

## **SECTION 1      Executive Summary**

Throughout the district the Gisborne District Council administers a total reserve area of approximately 900 Hectares. Reserves for sports comprise nearly 400 Hectares while esplanade reserves (Heritage and Amenity Zone) totals around 480 Hectares. There are approximately 26 hectares of Neighbourhood Reserves, mostly within the City. With a total population of approximately 43,974 in 2001 Gisborne district is well endowed with an open space resource as compared with other districts with a similar population. Consequently the Open Space Strategy for Gisborne City and Wainui (Strategy) concentrates on enhancing existing open spaces and does not require further acquisition of land.

The Strategy acknowledges that open space has the potential to increase the quality of life for residents in an area by offering improved social amenities for leisure and recreation. It also improves the visual image or first impressions of visitors to the district. Potential new residents from outside the district often consider the aesthetics of an area as part of the relocation decision making process.

A set of 17 Guiding Principles and the Implementation Section details Council's vision for future open space.

The Strategy reviews issues and identifies opportunities affecting each open space area and then recommends actions in the Implementation Section. These actions may be short or long term goals. For the purpose of the Strategy open space areas have been grouped under the following headings: recreation and sports, neighbourhood reserves, Titirangi/Kaiti Hill, the harbour, city centre, civic centre area, rivers and coastal margins, city beaches, Wainui, entrances and linkages. Related topics of Heritage, economy and tourism, population change, community groups and sponsorship are also briefly discussed.

This Strategy specifically addresses the Gisborne City and immediate environs such as Wainui, however the District's overall Strategy has to include all those resources within each rural sector, particularly rural townships. The development of the Strategy for the rural sector will be staged and progressed in conjunction with the implementation of the City Strategy.

### **1.1                      Sports Facilities and Recreation**

The majority of sports grounds, parks and other large green areas are classified under the Reserves Act. Council intends to concentrate on the enhancement of its existing resource base ensuring the needs of future users are provided for. Consideration also needs to be given to the development of open space areas for activities such as waka ama, basketball, surfing and endurance events for the increasing number of youth.

Recreation reserves are maintained to a provincial standard. With the possible exception of Harry Barker cricket wicket and Rugby Park 3<sup>rd</sup> Division NPC there are no facilities to national or international standards. There may be the opportunity to create a facility to a national or international standard that could attract regular national events or training camps where spectator provision may not be so critical. The target areas should complement our natural resources and attributes (i.e. beach, surf or triathlon events or a multi-purpose sport stadium) and be capable of providing adequate facilities for spectators and media coverage.

The Strategy through its principles and implementation sections encourages more efficient use of its sports fields and reserves. This may simply be combining junior sports or different clubs and facilities together. By including play equipment, seating and gardens, passive recreation activities alongside large under utilised sports fields, may be possible. It may even

involve better rationalisation of schools and Council's sport grounds. Making better use of existing reserves may result in some reserves becoming surplus. An important criteria however is to retain reserves and open spaces that are visible from the Main Road Linkages.

## **1.2 Neighbourhood Reserves**

The Neighbourhood Reserves are small pockets of open space in residential areas providing relief from the built environment. These are generally well provided for in the City already. Play equipment, seating and gardens are provided for the public including children and the elderly. The aim is to ensure that such a reserve is located within a 700m walking distance from each dwelling in the city and that these reserves are equitably distributed (see Map No. 4).

## **1.3 Harbour**

The Strategy recommends that the long-term development of open space in and around the harbour should include a clear pathway around the harbour with seating, toilet facilities, historical storyboards and clear signage, all of which enhance public amenity. The Strategy seeks to therefore ensure that any future Port proposals provide a walkway linkage to Titirangi and Kaiti beach.

The ex-Bulmer Harvest site has been identified as an open space area to offset the development of the ex-Watties site. This area will be critical to ensuring a balance of outdoor recreation in this vicinity. The development of a promenade along the harbour edge and footbridge at the mouth of Waikanae Stream will provide a link from the existing CBD walkway to the City beach areas. Utilising the railway bridge as a walkway will connect both sides of the harbour for pedestrians.

## **1.4 Titirangi/Kaiti Hill**

Titirangi is an impressive natural landscape backdrop, which has significant cultural value. Extensive upgrading and maintenance of existing facilities is desirable. A small track or steps should connect the end of Kaiti Beach Road to Memorial Drive. Properly sign posted, this would provide wandering tourists with a return trip back to the City via Kaiti Beach. It also provides a longer running circuit as required by the Harriers Club and runners in general. Maintenance of existing tracks, signs and sightlines is important.

## **1.5 City Centre**

The strategy builds on the CBD creating networks extending from the existing CBD walkway out to the Botanical Gardens to the Civic Centre Area, the western side of the harbour to the beach and the Inner Harbour to Titirangi. Each of these walks has a circuit returning to the city.

The strategy identifies trails in the CBD identified as the Arts and Crafts Trail, Mural Trail and the Historic Walk and develops a City Walkway which would incorporate the most likely traveled streets in relation to these trails and other street enhancements. The City walkway map overlays the Concept Areas developed by the Walkways Committee (Map No. 3) and will provide guidance for groups to place future street enhancements such as sculptures and murals. It can also be used to focus enhancement programs along specific streets or routes.

