



# TRUBY KING RECREATION RESERVE MANAGEMENT PLAN

JUNE 2021

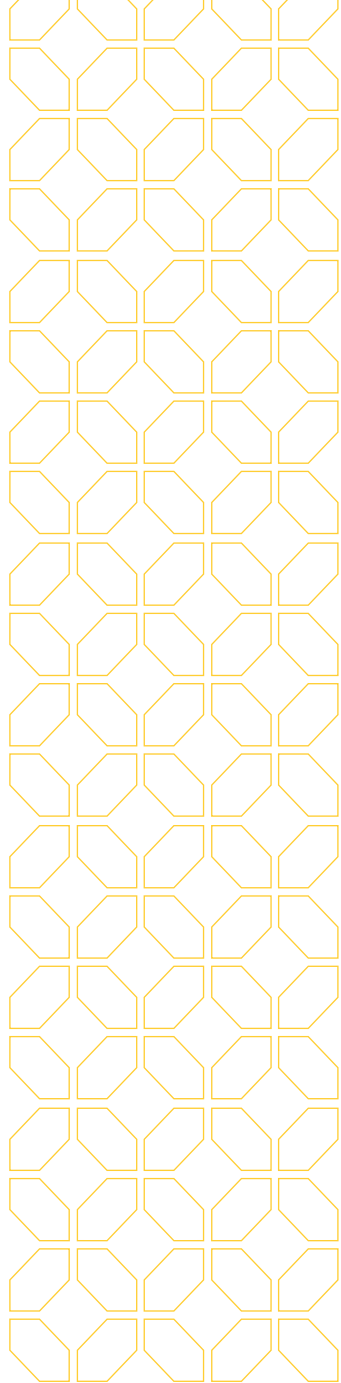


**DUNEDIN** | kaunihera  
CITY COUNCIL | a-rohe o  
Ōtepoti



# CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction .....02
- 2.0 Description of the Reserve .....04
- 3.0 Background Information .....05
- 4.0 Site Analysis .....09
  - 4.1 Heritage .....09
  - 4.2 Horticulture .....11
  - 4.3 Recreation .....12
  - 4.4 Access .....13
  - 4.5 View Shafts .....14
- 5.0 Opportunities .....15
- 6.0 Strategic Methodology .....15
- 7.0 Management Objectives and Policies .....16





# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Purpose of a Reserve Management Plan

Reserve Management Plans are required by section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 (the Act) to provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection and preservation of the reserve for the purpose for which it is classified.

Truby King Recreation Reserve is a classified Recreation Reserve under section 17 of the Act for the purpose of providing 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 activities.

Section 17 (2) (b) states that – *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:*

*Provided that nothing in this subsection shall authorise the doing of anything with respect to fauna that would contravene any provision of the Wildlife Act 1953 or any regulations or Proclamation or notification under that Act, or the doing of anything with respect to archaeological features in any reserve that would contravene any provision of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.*

Reserve management planning is a process for determining the management direction that the community and Dunedin City Council (Council) would like to apply to reserves. Reserve Management Plans outline Council's general intentions for use, development and maintenance of its reserves. The aim of the Act is to ensure that the reserve development meets the purpose of the reserve and through the public's involvement ensures their needs are considered while managing the resource in a sustainable manner.

This project implements the following action within the Parks and Recreation Strategy 2017–2027.

- Review current Reserve Management Plans, including Coastal Reserves, and existing open space policies.

This plan is a review of the *Truby King Recreation Reserve Management Plan (1998)*. It is intended to identify the unique characteristics of the reserve and provide a clear vision for its ongoing management and development. When adopted, this management plan will replace the 1998 management plan. Site specific reserve management plans are subject to ongoing review and regular, comprehensive reconsideration at 10 yearly intervals.

The policies of the *Dunedin City Council Reserves Management Plan – General Policies (General Policies)* are an integral part of this management plan. The General Policies cover all basic issues of the day to day administration of reserves in Dunedin. The Truby King Recreation Reserve Management Plan does not replicate those policies as they are under constant and separate review. Where any issue is addressed by both the General Policies and the Truby King Recreation Reserve Management Plan then the policies in the Truby King Recreation Reserve Management Plan take precedence.

The Truby King Recreation Reserve Management Plan has been drafted for the benefit of the various stakeholders in the Truby King Reserve. It will provide clarity to:

- The users of the reserve regarding the Council's management intent for the reserve.
- Community groups who actively participate in volunteer activities within the reserve.
- Council's strategic and operations staff tasked with carrying out the reserve's ongoing maintenance and development
- Councillors who are ultimately responsible for the allocation of resources for this reserve.





## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE RESERVE

### 2.1 Truby King Recreation Reserve

The reserve is a 16.4 hectare recreation reserve and forms part of the former Seacliff Asylum grounds located in the Seacliff area approximately 25 kilometres north of Dunedin. The reserve adjoins Coast Road with the main entrance to the reserve and the historic hospital grounds located off Russell Road. The orientation of the reserve provides spectacular views south towards Aramoana and the entrance to Otago Harbour.

The reserve is a pleasant mixture of grassed lawn with remnant stone structures, shielded from a collection of institutional buildings that now sit on private land. The winding woodland paths navigate through various stone remnants of the old Seacliff Asylum.

The reserve is named after prominent physician and health campaigner Sir Frederic Truby King, known as Truby. He played a pivotal role in New Zealand’s medical history through the care and treatment administered at Seacliff Mental Hospital. He was also world renowned as the founder of the Plunket Society. His pioneering methods of treatment for patients at Seacliff Asylum included healthy diets from food produced on site and outdoor work in the gardens and fields by the patients themselves.

The Seacliff Asylum and its ancillary buildings, gardens and farm occupied an area much larger than the present day recreation reserve.

### 2.2 Legal Description

Secs 2-3 SO 23214 RT OT15C/200

### 2.3 Gazette Notice

Land Notices

Conservation

Reserves Act 1977

Classification and Naming of a Reserve and Appointment of the Dunedin City Council to Control and Manage a Reserve

Pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977, and to a delegation from the Minister of Conservation, the Regional Conservator, Otago Conservancy, Department of Conservation, hereby classifies the reserve described in the Schedule hereto, as a recreation reserve and further declares that the said reserve shall hereafter be known as the Truby King Recreation Reserve and appoints the Dunedin City Council to control and manage the said reserve.

