

## Development of the former Tomahawk School Site as a recreation hub.

We are residents of Tomahaka / Tomahawk / Ocean Grove (referred to as Tomahawk hereafter).

We request that DCC commit to the development of the Tomahawk primary school site (referred to as the old school site) as a recreation area, with the development scheduled and completed within the timeframe of this 9 year Long Term Plan. We request that the DCC commit to funding detailed design work, scoping of costs and a large proportion of the development and construction costs. This would enable the community to seek further funding to add to or enhance the facilities that the council might be able to fund.

**We anticipate council funding would need to be in the range of at least \$800,000 for this project, and request that this amount be budgeted for this project in the 9 year Long Term Plan.**

The community would like the site to include facilities such as a full or half court basketball / netball court, a pumptrack, play equipment, and improved landscaping, including further native plantings as well as junior football pitch for the Grants Braes Football club. Additional facilities such as toilets and bbq or picnic facilities were also noted.



*Figure 1. Site of the former Tomahawk School where the community would like a recreation hub developed.*

There is strong community interest in this site being developed as a recreation hub for both the local and wider community and extending native plantings out from the Tomahawk Beach back dunes.

Tomahawk is experiencing its most significant growth in decades, with two developments occurring on Centre Road and one at 155 Tomahawk Road. One of these is complete and has added 15 new houses (Sunset Terrace), while the Ocean Heights development by Willowridge will add another 52 houses to the area (Figure 2), with a further 11 houses at the 155 Tomahawk Road development (Figure 3). This will increase current dwelling numbers by

about third or more. There have also been infill new builds in the area and significant renovation of older properties (which can result in an increase in the number of residents).



Figure 2. Subdivisions adjacent to Centre Road in Tomahawk – the green numbered area is the Willowridge Development, while the earthworks to the south of this show the sites of the 15 lots on Sunset Terrace.



Figure 3. The subdivision occurring at 155 Tomahawk Road.

Many of the families that have built on Sunset Terrace have young children. Should the new developments have a similar ratio of families with young children then this is a significant increase in the number of children in the area. This growth in the local population supports the development of the old school site as a safe recreation hub for the wider area.

The use and primary management of the recreation center at the football fields by the Grants Braes Football Club also brings many children and young people to this area, whether through playing or watching their siblings. A recreation hub at the old school site would also be utilised by these families. With the school closure well over a decade ago there was no planning in regard to children of all ages being able to access a playground within safe walking distance of their home. The current playground on Tomahawk Road has very little use as it is very age specific. The closest playground catering for a wide age range of ages and abilities is at Tainui School.

Willowridge, through the Ocean Heights Subdivision, has recently contributed \$424,500 (ex. Gst) as their DCC development contribution for the Tomahawk area. This acknowledges an increased demand in the relevant geographical area and the opportunity for funding to be targeted to develop the old school site in a planned and appropriate way.

Two community meetings were held in late 2023 to discuss development of the site, which was kindly attended and supported by staff from the Parks and Reserves Team. There was a great turn out from the community and a high level of enthusiasm for development of the site. A survey was undertaken of local residents online, with 85 responses received. The results of the survey are outlined in Appendix A of this submission.

The results show strong support for development of the site including – (top 5 options):

- native planting
- a playground for smaller children (as the existing playground off Tomahawk Road does not cater well for smaller children)
- a basketball/netball half court
- a junior football field
- a pump track.

Respondents could select more than one option. Additional suggestions included toilets and bbq/picnic area. There may be a possibility of utilising the existing toilets at the Grants Braes Football club (as these have external access). Existing access to the Grants Braes Football club could be enhanced, with good parking on site at the clubrooms to access the old school site.

The current playground on Tomahawk Road, as previously mentioned, does not meet the needs of the majority of the local children. It is also bordered by a very busy carpark and bus turning hub on one side and a blind corner coming down the hill on the other and is considered unsafe by many parents/carers. One option favoured by some community members is to move the play equipment to the school site, which would be more centralised and safer in relation to traffic.

In addition to the survey mentioned above, 130 residents recently signed a petition for the DCC to landscape the old school site (refer [Petition · Landscaping of the Old School Site in Tomahawk - Dunedin, New Zealand · Change.org](#)).

We would like the DCC to work alongside the community over the next year to develop a design for a recreation hub at the site, (incorporating factors such as extension or upgrade to the existing carpark at the football grounds and improved access to this carpark from Tomahawk Road), including costings. Works could be done in a staged manner. The community is motivated to support and enable this work, including through applying for grants to support the development of the site. We'd love to see the DCC make the most of the community support and enthusiasm for planning and development of this site.

### **Background on the site:**

The school closed in 2010 and was bought by Ngāi Tahu in January 2012. The DCC bought the school a month later. The site has been sitting vacant since that time – there have been a few options put forward and considered over the years, but none have progressed.

The DCC have previously investigated options for the site, particularly when the school buildings were still on site. These fell into a state of disrepair (with a roof leak that wasn't

remedied), and were demolished a number of years ago. A report commissioned by the DCC highlighted that the site was unsuitable for residential development due to concerns about coastal hazards, including erosion and sea level rise.

DCC started consultation with the community about the site in 2018, the staff member leading this left and this stalled. Then Covid came so was put on hold again. In 2023 and 2024 the community got together again, with the support of the Otago Peninsula Community Board to progress this issue once more.

