



Wattle Downs Coastal Reserves Management Plan

The reader should note that this plan is due for review and contains information that is out of date or superseded by other documents. Particular reference should be made to The Manukau Operative District Plan 2002 and Making Connections – A Strategy for Manukau’s Parks into the Future 2002/10. In the future these reserves will be included in a larger Coastal & Riparian Reserves Management Plan that covers all coastal reserves in Manukau City. This new plan is currently being drafted.

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1.0INTRODUCTION

Definition and Purpose of a Management Plan

The Reserves Act 1977 requires that all administering bodies prepare management plans for reserves under their control. The act originally required this to be done within 5 years after the commencement of the Act but this has since been relaxed and Local Authorities are to devise their own priorities and timetables.

Where reserves are not subject to conflicts of use or are not especially complex from a management point of view the management plan may consist of simple statements under pertinent headings. Others will be more complex and detailed as needs dictate. The format may be adapted to suit varying circumstances.

A Management Plan is not a design document (which is finite and definite) but a statement of objectives and policies by which specific proposals (eg for development) are assessed.

Because of its basis in objectives and policy statements a management plan can cope with changing circumstances, whereas a design plan can be suddenly rendered invalid by, for example, the introduction of a new and previously unforeseen activity.

Management Plans should be kept under continuous review by way of minor amendments from time to time. Approximately every 5 years a comprehensive review should be undertaken to ensure the documents continued relevance.

1.1Procedure for Preparation of a Plan

Under the Reserves Act the Council must follow a set procedure for Management Plans. In order to facilitate greater responsiveness to public opinion and to make the public more aware of reasons for decisions, there are opportunities for public representation within this procedure. Table one summaries the statutory procedure for the preparation of Management Plans.

Table 1: Summary of Statutory Procedure for Preparation of Management Plan under Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1997.

STAGE	STATUTORY PROCEDURE
I	The Council gives public notice of the intention to prepare management plan calling for suggestions
II	Submissions shall be received over a two month period following the date of public notification
III	The Council prepares the draft management plan, then gives public notice that the plan is available for inspection and invites persons and interested organisations to make written suggestions
IV	Submissions to the draft Management Plan shall be received over a two month period following the date of public notification
V	The Council will have a Reserves Act Hearing to consider any submissions received
VI	Preparation of the final management plan

With regard to this management plan, Steps I-III have already been undertaken as shown above. A total of 3 submissions were received and the contents of these submissions have been incorporated into this management plan where appropriate.

1.2 Planning Area (Refer to Figure 1)

The area which is the subject of the management plan consists of the coastal strip of reserve land adjoining Wattle Downs and the Papakura Stream as far as the Great South Road.

This land consists mainly of esplanade reserve with 2 larger Reserves at Kauri Point and adjoining Kaanapali Crescent. The reserve land adjoining the proposed Mahia Park subdivision has only recently been acquired by Council and is not yet maintained to a standard suitable for public use.

Much of the reserve land adjoining the Papakura Stream is held for flood protection purposes. There are 2 sections which are held as esplanade reserve (refer to Figure 1).

As future subdivision proceeds, Council will acquire additional reserve land including another larger reserve on the Waimahia Creek side of Wattle Downs.

1.3 Surrounding Land Use

Wattle Downs subdivision is being comprehensively developed for residential use. Most of the land adjoining the coastal reserves is residential. The land between the existing Wattle Downs subdivision and the existing subdivision in the Coxhead Road area is currently grazed. However subdivision plans have been approved by Council and development will occur in the near future.

The reserves between Holmes Road and the Papakura Stream are bordered by Industrial land (refer Figure 1).

The major reserve for structured sports activities in the area is Mountfort Park which is located on Weymouth Road approximately 3 Km to the north west of Wattle Downs.

It is hoped that the coastal reserves adjoining Weymouth will eventually be linked with those in Wattle Downs. This will create a continuous link to Thurlows Farm in the north and to Conifer Grove in the south. The establishment of this linkage is dependent on the subdivision process as described in section 1.2.