Schedule

Otago Land District—Dunedin City

16.1935 hectares, more or less, being Section 2, S.O. Plan 23214, situated in Block III, Waikouaiti Survey District. New Zealand Gazette, No. 150, 1990, page 3170.

2264 square metres, more or less, being Section 3, S.O. Plan

23214, situated in Block III, Waikouaiti Survey District. New Zealand Gazette, No. 39, 1991, page 838.

Dated at Dunedin this 22nd day of March 1991.

J. E. CONNELL, Regional Conservator.

(DOC H.O. Res. 12/2/103; C.O. REC 60)

18

h3180

Iwi Transition Agency

Maori Affairs Restructuring Act 1989

Maori Land Development Notice

Pursuant to section 21 of the Maori Affairs Restructuring Act 1989, the General Manager, Iwi Transition Agency hereby gives notice as follows:

Notice

1. This notice may be cited as Maori Land Development Notice Hamilton 1991, No. 18.

2. The notices referred to in the First Schedule hereto are hereby revoked by omitting all reference to the land described in the Second Schedule hereto.

### 2.4 Dunedin City Council Second Generation Plan

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Zone:  | Recreation  |
| Wāhi Tupuna Mapped Areas                                       |   |
| ID 13  | Name Northern Slope of Ohineahi (Māori Peak) / Pukemaeroero |
| ID 14  | Name Pūrākaunui to Hikaroroa to Huriawa                     |
| Landscape Overlay Zone   |   |
| Name   | Seacliff  |
| Type   | Significant Natural Landscape (SNL)                         |
| Scheduled Heritage Site  |   |
| Plan ID HS 18  | Truby King Reserve  |
| Hazard 2 (land instability) Overlay Zone (Part of the Reserve) |   |
| Category Hazard 2  |   |
| Source   | Revised landslide database for the coastal                  |
| Document   | sector of the Dunedin City District (GNS, 2017)             |

## 3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### 3.1 Early History of the Area

The coastal area to the north of Dunedin, around what is now known as Waikouaiti and Karitane, was a resource rich area for iwi, an area with strategic views from the cliff tops up and down the coast. In the nineteenth century the centre of the takiwa was at Puketeraki, along the coast from what would later become known as Seacliff. There were scattered small camps of people associated with Huriawa and Puketeraki for collecting shellfish, eels, and other sites at places like Te Awakoeo (Brinns Point – as the Seacliff area was first known by European settlers on the 1850s). A trail existed along the cliff top from what is now Evansdale, to Puketeraki. The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand records that the area where the Seacliff Asylum was located was known as Turau Aruhe, and the Seacliff Creek was Waikoko. The bush at Seacliff was known as Potaerua. The area between Te Awakoeo and Puketeraki was set as a native reserve as part of the 13,551,400 acre Kemp purchase. The reserve surveyed again in the 1880s, before it was largely subdivided, shows its position immediately adjacent to the site set apart for an Asylum.

**Mana Whenua**  
The area occupied by the reserve and the township of Seacliff is part of the historic hapu associated with this whenua, namely Kati Huirapa and Kai Te Ruahikihiki. Previous iwi of the area (Rapuwaiti, Hawea, Waitaha, Kati Mamoe and most recently Kai Tahu) utilised the area as a mahinga kai (food gathering) area.

Following the arrival of the earliest Māori around 1000 years ago, the coastal landmass between Waikouaiti Bay and Blueskin Bay were given Māori names that reflected the importance of the area to their way of life. The migratory waka, Takitimu, is remembered in the name of the high central ridge and spring feeding Omimi creek and others. Māori settlement patterns on this coast included relatively large sites at the mahinga kai zones around the Blueskin and Waikouaiti estuaries, along with more diffuse settlement on hilltops along the coast, adjacent to tauraka (Waka landing areas), sites utilised for accessing the sea and the abundant kai moana.

Land resources included moa centuries ago, as proven by recovery from some of these coastal sites of their bones during controlled archaeological excavations. Dense podocarp forest along the coastal side of the massif (including where the reserve is) housed numerous birds, especially perennial favourites tui and kereru, and vegetation resources of timber, berries etc.

Wetlands scattered along the coastal strip provided eels, raupo and waterfowl. Ti kouka (cabbage trees) were scattered throughout the area and were processed in umu where the younger stems were roasted for their sucrose. Numerous umu are still evident along the seaward side of the reserve today.

The drier western side of the massif, characterised by tussock and bracken fern with scattered ti kouka allowed for easy and fast travel. The numerous tawhito (traditional travel routes) connecting these places both inland and along the coast have been lost due to lack of use following change in travel patterns with the arrival of Europeans in the early 1800s. Today, the Seacliff area is part of the Kati Huirapa iwi’s rohe, centred at Puketeraki Marae in nearby Karitane.

### 3.2 Seacliff Site for an Asylum

The first asylum in Dunedin was the Littlebourne Mental Asylum which opened in January 1863. Almost immediately it was too small, leading to overcrowding. There were also issues with the facility being insecure which resulted in several escapes.

A Crown grant was issued for a ‘Lunatic Asylum and Industrial School’ at the Seacliff site in July 1876. Tenders were advertised for clearing the site in August 1878, with the tenders for temporary buildings designed by R.A. Lawson, advertised in October 1878. The completion of the main trunk railway line from Dunedin to Hawkesbury (Waikouaiti) in May 1878, allowed building materials to be carried by rail. The site at Seacliff was nearly 1,000 fertile acres, an important consideration for a farm asylum. The Seacliff Lunatic Asylum opened in 1879.

### 3.3 Architecture of the Asylum

The contract for the permanent buildings was tendered in July 1879. Architect Robert Arthur Lawson was commissioned to design the building. The Asylum was designed in Scottish Baronial style, Lawson’s own Scottish background influencing his architectural practice.





Seacliff Lunatic Asylum was the largest building in the colony on its completion: 750 feet long (228 metres) and 228 feet (70 metres) at its broadest point. The contractor was James Gore. Liverpool-born Gore, who had come to Dunedin in 1861, was mayor of Dunedin 1881-1882, and went on to be a Member of Parliament 1884-1887. Ancillary buildings were also built, such as the bluestone Stable and Blacksmith Shop (later used as a general workshop), and the Morgue, both thought to date from the late 1880s or early 1890s.

Seacliff Asylum was typical of nineteenth century asylums. These institutions were hierarchical, enclosed, largely self-sufficient communities of mental patients, on whose labour the asylum very largely depended. The asylum was presided over by a medical superintendent who lived in a large house with open fires, with patient labour to fetch and carry coal for him. Asylums were seen as a guarantor of the social order as well as 'an important symbolic reminder of the awful consequences of nonconformity'.

