



DUNSTAN RECREATION RESERVE

Approved Management Plan

Adopted 5 July 2000

DUNSTAN RECREATION RESERVE

APPROVED MANAGEMENT PLAN

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 GENERAL

The Dunstan Recreation Reserve is a major equestrian oriented recreation reserve located on Dunstan Road near Alexandra providing the Alexandra/Earnscliffe communities with a venue for equestrian related recreational activities including harness racing. The reserve was administered by the Dunstan Domain Board until 1989 when the Board became amalgamated into the District Council. The Council is now the administering authority for the reserve in terms of section 40 of the Reserves Act 1977. The Council has formally requested that the reserve be vested in it so that the Council can issue leases in accordance with the proposed Management Plan without further reference to the Minister of Conservation.

1.2 PURPOSE OF MANAGEMENT PLAN

This Dunstan Recreation Reserve Management Plan is the Management Plan for the reserve required to be prepared in terms of section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977. The extent of the reserve is identified in Figure 1.

The Plan provides the Council with a framework for decision making with respect to the use of land and facilities on the reserve in accordance with section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977 which recognises that Recreation Reserves are held "...for the purpose of providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public..."

1.3 PUBLIC INPUT

Public input was essential to the preparation of the plan. The various steps required are set out in the Reserves Act 1977:

Sec 41 (5) - Publicly notify the intention to prepare a draft management plan, invite persons and organisations interested to submit written suggestions on what might be included in the plan and consider those suggestions when preparing the draft plan.

Sec 41 (6) - Prepare a draft management plan and give public notice that it is available for inspection, allowing at least two months for interested persons or organisations to lodge written submissions to or objections against the draft

plan, ensuring that those who made initial suggestions are advised of the draft plan and invited to make submissions or objections on it.

Send copy of draft plan to Minister of Conservation for his consideration.

Hear any submissions or objections and amend the draft plan as thought necessary before adopting the plan.

1.4 APPROVAL OF PLAN

The public was invited to make submissions or put forward suggestions as to the future use of the reserve as a preliminary step in accordance with section 41(5) of the Act.. No comments were received.

The preliminary draft plan was prepared by Council staff in consultation with representatives of the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated.

The draft plan was approved on 12 April 2000 and submissions and objections were invited in terms of section 41(6). Submissions and objections closed on 19 June 2000.

The Department of Conservation made a submission in relation to wider recreational purposes of the reserve, the siting of Central Otago Rail Trail Trust toilets within the reserve and provision for access across the reserve for Departmental staff or agents.

The submissions were considered on 5 July 2000 and accepted. The plan, as amended, was adopted on 5 July 2000.

Note: The Department's submission has been accommodated by changes to Part 5, Objective 5.2.5, Part 6, 6.2, a new policy, Policy 16, Part 6, 6.3, new policies, Policy 11 and Policy 12.

PART 2: DESCRIPTION AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 LOCATION

The Dunstan Recreation reserve is located in Dunstan Road, near Alexandra – refer to Figure 2 **attached**.

2.2 LEGAL DESCRIPTION AND AREA

Sections 134 135 Lot 1 of 27 Block 1 Leaning Rock Survey District, comprising 19.5337 hectares . All Gazette Notice 1985 page 1165.

2.3 HISTORY

The date of the original reservation of the land is unknown but it has been used as a racecourse reserve for many years, having been leased to the Alexandra Trotting Club since prior to 1957.

The former Domain Board and the Alexandra Trotting Club, with assistance from local service clubs, have provided all the facilities on the reserve.

Funding for the reserve has been provided from farming activities (lucerne crop and sheep farming) and from the profits from harness racing events. There has been a considerable volunteer labour input to develop, maintain and upgrade the reserve.

2.4 EXISTING FACILITIES AND USES

2.4.1 General

The Dunstan Recreational Reserve has been used primarily for equestrian related purposes, and has been developed as a venue for harness racing by the Alexandra Trotting Club.

It has also been used for gymkhanas, pony club events (including the Springston Trophy event in 1998) and as a training ground for equestrian activities.