2.MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Following consideration of the submissions received and Council's own records, several management issues require resolution and/or direction. These issues have been summarised below.

- Environmental quality
- Erosion management
- Future development
- Recreational Use
- Maintenance

Each of these issues is discussed in more detail below.

2.1Environmental Quality

Because of its peninsular location, Wattle Downs is a maritime subdivision. The Manukau Harbour is the dominant influence in creating this atmosphere and the feeling of being close to nature in an urban setting.

Much of the land on the southern side of the Puhurehure inlet is rural, and boating activity on this part of the harbour is minimal. This helps to enhance the atmosphere of tranquillity which is valued by the residents of the area.

The coastal reserves provide a continuous link around the shoreline for the use and enjoyment of the community. They also provides a buffer between the residential uses and the habitat areas of the harbour edge. These mudflats are frequented by a range of wading birds.

The Manukau Harbour edge is less intensely developed than in some equivalent residential areas on the eastern side of the City (for example Pakuranga). The absence of developments such as retaining walls and formal paths creates a semi natural appearance on the coastal reserves.

The management decisions taken here will influence the environmental character described above as pressure is exerted to provide additional facilities such as a boat ramp, paths, erosion control etc. It is Council's role to mediate sensitively in the this process of development in order to ensure that the very qualities which attract people to live and recreate in the area are not destroyed during the development process. Council must also ensure that the long term sustainability of the Manukau Harbour as a wildlife habitat, is maintained.

2.2.Erosion Management

Parts of the foreshore reserves are eroding and other sections are accreting. Most erosion appears to occur in the form of slumps which 'break off' the cliff at intervals. In some areas erosion has been rapid in recent years. The area adjacent to No 252 St Anne's Crescent is estimated by residents to have retreated 2-3m during the last 2 years. (Refer to the photos on the following pages).

There is also scouring around some of the stormwater outlets which is exposing sections of pipe.

Council has established benchmarks along the shoreline adjacent to the Kauri Point Reserve which will enable regular and accurate monitoring of the rates of erosion and accretion in order to gain a clearer understanding of the situation. However in areas more seriously affected by rapid erosion, other more urgent remedial action may be required to prevent further disappearance of the cliff face.

2.3Future Development

Council's Recreation Strategy contains a number of goals which are aimed at providing a coordinated approach to future development and provision of recreational facilities within the city. Goal 3.3 states:-

"Developing and maintaining an open space system capable of hosting a variety of outdoor recreation activities whilst conserving the natural environment".

This management duality must be considered in evaluating any proposals for future use and development of the coastal reserves at Wattle Downs.

In their initial submission to this draft management plan, the Wattle Downs Peninsula Residents Association has requested that the following developments be undertaken.

- Temporary vehicle access to the small boat ramp adjacent to No. 330 St. Annes Crescent. (Since this request was made, Council has installed vehicle barriers to prevent vehicle access in the area at the request of surrounding residents).
- A major boat ramp with associated parking facilities on Kauri Point.
- Tennis courts on Kauri Point including parking and fencing.
- Community facilities such as Boating/Tennis Club on Kauri Point if the Country Club on the golf course does not proceed.

- Establishment of a coastal walkway suitable for all ages and abilities with seating.
- Viewing deck.
- Following an engineer's assessment of the erosion problem, that remedial measures are set in place as soon as is practicable.

All of the above will have a significant impact of the character of the coastal reserves and may not be appropriate in the context of the proceeding discussion regarding environmental quality.

2.4Recreational Use

The coastal reserves currently provide a resource which is mainly used by local residents for passive use. Activities such as walking, bird study, picnicking tend to predominate.

Developments of the nature described in section 2.3 will increase the visitor catchment and numbers so that the reserves could be used by more people from outside the immediate area.