The Seacliff site, with its remnant buildings and relict landscape strongly recall the stark history of the asylum.

Unstable subsoil led to structural problems even before the building was completed. In 1887 a slip left the north wing uninhabitable; major controversy followed, which attracted national attention and resulted in a Royal Commission of Inquiry. In March 1888 the report of the Royal Commission on the Seacliff Lunatic Asylum was released. The authors were critical and held Lawson and the contractor responsible.

### 3.4 Frederic Truby King, Seacliff Superintendent 1889-1923

In 1882 the government decided that all public asylums had to be superintended by doctors. In 1889 Frederic Truby King was appointed medical superintendent of Seacliff Lunatic Asylum. Born in Taranaki, he was trained in medicine at Edinburgh University before returning to New Zealand in 1887. Truby King's involvement was hands on: he designed buildings, trained attendants, improved sanitation and treated inmates. He promoted fresh air, exercise and a good diet as treatments for mental illness. He developed separate facilities for inmates with different classes of illness, including villas for convalescents erected out of sight from the main block.

Lawns were used for more formal recreation. The grounds included a ha ha retaining wall, meandering paths and curved edges with extensive plantings of trees, shrubs and flowers.

While King improved the environment of Seacliff, some of the treatments were brutal to modern eyes and reflected contemporary beliefs about the basis of insanity. Women's experiences in the asylum were different from that of the male patients. The therapeutic value of work saw the men in healthy outdoor pursuits, such as farming and gardening, which were not seen as appropriate for women. The women were largely confined to inside work, cleaning, laundry and kitchen work, a reflection of their limited role outside the home.

### 3.5 Seacliff Asylum to Seacliff Mental Hospital

Seacliff Asylum as a medical institution was central to medical education, its staff being from 1889 to 1948 almost the sole resources for teaching psychiatry at the University of Otago. It was amongst the first of the psychiatric hospitals to start outpatient clinics at public hospitals. Seacliff Asylum practices developed with medical thinking: in 1905 the term 'mental hospital' was officially adopted, replacing the outmoded 'lunatic asylum.'

A major change in the legal context of mental hospitals was the change of law which allowed voluntary admission. Prior to 1911 people came to the hospital only through a legal process of committal. In 1911 the law changed and enabled people to come informally, as voluntary boarders. Villa-style accommodation, aspiring to a more domestic scale of accommodation was a feature of mental hospitals built from the early twentieth century on. Truby King supported the idea of a series of detached buildings rather than large blocks, and this led to the construction of separate more intimate buildings for inmates. The villa-system of accommodation facilitated the move towards intermediate facilities such as the establishment of outpatient services which would avoid the stigma of a stay in a mental hospital. Community amenities, such as sports fields and halls were often added. Mental hospitals became identified with the medical specialty of psychiatry. Despite these changes, the design of Victorian-era institutions limited their ability to adapt with changing treatment philosophies.

### 3.6 Clifton House

In 1917 Clifton House was built to house soldiers suffering from 'shell shock', what would probably be recognised now as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, after serving during World War One. There was considerable disquiet about the accommodation of soldiers in an asylum and the stigma attached to the stay. The treatment of soldiers, which saw their illness treated through a range of talking cures, saw psychoanalysis and other allied therapies gaining a valid place in the psychiatric repertoire. Ultimately soldiers were treated at a specialist facility developed at St Mary's Hospital at Hanmer, away from those tainted with insanity.

### 3.7 Importance of Seacliff Asylum to the Wider Community

Seacliff's significance went beyond the bounds of its walls, and it was a central element in this area of coastal Otago. Seacliff was the main employer for the Blueskin Bay area. Many attendants lived in the Seacliff / Warrington area. Seacliff was an important point of bicultural contact between Māori and Pakeha – whanau from Karitane and Pakeha both worked at Seacliff. These relationships have created lasting links with iwi at Puketeraki, recalling the major role Seacliff Hospital played in the community.

### 3.8 Outpatient Clinics

From the mid-1920s onward there was slow movement within the health system where some hospital boards allowed mental hospital staff to run outpatient clinics. This allowed for people to be treated without the label of committal or voluntary admission to a mental hospital. This would lead, in the late twentieth century, to a policy of deinstitutionalisation that would see the closure of the many of the large Victorian institutions.

### 3.9 Tragic Fire at Seacliff Mental Hospital

In 1942 a tragic fire, the worst in New Zealand's history to that date, broke out in Ward 5 at Seacliff Mental Hospital. The fire swept through the ward, killing 37 female patients. Most of the windows were locked and could only be opened by a key from inside. The 39 women inmates of Ward 5 were either locked in single rooms, or in the 20 bed dormitory. Only two women escaped. The tragedy led to a commission of inquiry. Though the cause of the fire was never identified, the timber construction of Ward 5 was condemned. The locked windows and lack of fire protection was criticised. The commission recommended the installation of sprinklers in all mental hospitals.

### 3.10 Development and Change

The complex of buildings that made up the Seacliff Mental Hospital continued to develop and change through the 1920s to the 1960s. In the 1930s a new kitchen, laundry and stores block was built. Temporary buildings were shifted to the Seacliff site in the 1940s designed to be adjusted when the ground moved. Contractors started to demolish unsafe parts of the main building, including the tower, in 1945.

### 3.11 Cherry Farm

In 1945 nearby Cherry Farm was chosen as the site for a new mental hospital, billed as a 'therapeutic community', the first of its kind in New Zealand. The change in the treatment for mental illness in the mid-twentieth century was profound: the introduction of insulin therapy, convulsive therapy, and the discovery of new drug treatments medicalised mental illness. Seen as enormous therapeutic advances, some of the new treatments also added a further layer of horror in the public mind. Electroconvulsive therapy and prefrontal leucotomy (lobotomy) in particular feature highly in the image of mental illness. It was originally thought that Seacliff could continue to house the more disturbed patients, but the buildings were becoming unsafe. Seacliff ceased taking admissions in 1964.