There are a number of buildings, including stables, an office block built in 1985, and a toilet block built in 1985.

2.4.2 Race Track

There is a well developed and well maintained track for harness racing.

2.4.3 Water Supply

The reserve has an entitlement to irrigation water from the Manuherikia Irrigation Company (12.1 irrigable hectares).

The former Domain Board provided a bore and irrigation system in 1984 funded from loan and a grant from the Trotting Club.

PART 3: RESERVES ACT 1977

3.1 GENERAL

The Reserves Act 1977 makes provision for the acquisition, control, management, maintenance, preservation, development and use of public reserves as defined in that legislation. This includes the Dunstan Recreation Reserve.

The Act provides for the Administering Body, being the Central Otago District Council, to prepare a Management Plan under section 41 for the Dunstan Recreation reserve. The Council has delegated the responsibility for administering and managing the reserve to the Earnscliffe-Manuherikia Community Board.

3.2 PRELIMINARY SUBMISSIONS

At its meeting on 22 September 1999, the Earnscliffe-Manuherikia Community Board received a proposal from the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated (**attached**) that the current lease to the Alexandra Trotting Club be replaced with a new head lease which would provide for a sub lease of the reserve to the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated. The Community Board approved the proposal in principle, but resolved to first seek vesting of the reserve and to prepare a management plan for the reserve to give the public in general an opportunity to have its say on the future use and management of the reserve.

A notice was published in the Central Otago News on 5 October 1999 inviting suggestions as to how the reserve might be developed and managed. No submissions or suggestions were received.

The draft plan was notified and the Council considered the submission from the Department of Conservation. The plan was amended accordingly and adopted on 5 July 2000.

3.3 RECREATION RESERVES

The Dunstan Recreation Reserve was classified as a recreation reserve pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977 in 1985 (NZ Gazette 1985 page 1165). Section 16(8) of the Act requires that when classified under that section, each reserve shall be held and administered for the purposes for which it was classified and for no other purpose.

3.3.1 Purpose of Recreation Reserves

Section 17(1) of the Act states that Recreation reserves are for the purposes of

“..providing areas for recreation and sporting activities, and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and the beauty of the country side, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and outdoor recreation activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside,”

3.3.2 Administration of Recreation Reserves

Section 17(2) requires that every Recreation Reserve shall be so administered that:

“The public shall have freedom of entry and access to the reserve, subject to the specific powers conferred on the administering body by sections 53 and 54 of the Act [which provide powers of leasing and other miscellaneous powers to restrict access] and to such conditions and restrictions as the administering body considers to be necessary for the protection and general well being of the reserve and for the protection and control of the public using it.”

The administering body is also required to manage any special features of the reserve (such as flora or fauna or geological, scenic or historic values), to protect those qualities of the reserve that contribute to its natural environment, and to endeavour to maintain its soil, water and forest conservation values.

3.4 ADMINISTERING BODY, MANAGEMENT PLAN, POWERS AND BYLAWS

3.4.1 Functions of Administering Body

Section 40 of the Act charges the Administering body (the Council) with the duty of administering, managing and controlling the reserve in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Act, so as to ensure the use, enjoyment, development, maintenance, protection and preservation of the reserve for the purposes for which it has been classified.

3.4.2 Reserve Management Plan

Section 41 of the Act **requires** the preparation of a Management Plan. The Management Plan is also required to provide for the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection and preservation, as the case may require, and to the extent that the administering body’s resources permit, the development, as appropriate, of the reserve for the purposes for which it has been classified.

The Administering Body is required to keep this Management Plan under continuous review so that the Plan is adapted to change in circumstances or in accordance with increased knowledge.

The procedure for preparing the management Plan is detailed in Section 41(6) of the Act.

3.4.3 Powers of Administering Body

(a) General

Section 53 of the Act provides for the administering body to exercise a wide range of miscellaneous powers in the exercise of its functions under section 40 and to give effect to the principles set out in section 17 which relate to recreation reserves.

