

**Report 02.594**

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Report to the Landcare Committee  
from Ross Jackson, Landcare Planner

## **Te Marua Development Plans – Kaitoke Regional Park**

### **1. Purpose**

To present to the Committee a Landscape Development Plan for the Te Marua entry area to Kaitoke Regional Park.

### **2. Background**

Over the past 25 years, since the planning for Stuart Macaskill Lakes and Te Marua treatment plant began, there have been a number of landscape proposals developed for the Te Mama area. There has also been an ongoing proposal to realign State Highway 2 through the site west of the Stuart Macaskill Lakes. Hence, major developments and initiatives in this area have been continually delayed. Now that a decision has been made to upgrade the highway along its present alignment, long-term plans for the Te Marua entrance of Kaitoke Regional Park can be developed with a level of certainty.

The site has been well developed for its principle purpose of treating and storing water. The site is also a key entry point to the Kaitoke Regional Park. We are now working on a staged landscape development to realise the site potential and to utilise its strategic location to all the recreational activities in the area.

Parks and Forests have developed this Landscape Development Plan with input from the Utility Services Division. Currently, no funds have been specifically allocated to implement the development. Accordingly, we will implement the plan on a gradual basis.

### 3. The Te Marua Site

The site was developed from farmland primarily as a water treatment facility, however, a large portion of the area is regional park and plantation forest. Presently, roads, buildings, power lines, and storage lakes are central to the view and the layout of the site is designed to be functional rather than aesthetic. The attention of a visitor tends to be captured by the road corridor and the associated structures. Grazing of the extensive open areas ensures easy maintenance and keeps the earthworks associated with the lakes and channels accessible to inspection. The planting of tall vegetation has been limited to the enhancement of buildings and car parks. Some indigenous forest remnants have been fenced off from grazing and remain as isolated 'islands.'

The objective of the Landscape Development Plan is to promote a greater recognition of the special character and features of the river terraces, and to improve public access to, and experience of, this environment. The key issues that have been addressed in the Plan are:

- The present dominance of the main vehicle access road.
- The current lack of recreational opportunities for visitors to this end of the park.
- The dominance of grass with a shortage of taller vegetation to define the spaces and provide a pleasant place to recreate.
- The cultural history and dramatic natural character of the place is not readily discernible to a visitor.
- The linking of isolated blocks of native bush remnants into a viable network of vegetation and wildlife corridors.

### 4. Te Marua is a Key Entry Point

The potential of the Te Marua area for Park development has long been recognised. The current management plan lists a number of development proposals that have been expanded on in this Landscape Development Plan including:

- Establishing a visitor information point in the Park.
- Creating further walking tracks including a link to the Rimutaka Rail Trail via the proposed State Highway 2 underpass.
- Expanding the opportunity for recreational activities including major events.
- Extensive tree planting, including expanding the community planting concept, commenced in 2000 with the Millennium Totara Grove.

### 5. Communication

The development plan will be released to, and consulted on, by the public as part of the management plan process currently under way. A copy of this plan will be available to Councillors in the Councillors' lounge. Other copies will be made available to Councillors on request.

6. **Recommendations**

*That the Committee:*

- (1) **Receive** the report.
- (2) **Note** the contents of the report.

Report prepared by:

Approved for submission:

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