## 4.0 SITE ANALYSIS

### 3.12 Janet Frame Insights into Institutionalisation

Popular portrayals in film, fiction and autobiography, such as Janet Frame's *Faces in the Water* (1961), were accurate insights of institutionalisation in the 1940s and 1950s. Frame spent time both as a committed and a voluntary patient at Seacliff and Auckland's Avondale Hospital in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Descriptions of treatments used at the hospital appear at *Faces in the Water*, while the gardens are described in *An Angel at my Table*. Misdiagnosed with schizophrenia, she was treated with electroconvulsive therapy (ECT) and insulin therapy. In her autobiography she claimed that winning the Hubert Church Memorial Award for "The lagoon" in 1952 persuaded the superintendent at Seacliff to forbid a prefrontal lobotomy. Her writing provides graphic insight into life behind the closed doors of Seacliff.

### 3.13 Change to the Institutional Model of Psychiatric Care

From the 1950s on there was further questioning of the institutional model of psychiatric care, a tension between the idea of the romantic idea of early asylums (with their farms and grounds and healthy work) and the reality of overcrowded, understaffed hospitals with the inmates little more than prisoners. Increasingly the idea of community care replaced institutionalisation, leading to the close of the institutions such as Seacliff. Closure was a slow process. In 1959 the central block main building was demolished, the demolition programme taking eighteen months. Despite all the instability and cracking, the buildings proved difficult to dismantle.

### 3.14 Seacliff Mental Hospital Ceases Operation

In 1970 Seacliff ceased operating as a mental hospital, control of the land reverted to the Department of Lands and Survey.

In 1974 the Seacliff site was leased by the Dunedin Museum of Transport and Technology Inc. By 1991 the Museum had closed. A site plan from that time indicates there were fifteen structures remaining including the Boiler House, Laundry Building, Garage, Forge Building, Morgue and Administration Building.

In 1991 the Department of Conservation, which had succeeded the Department of Lands and Survey as manager of the site, divested its responsibility for the reserve to the Dunedin City Council. In 1992 the last building within the bounds of the reserve, Clifton House, was demolished.

### 4.1 Heritage

In April 2012, the Truby King Reserve and the privately owned adjoining institutional buildings were officially listed with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga as a Category 1 Historic Place (List Number 9050), which recognises the nationally significant history that is represented by the reserve and the wider site. The historic classification of the reserve can be attributed to various architectural, archaeological, aesthetic, and culturally significant reasons. The Seacliff Asylum's history represents the evolution of mental health care in New Zealand. The following information is from the List Entry.

#### 4.1.1 Historical Significance or Value

Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site has outstanding historic significance. The Site draws together the strands of social and medical history and the treatment of those judged to be mentally ill. The history of the place represents the changing history of medical practice and also the experiences of those who lived out their lives in the institution, or who were only briefly incarcerated. The associated records, still accessible to researchers provide an important body of historical material which adds to the importance to New Zealand's history, and has formed the basis for published work which centres on the history of insanity as shown through the Seacliff site.

The history of the buildings themselves, through their design and construction, and the subsequent failure and on-going difficulties with structural instability was significant historical moment and one which added to Seacliff's notoriety. The notoriety compounded with the Seacliff fire, where 37 women died in a locked ward. The history of Seacliff in New Zealand literature via the writings of Janet Frame is also of great significance.

#### 4.1.2 Aesthetic Significance or Value

The Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site, with its remnant buildings, archaeological remains, and the woodland grounds, has special aesthetic significance. The site allows the visitor to create an imagined past recalling the disturbing history of the place while walking through the relict landscape – alongside the foundations of the vast asylum and the pathways through sanity and insanity. The outstanding power of the place is in its absence but in its ability to evoke the history of the Seacliff Asylum, and all the forgotten inmates.

#### 4.1.3 Archaeological Significance or Value

The Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site, a vast and complicated series of structures occupying the site from the 1870s through to the 1970s has potential to reveal information through archaeological methods and as such has archaeological significance.

#### 4.1.4 Architectural Significance or Value

While only a few structures reflecting the institutional architecture of Seacliff remain, they provide an indication of the architectural scale of Seacliff. The remaining outbuildings are important, representative and now rare remaining examples of the buildings constructed to support the operation of lunatic asylums, including the Morgue, Kitchen, Laundry, Garage, Blacksmith's, Administration Block, Boiler House, and Isolation Cells. The architectural history of the site, the largest commission in New Zealand at its time of construction, is of outstanding importance in the history of New Zealand architecture. The building's spectacular failure was (and remains) notorious in New Zealand's architectural history.

#### 4.1.5 Cultural Significance or Value

The Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site represents the cultural and medical practices in the treatment of mental illness in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The creation of the asylum represented the culture first of the moral management of insanity, medicalisation of mental illness, and the development of community care philosophies which ultimately led to the closure of Seacliff. Seacliff represents the culture of incarceration and seclusion of those judged to be mentally ill or arguably to have deviated from social norms.

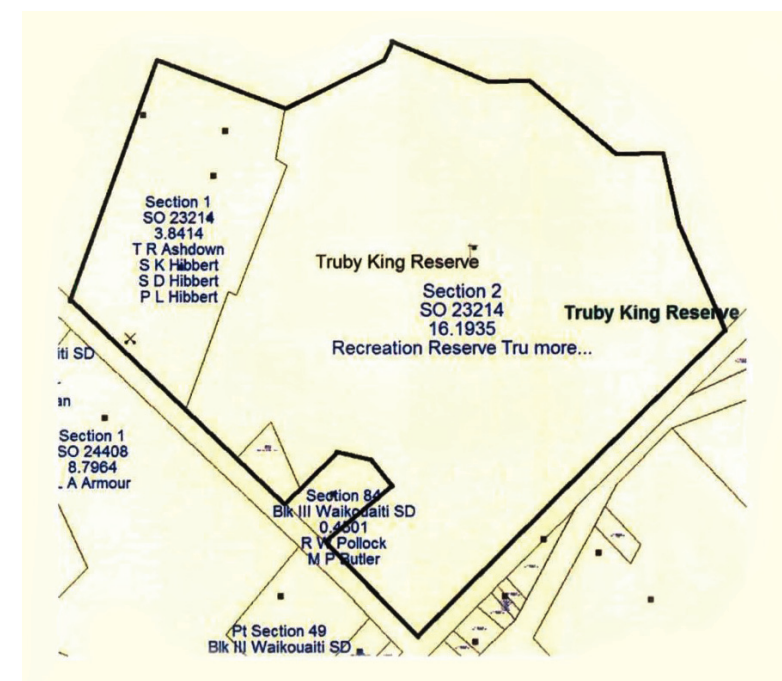


Figure: Extent of Registration – Sec 1-3 SO 23214 (Quickmap, October 2011)



4.1.6 The Truby King Reserve was listed as a Heritage New Zealand as a Category 1 Historic Place based on the following Section 23 (2) Assessment.