Council as land owner needs to determine an appropriate blend of land use. This blend will lie somewhere between the existing low key development and a more structured and multiuse development. The primary aim will be to preserve the low key, informal character of the coastline.

2.5Maintenance

The majority of the reserves area maintained by machine mowing. Some of the cliff areas have been planted with N.Z. native coastal species such as Myoprum and Coprosma. Other areas contain solanum, gorse and Cape Brush Wattles and other undesirable plants which have value as a short term erosion control measure. Many of the steeper areas are not able to be mowed and are consequently left unmaintained.

In places, the adjoining residents have `adopted' the esplanade reserve and planted flower beds and other species along the cliff edge. This practice should be discouraged as it is likely to result in dissatisfaction if/when the plantings are removed by Council. It also discourages public use of the esplanade reserve as the impression is created that private ownership extends to the cliff top.

If may be appropriate to consider re grading the existing contours in some areas where space permits, so that mowing can be undertaken to the beach edge.

In other areas dense planting of species with tight root structures, such as flax and toitoi may be planted in order to slow the erosion process.

2.6 Guidelines for Future Management & Development

Based on the issues raised in the previous discussion the following management guidelines are proposed.

2.6.1 Environmental Quality

- °To retain the 'natural' qualities of the reserves as far as is practicable.
- °To ensure that any developments such as paths or car parks are unobtrusive and low key.
- °To conserve and/or enhance the wildlife habitat values of the coast and to ensure that any future developments will not determinately affect the long term sustainability of these values.

2.6.2 Erosion Management

- °To undertake a variety of measures to prevent future erosion. The measures undertaken should be appropriate to the locality and should be the minimum required to prevent further erosion.
- °Erosion control measures to consider include (in order of priority).
 - (i) revegetation
 - (ii) recontouring in selected areas to allow mowing to beach or revegetation.
 - (iii) Structural solutions such as retaining walls Gabion Baskets etc.

Number (iii) above should be considered as a last priority solution.

2.6.3 Future Development

- °To concentrate development into Kauri Point.
- °To restrict development to low key, visually unobtrusive activities.
- °To facilitate year round opportunities for casual use of the foreshore reserves.

2.6.4 Recreational Use

°To facilitate passive recreational use.

°To investigate the feasibility of establishing a boat ramp and carpark on Kauri Point. (It should be noted that, due to the considerable distance from the mean low water mark to the land, it is not likely that an all tide boat ramp could be constructed in this area).

°To encourage local uses of the reserves with sub regional use in selected areas (eg Kauri Point) where a proven community need has been established.

2.6.5 Maintenance

°To maintain the existing 'natural' appearance of the coastline in preference to a more urban and structured appearance.

The following section outlines objectives and policies for future management based on the guidelines above.

3.MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The management guidelines as outlined in section 2.6 provide a framework by which management of the reserves can be carried out. These guidelines are supported by objectives and policies.

The objectives outline the aims of park management in particular areas while the policies follow-on from the objectives as 'ground rules' for specific issues in the reserves management.

3.1Major Management Objective

To facilitate the use of the coastal reserves while enhancing the aesthetic values and environmental quality of the reserves and immediate coastal environment in accordance with the principles of the Resource Management Act 1991.

Policies

- 1.In considering any future management and development options the primary consideration shall be the likely impacts on the sustainability of conservation values and landscape values.

3.2Landscape

Objective

To manage protect and enhance the open space qualities of the coastal reserves as an integral part of the Manukau Harbour Foreshore reserves network.

Policies

- 1.The natural qualities and features of the landscape inherent in the landform, the harbour, the vegetation and open space areas shall be preserved and where appropriate enriched for passive and other informal recreational areas.
- 2.Any new uses, activities and works which modify the physical environment of the coastal reserves should be located and designed in harmony with rather than in contrast to, the natural forms of the bays, inlet and other landforms. Any such proposals shall be subject to a public consultation process and the necessary consents under the Resource Management Act 1991.
- 3.Council will encourage the retention of coastal vegetation both on reserves and private land.
- 4.Council will consult with all potentially affected landowners when considering the likely impact on views from adjoining properties when considering any modifications to the coastal reserves.