These powers include the enclosure of all or part of the reserve, prohibition of public access from time to time, prescription and regulation of recreational uses, limited admission by payment, grants of exclusive use for limited periods, the erection of buildings and structures, allocation of land for specific purposes, regulation of any trade or business activity and such other things desirable or necessary for the proper management of the reserve.

(b) Leasing Powers

Section 54 provides for the administering body to issue leases subject to certain conditions

Basic provisions relating to leases of recreational reserves are set out in the First Schedule to the Act.

The administering body is able to issue a lease without reference to the Minister if :

- (a) the reserve is vested in the administering authority
- (b) an operative management plan anticipates a lease

If these conditions are not met, the consent of the Minister is required.

In all cases, the administering body is required to publicly notify its intention to issue a lease over all or part of a recreation reserve and to consider any objections to the proposal.

(c) Bylaws

Section 106(2) empowers the administering authority to make bylaws with respect to a reserve under its control. The Central Otago District Council also has the power to make bylaws in terms of the Local Government Act 1974 and other legislation.

The Council has adopted NZS9201:Chapter 17 1972 which comprises a general bylaw relating to parks and reserves.

PART 4 - DISTRICT PLAN AND ANNUAL PLAN

4.1 CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT PLAN

In the District Plan the reserve is provided for as designated Area 195 “Recreation Purposes Dunstan Recreation Reserve”.

The land has an underlying use of [RR] - Rural Residential Resource Area 4. This means that if the “recreation” designation was uplifted, the land would become rural residential land able to be subdivided into allotments with an average allotment size of no less than 2 hectares.

4.2 CENTRAL OTAGO DISTRICT COUNCIL ANNUAL PLAN AND REPORT

Each year the Council is required to prepare an Annual Plan which provides information about the services the Council intends to provide and how they will be funded, and at the end of the financial year it produces a report on its own performance.

The Annual Plan provides details of proposed income and expenditure on particular reserves or groups of reserves and of any proposed significant activities in relation to its reserves.

PART 5 - MANAGEMENT PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

5.1 - GOAL

To administer manage and control the Dunstan Recreation Reserve in accordance with the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 so as to ensure the use, enjoyment, development, maintenance and protection of the reserve for the public of Alexandra and Clyde and the Earnsclough Ward and of the wider Central Otago community .

5.2 - OBJECTIVES

1. To preserve the Dunstan Recreation Reserve as a recreation area for the enjoyment of the general public.
2. To encourage and facilitate the use of the reserve for recreation and sporting purposes and for the welfare and enjoyment of the public.
3. To allocate land within the reserve for the purposes of the Alexandra Trotting Club and the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated for public sporting and recreational activities with a particular but not exclusive emphasis on equestrian based recreation having due regard to the public's right of freedom of entry and access to the reserve.
4. To provide for the continued maintenance of the reserve and, as resources permit, for an improvement to the level of services currently provided.
5. To issue a head lease over the entire reserve to the Alexandra Trotting Club with provision for a sublease to the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated., to provide for the lessees to develop and maintain the reserve as a major equestrian oriented facility for the use and enjoyment of their members and of the public in general and to encourage the use of the reserve by the public for other recreation, leisure and sporting purposes.

PART 6 - POLICIES FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE DUNSTAN RECREATION RESERVE

6.1 ADMINISTRATION

The Council is the administering authority for the reserve as successor to the Dunstan Domain Board (1989 Local Government Reorganisation Order). The reserve is to be vested in the Council for use as a recreation reserve.

The Central Otago District Council is therefore responsible for the management of the reserve in accordance with the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977. In terms of the Local Government Act 1974, the Council also has responsibilities to ensure that the income and expenditure in relation to the reserve is properly accounted for and that the publicly owned assets on the reserve are accounted for, valued and depreciated in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices.

Under present Council policy, the Council has delegated responsibility for the day to day management of the reserve to the Earnsclough-Manuherikia Community Board.

The delegations provide a number of powers and responsibilities for managing the reserve but specifically **exclude** (among other things) the power to

borrow money

enter into a contract

initiate an action for the recovery of any amount in excess of \$5,000

acquire, hold or dispose of property

appoint, suspend remove staff

The lease to be issued will be between the District Council and the head lessee.