- (a) **The extent to which the place reflects important or representative aspects of New Zealand history**  
Seacliff Asylum Site represents the history of the development of mental health care in nineteenth century New Zealand. This history reflects the international trends in the care and treatment of those judged 'insane' which saw the construction of vast and imposing buildings which epitomised Victorian asylums. Within New Zealand Seacliff was one of a network of provincial asylums built in the later part of the nineteenth century which provided residential 'care' for inmates until their closure in the later twentieth century as community care replaced incarceration.
- (b) **The association of the place with events, persons, or ideas of importance in New Zealand history**  
The Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site is associated with a number of individuals who have importance in New Zealand's history. Architect Robert Arthur Lawson is one of the most significant architects of the nineteenth century in Dunedin and his role in designing the Seacliff Asylum and its structural failure was a major architectural scandal and gained huge public attention. The Director of the Asylum from the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century was Frederic Truby King who played a pivotal role in New Zealand's medical history, both in the care and treatment of those with mental illness, and as founder of the Plunket Society. The portrayal of life in the asylum by writer Janet Frame has become a cultural icon in New Zealand's literature and her association with Seacliff is of special significance and can also be seen to represent many of those who could not express with such insight and clarity their experiences behind the locked doors of a mental hospital.
- (e) **The community association with, or public esteem for the place**  
The Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site has a strong community association. The grounds are set aside as a public reserve recalling the significance of the place, managed by a committee from the local community<sup>1</sup>. The Seacliff Asylum was a significant place as the biggest employer in this area of Otago. and a key place of bicultural relationships between those whose whanau who worked at Seacliff.

- (l) **The potential of the place for public education**  
Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site already provides for some public education. The Truby King Recreation Reserve has interpretation about the history of the Asylum which provides insight into the archaeological remnant structures within the reserve.
- (h) **The symbolic or commemorative value of the place**  
The Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site has special symbolic and commemorative value. The remnant buildings and landscape commemorate the history of the place and as a whole the Site symbolises the experiences of those who lived out their lives in the asylum and who have no other voice than the place itself.
- (k) **The extent to which the place forms part of a wider historical and cultural complex or historical and cultural landscape**  
Seacliff Asylum Site is an historical and cultural landscape in its own right, as well as contributing to the associated historic landscape of the Seacliff settlement. The Site is made up of the remnant buildings, the archaeological remains of the structures which were demolished, the landscapes and plantings associated with the Asylum.

Conclusion

It is considered that this place qualifies as a Category I historic place. Seacliff Lunatic Asylum Site recalls the notorious and tragic history of this place which operated for nearly 100 years. It occupies a dark place in the public imagination through its spectacular structural failure which ruined the career of one of Otago's most well-known architects, and its association with prominent doctor and superintendent Frederic Truby King. Its position as a symbol of the threat of insanity and committal was further entrenched through the literary works of Janet Frame. The Site, even without its vast buildings, recalls this poignant history. The remaining outbuildings are important, representative and now rare remaining examples of the buildings constructed to support the operation of lunatic asylums. Together with the archaeological remains of the site, and of the extant garden, Seacliff reflects the cultural and medical practices in the treatment of mental illness in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.



4.2 Horticulture

The Site is made up of the remnant buildings, the archaeological remains of the structures which were demolished, the landscapes and plantings associated with the Asylum. Truby King saw the grounds as part of the therapeutic environment, appointing a landscape gardener as a matter of importance believing that fresh air and exercise was vital. The drive curved through the gardens rather than approaching the intimidating buildings directly, with the initial assessment of patients completed in an entry lodge.

The reserve management plan presents a unique opportunity to preserve the natural value of the forest and its associated ecology while harnessing its value to help draw interest from the community and generate more use of the reserve. The Enchanted Forest contains the unique collection of specimen trees that were planted by Truby King. A tree inventory carried out in 1991 identified 745

significant trees on the site. (Cazdow 1991) In October 1996 a second report was prepared by R B Allen on behalf of Landcare Research to build on the inventory by identifying and describing vegetation of particular significance for recreational use and by providing management guidelines.

Maintenance of the vegetation has been limited. Former driveways and footpaths are now in an overgrown and neglected state. There are a number of weed species within the forested areas that need to be controlled. These include sycamore and hawthorn which are of concern because they are invasive species and difficult to control once established.

Many of the trees are in poor condition and are unsafe. An audit of the trees is required, and a management plan formulated to ensure the character of the forest is retained.

<sup>1</sup> This will be continued into the future with the creation of the Truby King Reserve Management Committee in 2021.