## **1.6 Civic Centre Area**

The use of the Civic Centre Area over the summer has been growing in popularity, especially since the Millennium celebrations involving the Tuia festival which is now an annual event. The Strategy recommends that a management plan be undertaken for Civic Centre Area, which includes the Wi Pere monument and surrounding riverbanks. This should also include a report from a qualified acoustic engineer to address noise issues and recommend noise controls appropriate to the area.

An assessment of previous reports identified a distinct lack of provision of open space for a large cultural hall. There is currently no acoustically designed performance hall to adequately cater up to 1,500 people comfortably. The Strategy recommends investigating the setting aside of an area of open space in the Civic Centre Area for such a development in the future. This may involve the Army Hall site or possibly Marina Park as advocated in the 'Heart of Gisborne' report.

## **1.7 Esplanade Reserves**

Council has had a long-term view to acquire esplanade reserves and strips where possible. This is also a statutory requirement. Continuous esplanade reserves will help to form linkages along the waterways contributing to the vitality and amenity of the community, and will safeguard riparian and aquatic biodiversity. Particular areas have been identified along our riverbanks for conservation or public walkways and can be developed over the long term. Such development would involve extensive consultation with adjoining residents.

### Waimata River

The western side of the Waimata River along Riverside Road around the Grant Road is one such area where most esplanade reserves have been acquired. This is due to the subdivision of large residential allotments.

### Taruheru River

The northern side of the River branching out from the City has been identified in the past as an area for taking smaller sized reserves for conservation purposes (3 metres wide). This can be continued as Stout Street is already an attractive walkway from the Civic Centre to the Botanical Gardens. The northern bank of the Taruheru between Campion Road and Dalrymple Road could easily be turned into an attractive walkway.

### Waikanae Stream

Waikanae Stream from the airport area to Stanley Road is a Conservation Area administered by DOC and this is compatible with allowing public access. A walkway could also be developed along the rest of Waikanae Stream although a small footbridge is required behind Awapuni School connecting to Alfred Cox Park.

## **1.8 City Beaches**

Many issues are covered in existing management plans for Waikanae and Midway Beach. However a landscaping plan for multiple use should be undertaken for the City beaches including Kaiti Beach. This plan would build on existing landscaping and should have connections from the beach to the City, such as Grey and Customhouse Street, Stanley and Lytton Road. Pathways along the beachfront could be further developed and the planting of shade trees while considering views for residents. Kaiti beach is also recognised for the unique values it offers to the City, being a more sheltered beach area.

## **1.9 Wainui**

A management plan is currently being undertaken for Wainui beach through the Wainui Beach Management Committee. It is anticipated that there will be increasing pressure on Council in the long term to develop surrounding rural land around Wainui. Such developments are currently offset with native plantings. The Strategy supports native plantings and the creation of wildlife corridors. A corridor of mostly native plantings has been established by Transit New Zealand, McDonalds, Wainui Beach and other schools at Wainui along the SH.35 road reserve and should be continued back towards the City. The Strategy recommends that an alternative cycleway from SH. 35 be developed for the dangerous bends between the City and Wainui. This is part of a report by Opus (February 1995) which investigated options for a 10km cycleway from Makorori to the City.

## **1.10 Linkages**

Part of the Strategy's vision to enhance existing open space is to create definite links between recreational areas promoting mixed uses. Linkages are made up of roads and existing and proposed walkways. A mix of destinations between the beach, harbour, city, rivers, parks and reserves, and other features such as historic and cultural sites, murals and sculptures will encourage greater use of these areas. Emphasis is placed on the diversity of choices offering more opportunity and the likelihood of multiple users at different levels of ability.

Arterial and other main roads are identified as Main Road Linkages. These main roads and entrances of Gisborne are considered a marketable asset to the city with the potential to attract visitors and people to reside here. Priority is therefore given to developing and beautifying these areas. Network providers such as Eastland Network are being consulted to prioritise their list of services to go underground in conjunction with the streets recommended for enhancement. Road linkages requiring enhancement are attached to the Strategy (see Map No. 5).

Awapuni Road, Stanley Road and Lytton Road (Industrial zone), Aberdeen Road between Derby Street and the Botanical Gardens should also be prioritised for enhancement. The Awapuni Road industrial area is one of the main entranceways into Gisborne. This is the main bus route from Napier and does not create a very good first impression for visitors. Customhouse and Grey Street, Stanley and Lytton Road are main road links between the City and the beach and can enrich the City through enhancement of the street-scape.

The first two blocks of Aberdeen Road could potentially link the botanical gardens with the CBD walkway. This link also connects to the museum and civic centre area with the Stafford Street footbridge. It is acknowledged that street enhancement will be relatively costly, however over the long term, goals can be achieved as finances permit.

## **1.11 Community Ownership**

The Strategy can also be used as a guide to encourage individual community projects. Council already promotes partner and sponsorship liaisons with regard to recreation and sport. This is to be further advocated wherever possible. Community participation in the control of esplanade reserves and neighbourhood reserves and their on-going maintenance will be encouraged. It is expected that minimal finance towards these projects will be required. Council will need to initiate meetings to encourage community ownership and obtain sponsorship of a project.

Council adopted a long-term Strategy in 1960 with the Turbott Landscaping report to maintain and enhance its open space resource, this Strategy is still relevant today. This Strategy document collates the Turbott report and all the information since then from various reports into a clear and concise document providing a basic tool of how to best plan for open spaces of Gisborne City and how to look after them in the future. The Strategy is essentially planning open spaces for the future. It is recognised that what we do today will still be around in 100 years time.