

13.0 Open Space/Recreation

13.1 Introduction

The management of reserve land in terms of Resource Management Act (the Act) requirements (ie, sustainable management) is the subject of this section of the Plan. Integrated management of the resources contained within reserve land comes under the control of the Conservation Act 1987 and the Reserves Act 1977. The general intent of this Plan is not to repeat management processes but to only pick up those matters requiring control under the Act which are not covered under other legislation.

Generally the types of activities and consequently the acceptable effects within a reserve are those indicated by management plans under the above legislation. (For example, in the case of Department of Conservation land, the Conservation Management Strategy for the Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy.) This Plan seeks to provide for these activities while managing adverse effects. The Plan therefore only looks at the management of:

- Any off-site effects of land uses, extending beyond the boundary of the reserve area;
- Significant on-site effects of activities such as discharges, water takes, and disturbance to the beds of lakes and rivers; and
- The effects on reserve values of activities on neighbouring lands.

Open space and recreation areas serve a wide variety of functions within the Wairau/Awatere area. Most areas of reserve and publicly owned land fulfil one or more of the functions outlined below:

- Visual amenity (e.g. gardens, areas of indigenous vegetation, landscape views);
- Children's play (e.g. playground equipment, neighbourhood parks);
- Active sports (e.g. team sports, physical fitness, water sports, golf, tramping);
- Passive use of open space (e.g. picnicking);
- Access (e.g. especially to the coast, waterways and the high country);
- Linkages (e.g. walking tracks, cycleways);
- Built facilities (e.g. halls, clubrooms, pre-schools, swimming pools, libraries);
- Historic sites and features;
- Conservation (e.g. ecological values, water margins, wetland, indigenous habitats, fauna and flora);
- Public utilities (e.g. toilets, reticulated services);
- Commercial opportunities (e.g. rafting, four wheel drive tours).

Open space varies in terms of its significance to residents and visitors. Some areas will have only local significance while others will assume regional, national or even international significance.

Recreational trends and preferences are continually changing. Aside from recreational preferences which are reflected in the existing provision for reserves there are some distinct trends which are of note:

- Increased usage of the outdoors involving interaction with the 'natural environment' and often adventure orientated such as skydiving, mountain biking, rafting, kayaking and passive activities such as hiking and walking;
- A trend for working parents to use recreational activities close to home, reflecting their lack of available time.

13.2 Issue

The accessibility and distribution of a variety of land and facilities for open space and recreation.

The accessibility and therefore distribution of open space and recreational facilities around the District is important.

With respect to local parks, distribution is especially important as these areas are used particularly by the less mobile sectors of the community: young children and the elderly. Sports areas also need to be accessible, even though it is recognised that part of the organised sport experience involves travelling to different areas of the District to compete.

13.2.1 Objective and Policies

Objective 1 Open spaces and recreational facilities that are equitably distributed and conveniently located throughout the District.

Policy 1.1 To identify those areas of the District where there are, or likely to be, deficiencies in the provision of open space and recreational facilities and provide or facilitate accordingly.

Policy 1.2 To provide for new open spaces and recreational facilities to establish in locations that are convenient and accessible to users.

Policy 1.3 To require contributions towards the provision of public open space and recreation areas from subdivision and/or development for:

- Residential purposes to provide additional local and district parks; and,
- Business purposes to provide additional open space to enhance amenity values and meet the leisure requirements of workers in and visitors to business areas.

Policy 1.4 To use cash contributions towards public open space and recreation areas received from subdivision and/or development where appropriate to:

- Purchase land for district parks and sports fields;
- Purchase land for local neighbourhood parks in areas where there are existing or potential deficiencies in the provision of local parks;
- Develop land purchased or acquired as reserve contributions to a useable state for local and district open space; and,

- Purchase and develop land for amenity purposes within or adjoining business areas.

Policy 1.5 To take land instead of a cash contribution towards providing public open space and recreation areas from subdivision and/or development, where this will add to the quality and diversity of open spaces and recreation areas in the District.

Policy 1.6 To recognise the contribution of existing areas of open space, including private open space.

Policy 1.7 To recognise and make plan provision for the operation of large scale private open spaces and recreational facilities.

The objective is specifically concerned with the issue of accessibility and distribution of open spaces and recreational facilities. An equitable distribution is important in achieving convenience of access to open space and recreational opportunities, recognising the particular role or function of the open space or recreational facility in meeting the differing needs of the community. The policies are designed to ensure that accessibility and distribution are matched to population need and reflect trends in leisure time activities.

Objective 2 To seek diversity in the type and size of open spaces and recreational facilities to meet local, district, regional and nationwide needs.

Policy 2.1 To develop or facilitate the development of urban, regional or national open space and recreational facilities.

Policy 2.2 To develop or facilitate a range of open space types and recreation facilities.

This objective deals specifically with the provision of different types and sizes of open spaces and recreational facilities throughout the District. The range of types includes neighbourhood (local reserves), sports fields (district reserves), walkways, indoor sports facilities, swimming pools and other recreation facilities. This aspect relates to need in terms of age, specialised interest and ability rather than locational matters. The policy framework is reflecting the existing and potential recreation opportunities which exist in the District.