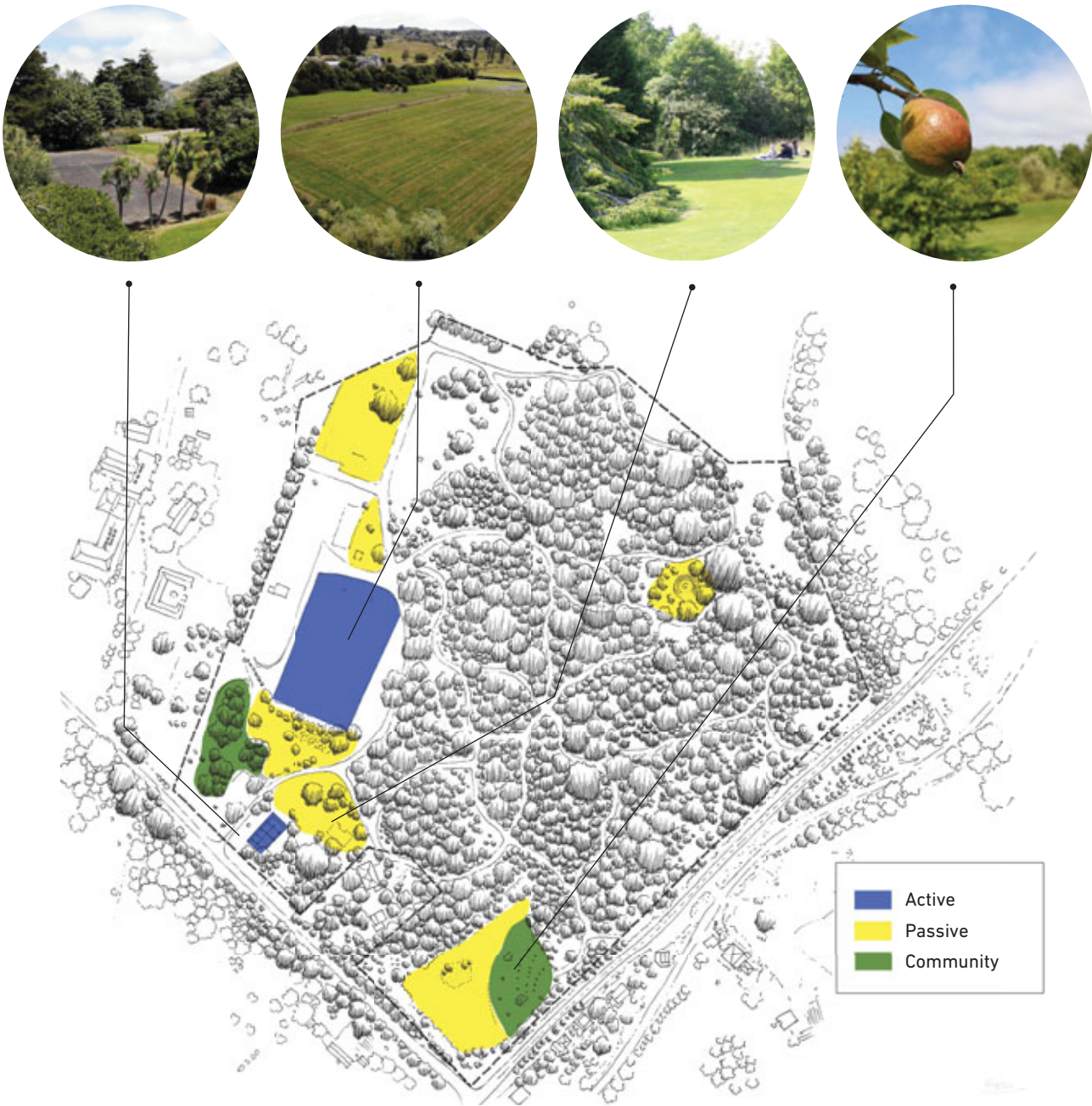


4.3 Recreation

Active recreation areas are limited to the existing tennis courts located near the main entrance of the reserve, and the historic cricket ground. Both activities were established during the occupancy of the Seacliff Hospital. Although there is no organised sporting events or regular use of these facilities, they provide an opportunity for current and future activities while also keeping a tangible connection to their former recreational use connected to the hospital.

The Passive recreation areas identified include the open spaces, pathways and tracks within the reserve that currently facilitate recreation in the natural setting of the surrounding vegetation and archaeological sites.

The reserve provides a unique opportunity to expand on the recreational potential of the existing community orchard and walnut groves through community gardening initiatives to promote the community use of the reserve as a meeting, learning, and recreation space.



4.4 Access

There is an existing network of paths, the majority of which were established during the occupancy of Seacliff Hospital. The network consists of main entry paths formed in asphalt and previously the vehicular route into the reserve, grass paths, and woodland paths which provide pedestrian access throughout the reserve's various areas.

The main entry path consists of the original road that provided vehicle access to Seacliff Hospital. This remains formed in asphalt and provides good universal access to the recreational plateau around the old cricket ground that previously fronted the main hospital building.

The network of grass paths provides pedestrian access to some of the more remote areas of the reserve particularly around the periphery.

The woodland paths are partly made up of old cobbled paths and dirt tracks and provide pedestrian access throughout the enchanted forest.

There are two main entrances located on Russell Road and the southernmost tip of the reserve. Two minor pedestrian entry locations are positioned along Coast Road.

There are two parking areas identified on the map, however the southern area provides a small informal parking area off the road reserve and the western area was previously used for parking but has since been closed to vehicles due to issues with vandalism.