**Signed: Members of the Tomahawk community**

Sally Dicey, Lloyd McGinty, Danielle Culling, Michele Driscoll, Rima Krause, Robert Strang, Janina Thies, Charlotte Smith, Alex Smith, Pauline Dicker, Chis Cooper, Rex Askerud, Rachel Carey, Wendy Bates, Steve Bates, Judy Fisher, Irene Pfeiffer, Higgins, Elwyn Bachop, Dean Stiles.



# Appendix A: Results of community survey about old school site

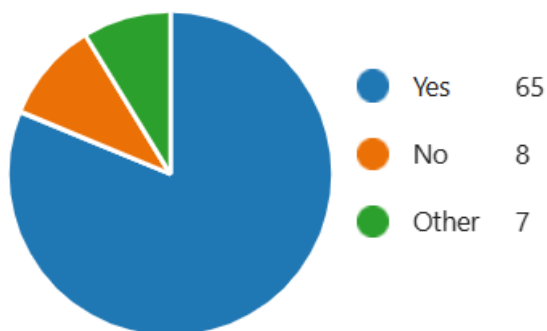
4 December 2023

Members of the Ocean Grove/Tomahawk community developed and ran a survey seeking input from interested community members about potential options for developing the former Tomahawk School grounds (referred to as the 'old school site'). The survey was open from 14 November 2023 to 2 December 2023.

The survey was shared on the local Facebook page 'The Hawk Talk', and shared on the Grants Braes Football club Facebook page also. Two hundred fliers were printed and distributed to households in the area. A community meeting was held on 22 November 2023 to discuss options for developing the 'old school site' and to invite further submissions.

A total of 85 responses were received. The results of the survey are summarised below.

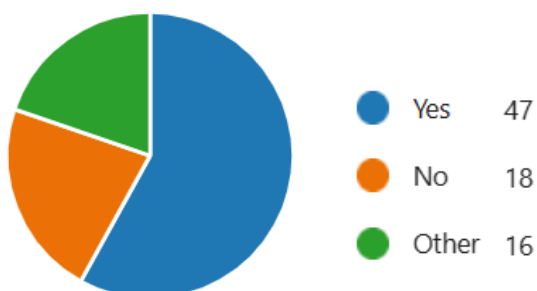
## 1. Would you be happy for the 'old school site' to become the recreation hub of Ocean Grove, with access for cars via the Football Club driveway and parking area?



Comments under 'other' varied but many focused on access to the site or around the area, such as:

- "a lot of people will access this area [the old school site] via Luke Street and this requires parking and foot traffic management."
- There will need to be "good demarkation between any parking and the school grounds" to link the Rec Centre /Football Club rooms with the old school site.
- "...cars parking along the bridge area is extremely dangerous..."

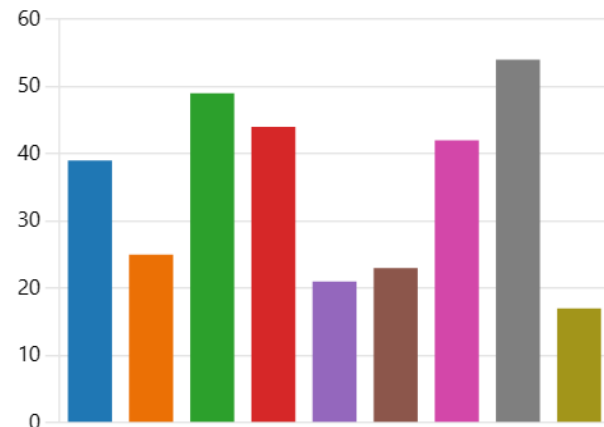
## 2. Would you be happy for the existing playground on Tomahawk Road to be moved to the old school site?



Almost all of the comments under ‘other’ focused on keeping the existing playground on Tomahawk Road, rather than moving it, and then adding additional play equipment at the old school site.

### 3. What facilities would you like to see at the old school site?

Bicycle pump track	39
Skate park	25
Upgraded playground for 0-12 ...	49
Half court basketball	44
Tennis rebound wall	21
Full court basketball / tennis co...	23
Junior Football Field	42
Native planting extending out fr...	54
Other	17



### 4. Any other thoughts about what you'd like to see happen with the old school site?

Many of the ideas reflected some of the options above, as shown below:



Other suggestions included

- A motorbike trail around the trees to stay a trail for local people (without signage so it stays low key)
- Whānau orientated, for all ages, so older siblings can take their younger ones to play.
- semi-permanent food truck parking area
- Community Multi functional Facility Hub / Food Garden
- Shelter with BBQ, surf tower by dunes, shower and toilet by tomahawk carpark
- Community gas bbq & picnic seated area with good lighting
- Nature reserve where one can enjoy a picnic, family time, perhaps a pool similar to Woodhaugh.

5. Of the options for facilities at the old school site that you have identified above, please list the top 3 on your wish list, in order of priority.



The number of responses for options were as follows:

Options listed amongst people's top three	Number of responses indicating this option as one of their top three
playground	27
basketball (half or full)	25
football (junior pitch)	22
pump track, bike tracks	20
native plantings	18
tennis (rebound or full)	14
skate park	11
BBQ area/shelter	5
toilets	4
picnic area	4
freedom camping	1
kiddy pool	1
water fountain	1
exercise equipment	1
dog park	1
gardens	1
food forest	1