

23. ROTO KOHATU RESERVE – COMMUNITY BOARD UPDATE

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The purpose of this report is to update the Shirley/Papanui Community Board on the development of Roto Kohatu Reserve.

INTRODUCTION

Roto Kohatu Reserve is located at the end of Sawyers Arms Road and comprises the old Waimairi Landfill site plus the two lakes formed by the extraction of shingles by Ashby Concrete, and later gifted to the Christchurch City by Bitumix Ltd.

CURRENT PROGRESS 02/03 CAPITAL WORKS

As reported previously to the Board, the development of the site was dependent on the availability of suitable supplies of capping materials for restoration of the landfill and old shingle works. The landfill capping (funded by the Waste Unit) has continued at a good rate with approximately three quarters of the site now covered and grassed down. The areas adjacent to the lakes have had an accelerated rate of development due to a large quantity of topsoil being given by Smith Cranes, the reserve's neighbour to the north. The bulk of this has been stockpiled on site for future use as funds become available for work. The current year's budget allocation is \$10,000 for site works (shaping and sowing the north and east sides of the northern lake) and \$9,500 for a small boardwalk link between the backwater and the lake used by the Jetski Club. The site works will continue next financial year, while the boardwalk has been priced and is due for implementation in April.

The site has had significant use as of late with the annual Dragon Boat Festival and local Jetski Championships. The passive lake is still being used by the Sailing School and the Coarse Fishing Club with positive feedback from both. The small backwater area adjoining the jetski lake has had a trial season of canoe polo being played on it. This has been very successful and a longer term arrangement is being organised by the canoe polo group and the Parks and Waterways Unit for next season. All of the above are organised groups and have restricted access to the site. They are currently providing their own toilet facilities. Discussions are continuing with the Jetski Club regarding the possibility of combined toilet facilities once they have finalised their building proposals.

The general public is still excluded from the site and will continue to be so while major earthworks are being carried out, due to Health and Safety requirements. It is anticipated that this will be the case for a number of years as funds for the development are limited to \$30,000 per year for the next few years and \$40,000 per year after that (subject to approval in the annual plan process). These are not significant amounts on such a large scale site where everything has to be created from the bare gravel up. It is difficult to be more specific on when development will reach a stage that it will be safe enough for the public to enter the site, as the availability of suitable materials is unpredictable and reliant on them being available at minimal or no cost to the council.

In the short term future it is planned to plant approximately one hundred trees around the lake used by the Jetski Club and the backwater areas this winter. Previous plantings have established well and the site is starting to resemble a reserve in some corners.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AND VISION FOR THE RESERVE

On a wider scale, there are factors that may have some influence on Roto Kohatu in the future. A major planning exercise for the Waimakariri Regional Park is currently being developed in association with land owners and developers. The proposed Waimakariri Regional Park is most likely to have an effect with the possibility of the paper roads and the private haul road to the river being used as one of the access points to the new park. Both roads are on the boundaries of Roto Kohatu. If this were to take place it would assist greatly with long term public access to the reserve as there is only one access point at present.

Commencing in late May the Parks and Waterways Planning Team propose to commission a review of the landscape plan for Roto Kohatu Reserve and to start the process of meeting with stakeholders and interested parties to discuss the existing and future needs for the reserve. It is programmed to have the review completed by October 2003, subject to the major management plans for Mona Vale and Hagley Park being completed first as per the key performance indicators in the annual plan.

Staff

Recommendation: That the information be received.

Chairperson's

- Recommendation:**
1. That the staff recommendation be adopted.
 2. That the Parks and Waterways Unit hold an on-site seminar with the Board and other interested parties to discuss proposed planning for Roto Kohatu Reserve.