3.3Vegetation

Objectives

- 1.To retain and where appropriate enhance the N.Z. native coastal vegetation.
- 2.To recognise the short term use of noxious and undesirable plants for erosion control but give priority to replacing them with appropriate N.Z. native vegetation in the medium to long term.

Policies

- 1.Species planted shall reflect the local coastal environment and climatic conditions.
- 2.Species planted shall be in accordance with Manukau City's Planting Policy.
- 3.Any new planting programme shall have regard to maintaining views across and from within the reserve.
- 4.No tree shall be removed except where it is a threat to public safety or the effective management of the reserve, in the view of the Manager Parks and Civic Areas.
- 5.Adjoining residents will be discouraged from planting on reserve land as this practise appears to make the area an extension of private property and can discourage public access.
- 6.Trees shall be maintained and preserved in accordance with the standards of approved arboricultural practices.
- 7.Council will initiate community plantings on reserve land subject to consultation with potentially affected landowners.

3.4Future Development

Objective

- 1.To reduce the impact of future development by restricting it to Kauri Point.
- 2.To limit development of other coastal areas to paths, seating planting erosion control and play equipment where appropriate.

Policies

- 1.The importance of informal recreational activities not involving structures or buildings along the foreshore such as walking, swimming, picnicking, fishing, shellfish gathering and boating, is recognised and will be given priority in considering development proposals for the area.
- 2.The erection of buildings (with the possible exception of a toilet block) on the foreshore reserves will be prohibited.
- 3.Council will investigate and report on the feasibility of constructing a boat ramp and associated carpark on Kauri Point in accordance with proven needs and the guidelines contained within the Recreation Strategy and this Management Plan.

3.5Erosion Management

- 1.To monitor and manage coastal erosion in the most appropriate way and to take remedial action where necessary. Any such action should minimise potentially adverse environmental effects. (Refer to 2.6.2 p.7).

Policies

- 1.Council will establish an understanding of coastal processes and sediment budget by regularly monitoring the survey benchmarks already established.
- 2.In consultation with the public and on the advice of coastal processes expert, determine the most appropriate means of managing coastal erosion.
- 3.Any such erosion measures will primarily focus on the use of natural mitigation measures.

3.6Recreation Use

Objectives

To provide opportunities for recreational and educational activities that are appropriate to the zoning of the reserve.

Policies

- 1.The right of public access will be maintained at all times except in exceptional circumstances as Council deems necessary such as for safety or maintenance reasons.
- 2.All areas within the reserves shall be readily accessible to pedestrians except areas set aside for parks work or where temporary exclusive use has been granted.

3. Recreational activities which are casual, non-commercial and which do not compromise the enjoyment of other park users, nor adversely affect the environment are permitted as of right on the Wattle Downs Coastal Reserves.
4. Use of the reserves will be governed by Manukau City Council by-laws the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 and the Resource Management Act 1991.
5. Vehicle access and parking shall be prohibited on the coastal reserves except in association with a boat ramp if such a development proves feasible.
6. Seating facilities should be placed in key locations having regard to orientation to the sun, shelter from the wind, and towards views.

3.7 Boundaries

Objective

To encourage a satisfactory visual transition between the reserves, roadside and adjoining properties.

Policies

1. Where necessary, to define the boundaries of the Reserves in an environmentally sensitive manner.
2. To use the landscape and planting to soften the boundaries of the Reserves.
3. To strive for boundary treatments that meet the needs of adjoining residents as well as Reserves users.

3.8 Utility Services

Objective

To minimise the impact of Utility Services (Power lines, pump stations etc).