Policy 1

The Council will issue a head lease to the Alexandra Trotting Club (in lieu of the existing lease to that Club) with provision for a sub lease to Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated, an umbrella society incorporating a number of equestrian groups including the Alexandra Trotting Club. The head lease and sub lease will provide for the management of the reserve in accordance with the requirements of the Reserves Act 1977 and the provisions of this Management Plan.

Explanation

The Alexandra Trotting Club currently has a lease which provides for it use and manage the reserve . That lease does not make adequate provision for other recreational groups using the facility to share the responsibility for management and ongoing maintenance of the reserve. The proposed sub lease will require the Equestrian centre Incorporated to effectively manage the reserve in the interests of its incorporated members and of the public in general. In the event that the sub lease should for any reason be surrendered or terminated, the head lease would remain in force, thus protecting the interests of the Alexandra Trotting Club to the extent provided for in the current lease.

As head lessee, the Alexandra Trotting Club will be responsible to the Council for the effective management of the reserve through the sub lease. It will have the responsibility for ensuring that the provisions of the sub lease are complied with.

As sub lessee, the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated will be subject to:

- 1. Rules of the Incorporated Societies Act*
- 2. Provisions of the sub lease which will specify what may and may not be done on the reserve recognising the goals, objectives and policies contained within this plan.*
- 3. Provisions of the Reserves Act 1977*
- 4. Such other controls or requirements that the Council, as owner and administering authority, might choose to impose.*

Policy 2

The Dunstan Recreation Reserve will be managed, administered and controlled in accordance with the provisions of this Management Plan, the Reserves Act 1977 and the Council's General Bylaw relating to Parks and Reserves.

Explanation

The provisions of this Management Plan have evolved through a process of public consultation and will form the basis for future decision making with respect to the reserve.

Policy 3

To implement the development proposals contained in this plan at the rate that the resources of the administering body or the head lessee, the sub lessee and the groups seeking specific improvements permit, and to recognise that the

satisfactory maintenance or replacement of existing facilities will have priority over the development of new facilities.

Explanation

The satisfactory maintenance of the reserve as an area for outdoor physical recreation for the enjoyment of the residents of the Alexandra, Earnscliffe and Manuherikia Wards in particular and of the whole Central Otago community in general is required to meet the terms of the vesting as a recreation reserve. The reserve has been developed by the former Dunstan Recreation Reserve Board as a racecourse (trotting track) and the facilities on the reserve generally relate to equestrian activities. The improvement of existing facilities and the creation of new facilities are envisaged to provide for additional equestrian activities.

There are already a number of building improvements on the land which will require ongoing repairs and maintenance. Some buildings may need to be demolished. The development of new buildings or the extension of existing buildings should not be at the expense of maintenance of existing facilities to be retained.

Policy 4

To delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the day to day responsibility for the administration, management and control of the Dunstan Recreation Reserve in terms of the Management Plan and relevant bylaws.

Explanation

Day to day implementation of Council policy is the responsibility of the Chief Executive and his staff.

Policy 5

To require the sub lessee, through the head lessee, to report annually on plans and performance with respect to the reserve. The head lessee and sub lessee's roles will be similar to that of a recreation reserve committee but with greater autonomy to act within the parameters set by the Council.

Explanation

The Council has the authority to issue leases over recreation reserves for the purposes of the Reserves Act 1977. The leases will permit the lessees to manage the reserve more autonomously (ie, as a body separate from the Council) but still subject to the rules of their Society, the provisions of the lease

and in accordance with the requirements of the Reserves Act 1977 and the management plan..

The Council does not have the physical or financial resources for “hands on” management of this reserve but can exercise control through the provisions of the lease and the requirement to report annually on plans and performance. The annual reports will assist with the period review of the plan.

Policy 6

To review this Management Plan at intervals of five years or less to ensure that the general public and user groups have the opportunity to express their views on the management of the reserve on a regular basis.