Objective 3 To recognise the role of reserves and covenanted areas in protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

Policy 3.1 To support the establishment of open space reserves and covenants to maintain and enhance the District's conservation values

Policy 3.2 To maintain and develop the reserve system to provide 'green linkages' throughout the District.

Policy 3.3 To enhance the role of the District's fresh and coastal water resources and their margins for conservation and environmentally compatible recreational uses

Policy 3.4 To develop and manage the recreational use of the surface and margins of the District's wetlands, lakes rivers in a way that does not adversely affect their natural, ecological and existing recreational values and, where applicable, their flood management function.

Policy 3.5 Protect the flora, fauna and natural character of open space areas through appropriate control of activities in and adjoining covenanted and reserve areas.

Reserves provide a positive opportunity to preserve areas of natural environment and enhance appreciation of conservation values. There is a strong relationship between this section and the objectives and policies relating to natural character, water, flora and fauna, coastal marine, landscape, and subdivision

13.3 Issue

Adverse environmental effects arising from recreational activities.

In undertaking recreational and reserve management activities consideration is required to be given to the avoidance, remediation or mitigation of adverse effects on the environment as well as the minimisation of conflicts between different recreational activities and other activities. These can include pest control for ecological management purposes, the scale of buildings and the effects of intensive use and carparking, (for example), or the competition for space between exclusive use sports and the general public.

13.3.1 Objectives and Policies

Objective 1 That the establishment or development of open space and recreational facilities is undertaken in a manner which enables adverse effects on the environment to be avoided, remedied, or mitigated.

Policy 1.1 To ensure that activities associated with open space and recreational facilities do not give rise to adverse environmental effects (e.g. excessive noise, glare, visual detracting) without separation or mitigation measures being employed.

Policy 1.2 To ensure that building development in association with open space and recreational facilities maintains or enhances the amenity values present in the locality.

Policy 1.3 To ensure that the development and use of open space and recreational facilities does not detract from the operational efficiency and safety of the roading network, or amenity values of adjoining streets.

Activities associated with open space and recreational facilities can have adverse environmental effects. Open spaces and recreational facilities occur throughout the Wairau/Awatere, although often they are located within living areas. Equally varied are the types of activities associated with these areas and consequently the potential to generate a range of adverse effects.

Potential adverse effects include noise resulting from recreational activity and the social activity of clubrooms and their hours of operation; glare, particularly from flood lighting; attraction of increased numbers of people and vehicles into an area; the impacts of building scale or shading of adjoining properties; and damage to vegetation including trees, waterways or sensitive habitats upon development.

The Plan therefore, includes standards to minimise adverse effects on amenity values, recognising that maintenance and enhancement of these values is an important part of managing the natural and physical resources of an area.

13.4 Methods of Implementation

Zoning	The Plan identifies on the planning maps the following open space zones: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation; • District Recreation; and • Local Recreation.
Rules	Plan rules permit appropriate activities based on the conservation, amenity, recreation, or landscape value associated with the particular reserve or type of reserve, subject to performance standards where these are necessary.
Performance Standards	Performance standards address matters which ensure that open space is used and developed in a manner which is compatible with the amenities of adjoining residential areas. Matters include noise, car parking, building setback and discharge standards.
Other Legislation	Management plans prepared under the Conservation and Reserves Acts have been used as the basis for Permitted Activities in the three open space zones. (Resource Management and Regulatory Department) will participate in the preparation and planning of relevant reserve management plans under the Conservation and Reserves Acts, in pursuit of achieving the objectives of this (and other relevant) section(s) of this Plan.
Other Methods	Preparation of a Reserves Management Strategy. Negotiation of leases and licences with individual organisations and businesses to manage and maintain facilities. Facilitating public participation in design, development and management of recreational facilities.

The methods provide for the policies above and enable relevant authorities to administer open space activities as set out in management plans.

13.5 Anticipated Environmental Results

Implementation of the policies and methods in relation to open spaces will result in:

- Maintenance of the characteristics which ensure that these open spaces remain highly valued by the community in terms of particular conservation, recreation, and/or landscape values;
- Minimisation of possible conflicts between different types of recreational activities;
- Public involvement in determining the 'quality' of public open space and recreational facilities and awareness of the opportunities they provide;
- Protection and enhancement of natural, cultural and scenic values, and of the District's general level of amenity;
- Recognition and appreciation of natural heritage values and conservation of indigenous vegetation remnants, freshwater and coastal habitats, where appropriate;
- Visual compatibility of open spaces and recreational facilities with their surrounding local area;
- Maintenance of the open character of open space as a visual contrast to urban development;
- Compatibility of activities associated with open space and recreational facilities with activities in the surrounding local area;
- Maintenance and enhancement of local amenity values;
- Conservation of the character of public recreation areas and areas of open space; and
- Protection of the operational efficiency and safety of the roading network and of the amenity value of streets.