Policies

1. Where possible utility services will be placed underground.
2. The placement of such services underground shall be carefully sited with regard to existing features such as trees and shrubs.
3. Where possible alternative sites to coastal reserves should be sought for utility services.
4. Where practicable to monitor sewerage overflows in the area and determine their impact on the harbour environment.

4.0 Wattle Downs Coastal Reserves 2003

The management decisions taken now (1993) will influence the character of the area into the 21st century. What will the Wattle Downs foreshore look like how will it be used in the year 2003?

Residential development will be more extensive than at present thus opening up more coastal reserves for public use. The reserves may extend around the entire perimeter of the peninsula, including another large headland reserve similar to Kauri Point.

There will be a walkway linking all of the reserves. This will be of a low key style which is in keeping with the coastal environment.

There may be an all tides boat ramp at one of the larger headland reserves. If so, this ramp will have an unobtrusively located carpark and will be available for general public use. Erosion will have appropriately managed in specific areas but the majority of the coastline will have retained its 'natural' appearance with plantings undertaken in the early nineties having reached maturity.

In general the surrounding subdivisional process will be nearing completion and the values of the coastal reserves as a recreational resource will be fully realised.

APPENDICES

MONITORING AND CHANGES TO THE PLAN

Plan Monitoring

If a plan is to be effective and remain usable, future changes must be recognised and accommodated. If this is not built into the Plan, a major unforeseen change can render the plan obsolete before it is due for review (a review is due every 5 years in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977).

Changes of this type are unpredictable. However, by monitoring effectively and having a set strategy for changing the Plan, a valuable management tool remains usable.

Public use and operational factors are monitored by staff in their daily surveillance and servicing of reserves. Planning matters, such as regional planning and harbour planning, are monitored by the Manukau City Council's planning staff.

Criteria for Undertaking a Plan Change

A plan change, as detailed below, will be initiated for any one of the following reasons:

- Any proposed new use, activity, facility or development which is not provided for the Plan and which is consistent with the management philosophy and objectives of this plan.
- Any proposal for a new or amended lease or concession operation in the park.
- Any statutory or legislative change which would render the plan inoperable or illegal.
- Any major change in recreation needs or any other factor which the Manager, Parks sees as warranting a change to the Plan.

Plan Change Procedure (S41, Reserves Act 1977)

- 1.The Council publicly advertises the proposed change and makes a copy of the proposed change available to the public.
- 2.The Council notifies, in writing, any person or organisation which it considers will be significantly affected by the proposed change.
- 3.The Council receives written submissions on the proposed change for a period of not less than eight weeks after the first public advertisement.
- 4.The Manukau City Council considers the submissions and the proposed plan change and adopts, rejects or amends and adopts the Plan change.

Appendix "2"

LEGAL DESCRIPTION

Lot 2	DP 81888	Esplanade Reserve	8320m ²
Lot 1	DP 81842	Esplanade Reserve	6400m ²
Lot 1	DP 81838	Esplanade Reserve	3630m ²
Lot 1	DP 81837	Esplanade Reserve	3285m ²
Lot 2	DP 81834	Esplanade Reserve	2215m ²
Lot 1	DP 77476	Rec. Reserve	5.6300ha
Lot 1	DP 77475	Esplanade Reserve	1.2410ha
Lot 2	DP 76234	Esplanade Reserve	3800m ²
Lot 2	DP 76231	Esplanade Reserve	5700m ²
Lot 2	DP 76230	Esplanade Reserve	2470m ²
Lot 3	DP 76228	Esplanade Reserve	2000m ²
Lot 2	DP 75796	Esplanade Reserve	3130m ²
Lot 2	DP 75795	Esplanade Reserve	2470m ²
Lot 303	DP 146543	Esplanade Reserve	3.1283ha
Lot 30	DP 82081	Rec. Res.	1637m ²
Lot 7	DP 82080	Rec. Res.	3665m ²
Lot 7	DP 123908	Esplanade Res.	5800m ²
Lot 2	DP 112913	Esplanade Res.	59m ²