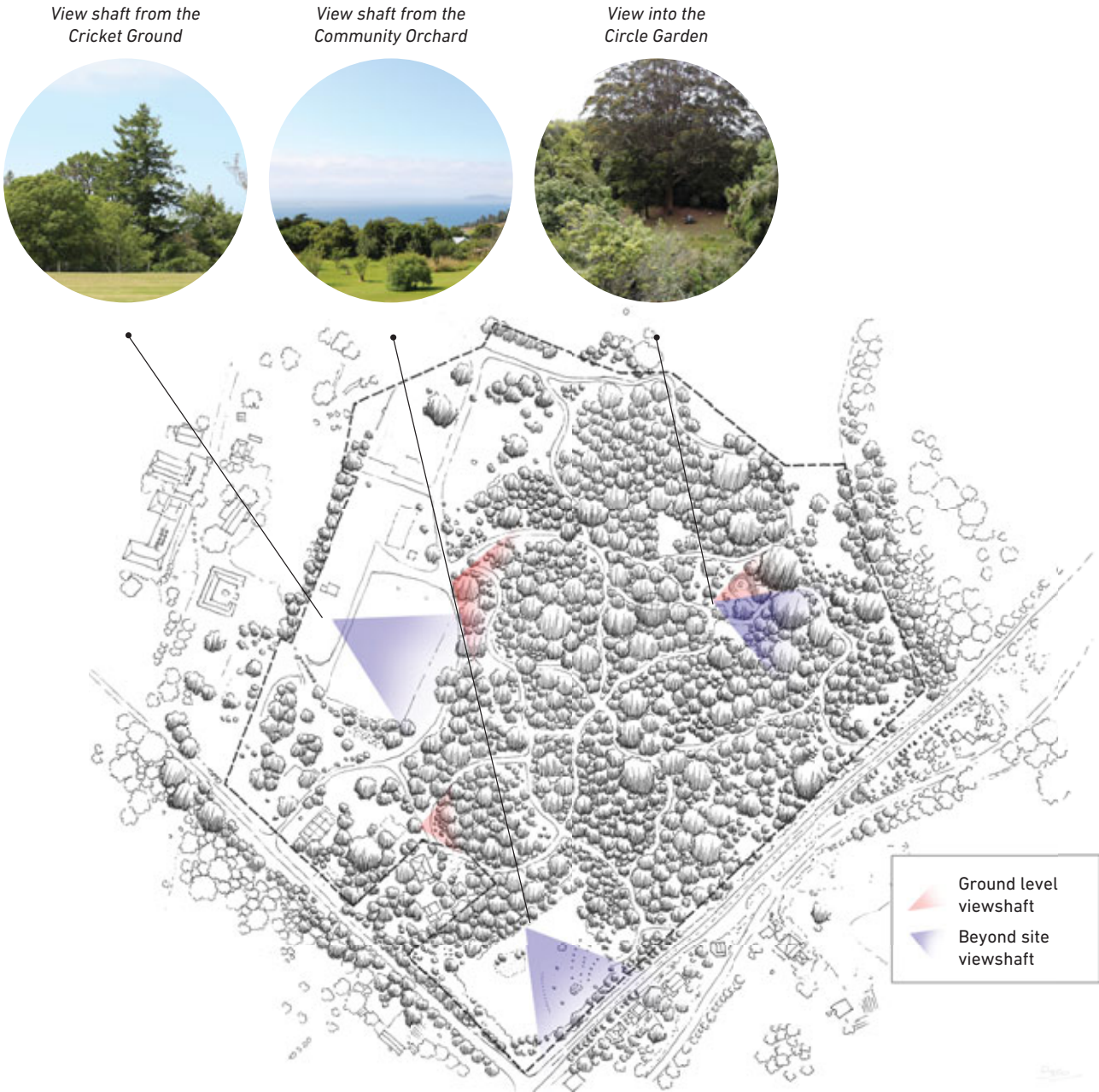


4.5 View Shafts

The scale of the trees in the established forest means only a few internal and externally facing view shafts remain. Framed by the surrounding trees, these view shafts provide intermittent windows into other parts of the reserve, and the stunning southerly view towards Blueskin Bay.

Planned view shafts in the reserve will add to the reserve’s character. They promote visual connectivity between different sections of the site and to the external context of the area.

Identifying and maintaining these view shafts should be a priority in the ongoing management of the reserve. In order to protect and enhance these, maintenance schedules and requirements need to be catered to these isolated locations.



5.0 OPPORTUNITIES

- 5.1 Identify, preserve, enhance and manage the historic and cultural values of the site in a way that makes them more accessible to visitors to the reserve, and better explain its history;

5.2 Capitalise on the existing network of pedestrian pathways through a variety of way-finding and coordinated management initiatives;

5.3 Identify and mitigate safety risks throughout the reserve;

5.4 Emphasise the delivery of increased maintenance across the various areas of the reserve and enhance safety for reserve users; for example, control of perennial weeds; declining trees which are unstable; the drainage systems are degraded, and as a result some pathways are slippery and unsafe.

5.5 Make a feature of the unique and diverse variety of specimen trees throughout the reserve;
- 5.6 Improve access to the reserve by facilitating appropriate onsite vehicle parking;

5.7 Improve amenities within the reserve by upgrading existing toilet facilities;

5.8 Maintain the historic cricket ground for informal recreational use;

5.9 Maximise the already popular community orchard activities in the reserve’s productive areas;

5.11 Refurbish the existing tennis court for informal use;

5.12 Create open glades in areas where visitors can appreciate the charm of the enchanted forest;

5.13 Maintain and enhance the horticultural and ecological values of the enchanted forest;

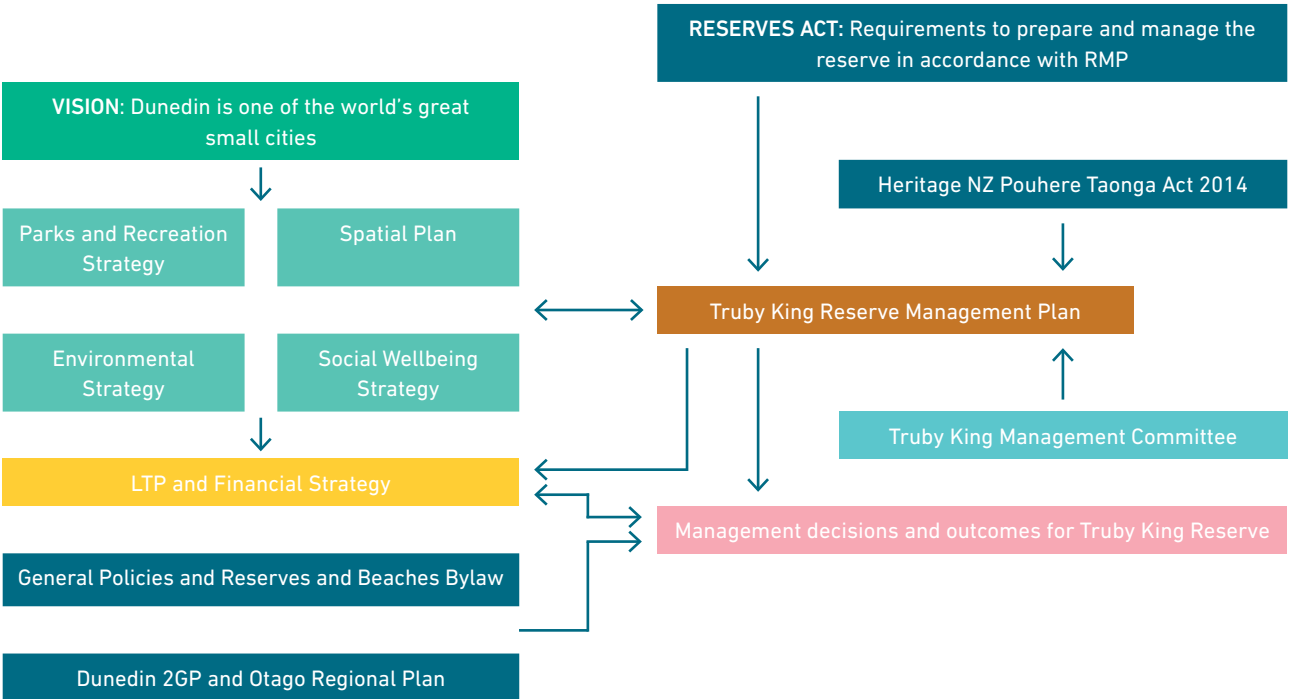
5.14 Engage local community and volunteer groups in projects, organised through volunteer agreements with Council.

6.0 STRATEGIC METHODOLOGY

The management strategy for Truby King Recreation Reserve outlines a set of strategic outcomes, management objectives and policies which are informed by the conclusions of the site analysis, the vision, identified opportunities, and the wider Dunedin City Council strategic framework.

This section of the plan works by coordinating the ongoing management and development of the reserve to achieve the vision for Truby King Reserve and to contribute towards the delivery of Dunedin’s wider strategic framework and the overall vision to be one of the world’s great small cities.

