens





Parking and Safety

Destination Playground will increase pressure on an already busy area

Propose to tap into other existing parking resources nearby and improve utilisation of existing road space

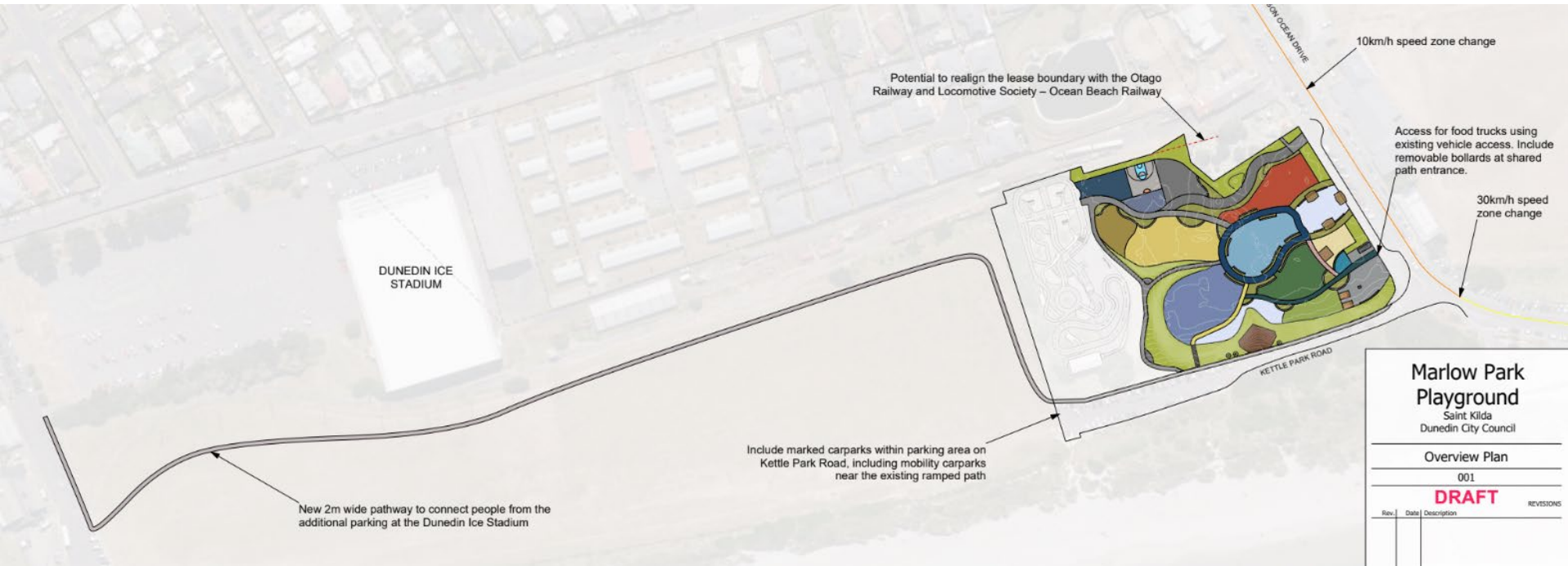
Increased safety risk on road from larger numbers of visitors

Propose to consult on lowering speed limit in area in front of playground and further along John Wilson Ocean Drive to improve safety for pedestrians using the area





Parking and Safety





Sponsorship and Fundraising

Community involvement and sponsorship have historically been central to the development of Marlow Park

Over time, play equipment in the park has been purchased and constructed by key Dunedin businesses as well as community groups like Rotary and Lions.

Subject to Council endorsement, we will develop a fundraising plan and prospectus for business and community opportunities to grow the existing budget and allow for the purchase of more equipment





Discussion