This diagram demonstrates how the management plan integrates into the wider strategic framework to deliver the strategically aligned management decisions and outcomes for Truby King Reserve.



❖ Truby King Recreation Reserve Management Plan Relationships with Wider Strategic Framework



# 7.0 MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

## 7.1 Objective 1

Encourage community involvement in the management and maintenance of Truby King Recreation Reserve.

### 7.1.1 Policies

1. A Truby King Reserve Management Committee will be formed and will be the liaison point between Council and the Seacliff community.
2. The membership of the Truby King Reserve Management Committee will be made up of 1 representative from the Truby King Recreation Reserve Committee<sup>2</sup> and 2 representatives from the Waikouaiti Coast Community Board. An additional 3 members may be co-opted to the committee as required. No Council staff members will belong to the committee, however Council staff from Parks and Recreation Services (PARS) will meet with the committee at least 2 times per year.
3. The active participation of the Truby King Reserve Management Committee in the ongoing management, maintenance and monitoring of the reserve will be encouraged.
4. Community volunteer groups will be encouraged to participate in maintenance activities within the reserve through liaison with the Truby King Reserve Management Committee. Volunteer groups will be required to have an approved Council volunteer agreement in place before working on the reserve.

## 7.2 Objective 2

Places and features of historic heritage value within Truby King Recreation Reserve are protected and acknowledged appropriately.

### 7.1.1 Policies

1. A conservation report for the heritage sites within the reserve shall be prepared to inform the future management of the heritage values of the sites.
2. An archaeological site survey shall be commissioned to obtain an inventory of the features present to inform the conservation report and provide details on the nature and extent of archaeological features of the site.

3. Adherence will be made to the requirements of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 regarding archaeological matters and with respect to known and potential archaeological sites and features including Māori cultural sites within the reserve.
4. Settings associated with places and features of heritage value shall be protected. Protection shall consider the findings and recommendations of the conservation report.

## 7.3 Objective 3

Manage and enhance the social, cultural and botanical history of Truby King Recreation Reserve, and acknowledge the manawhenua status of iwi.

### 7.3.1 Policies

1. Develop a heritage interpretation plan that investigates opportunities and identifies the historic features/values associated with the reserve in liaison with the Council's Heritage staff, the Truby King Reserve Management Committee and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga. The plan should manage, enhance and celebrate the social, cultural and botanical history of the reserve in a manner that engages and informs the visitor.
2. Consult with iwi about appropriate ways of recognising the manawhenua status and cultural heritage in the management of the reserve, which may include the use of indigenous plantings, interpretation, artwork and appropriate Māori names.

## 7.4 Objective 4

To protect and enhance the landscape character of the Truby King Recreation Reserve and ensure that the setting is compatible with the reserve's historic classification under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 and the listing in the Dunedin Second Generation District Plan schedule.

## 7.4.1 Policies

1. The landscape is an integral part of the historical and cultural significance of the site and shall be maintained in such a way to preserve these values.
2. Important sightlines are to be retained as these contribute to the integrity of the historic setting.
3. Maintain the historic cricket ground for informal recreational use.
4. Refurbish the existing tennis court for informal use.
5. Prepare a tree inventory for the reserve with an assessment of tree health and tree management recommendations (as determined by a qualified Arborist).
6. Trees identified as having historical significance are to be retained and when necessary (as determined by a qualified Arborist) are to be replaced with specimens of the same species as those initially grown.
7. Tree groupings which are identified as significant are to be retained and when necessary (as determined by a qualified Arborist) are to be replaced with specimens of the same or similar species to those initially grown.
8. Where replacement of trees is required (as determined by a qualified Arborist) this is to be carried out promptly.
9. The open lawn in front of the main hospital building shall be retained and maintained to a high standard.

## 7.5 Objective 5

To ensure that the remaining historic fabric of the asylum is protected so as to promote the long-term retention of these historic remnants.

### 7.5.1 Policies

1. All maintenance work carried out on the historic remnants shall be carried out in accordance with the Conservation Plan, in close consultation with Council's Heritage staff and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.

## 7.6 Objective 6

To retain and maintain pedestrian circulation patterns throughout the reserve.

### 7.6.1 Policies

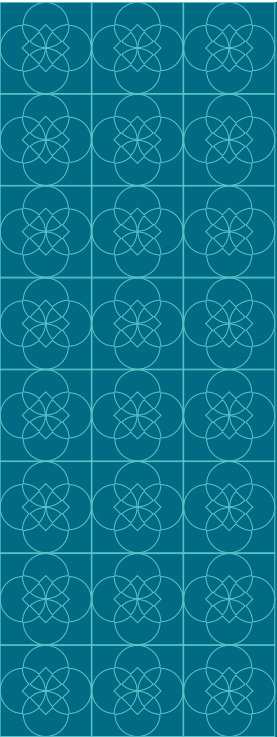
1. The sealed driveway shall be retained and maintained to a high standard.
2. The gravel pathways shall be maintained in their present form (not sealed) to maintain their historic character.
3. The pathways through the forest shall be maintained to a standard appropriate to the forest setting.

## 7.7 Objective 7

To develop a car park adjacent to the original main entrance, to be accessed from Russell road.

### 7.7.1 Policies

1. Retain the area next to the original entrance on Russell Road as a future visitor car park for Truby King Reserve.
2. Include suitable screen planting around the perimeter of the car park, to screen where possible the parked vehicles in the car park from the primary path in the reserve. Some view shafts from the car park across the reserve should be retained.
3. Plan for toilet facilities near to the visitor car park once it is built.



<sup>2</sup> In 1993, the Waikouaiti Coast Community Board asked the Seacliff Advisory Committee to set up a group of users to discuss the management of Truby King Recreation Reserve. This was subsequently done, and the Truby King Recreation Reserve Committee was set up later that year. The purposes of the group were to establish liaison with Dunedin City Council and to "outline a plan of attack which will benefit the general public in the future enjoyment" of the reserve.



### For advice or information

Dunedin City Council

50 The Octagon

PO Box 5045, Dunedin 9054

P 03 477 4000

E [dcc@dcc.govt.nz](mailto:dcc@dcc.govt.nz)

[www.dunedin.govt.nz](http://www.dunedin.govt.nz)

 [DunedinCityCouncil](https://www.facebook.com/DunedinCityCouncil)

 [DnCityCouncil](https://twitter.com/DnCityCouncil)



**DUNEDIN**  
CITY COUNCIL

kaunihera  
a-rohe o  
ōtepoti