Explanation

The administering body is required to keep the plan under continuous review by section 41(4) of the Reserves Act 1977.

6.2 USE OF FACILITIES

Policy 1

To respect the rights of recreational groups that currently use the grounds and facilities at the Dunstan Reserve.

Explanation

The reserve is currently used primarily for harness racing, pony club events and other equestrian related activities.. The former Domain Board, with assistance from local service clubs and particularly from the Alexandra Trotting Club, established a range of facilities on the reserve including the track, toilets, a water supply, fencing and various buildings. The Alexandra Trotting Club funded the construction of its office block in 1985.

The leases will provide for the exclusive or general use of particular current or future facilities.

Policy 2

To improve access for people with disabilities.

Explanation

This policy recognises that that people with physical disabilities should be able to access and enjoy the facilities on the reserve. As funds permit, facilities, including the toilet block, will be modified to better cater for the needs of people with disabilities.

Policy 3

To provide an equestrian training centre within the reserve.

Explanation

It is anticipated that the facilities currently on site and further facilities to be constructed can be made available to member groups such as the Central Otago Riding for the Disabled, to local equestrian groups, to schools and to professional instructors for the purposes of instruction.

Policy 4

To permit the hiring of facilities to recreational users and commercial operators.

Explanation

The Council recognises that hiring out of facilities will be necessary to provide for the recovery of some of the cost of construction and operation.

Policy 5

To permit farming of the reserve including grazing of sheep and making of hay.

Explanation

The Dunstan Recreation Reserve has for many years been “farmed” and the income used to meet some of the cost of development and maintenance of the reserve. This practice is expected to continue into the future.

Policy 6

To permit the occasional temporary installation of electric fencing to contain sheep grazing the reserve.

Explanation

The installation of permanent fencing to contain grazing sheep could interfere with the use of the reserve for recreational activities.

Policy 7

To maintain existing water rights and water supply services on the reserve and to protect any existing water courses within the reserve.

Explanation

The Alexandra Trotting Club has an entitlement to irrigation water from the Manuherikia Co-operation Irrigation Society Inc. and a bore for domestic water and ancillary irrigation.

The existing bore, pump and irrigation system will be protected and maintained for the benefit of the reserve and provision made to repair and or replace components as necessary from time to time. Irrigation is essential for the well being of the reserve and maintenance of the irrigation system is a Council requirement.

Policy 8

To permit the sale of goods produced on the site.

Explanation

The lessees intend to run a small flock of sheep on the reserve to keep the grass down. Wool will be sold. The lessees may also from time plant lucerne or other crops on the reserve for sale. They propose to collect horse manure and stable litter within the reserve and offer it for sale from the reserve. Any farming operation will be solely for the purpose of generating income to support recreational activities and will not take priority over recreational activities.

The Council recognises the need for the lessees to earn some income to assist with the cost of managing the reserve and supports these initiatives.

Policy 9

To permit recreational groups and sporting organisations to offer goods for sale to the public in association with sports and recreational activities being conducted on the reserve.

Explanation

Food, refreshments and other goods are permitted to be sold in the Reserve in association with public events of a recreational nature. These “commercial” activities are permitted as they assist recreational groups to raise funds for recreational purposes and for the benefit of the general community.

Policy 10

To permit the lessees to operate “market days”, carnivals, fun days and similar events on the reserve provided that the trade or business is clearly of a recreational nature.

Explanation

Trade and business activities of a non recreational nature, such as the sale of retail goods by local or itinerant traders, are not permitted as no justification exists for such activities to be conducted on a recreation reserve.

Policy 11

To permit the establishment of boarding stables on the reserve.

Explanation

The establishment of boarding stables will allow horse and pony owners to house their horses overnight on the reserve should this be considered necessary. The revenue earned will enable the sublessee to further develop or maintain the reserve.

Policy 12

To permit the construction of a caretaker’s residence on the reserve.

Explanation

The lessee or sub lessee may wish at some time in the future to construct a caretaker’s residence on the reserve so that the caretaker can provide better supervision of the reserve and its facilities.

No buildings will be permitted to be constructed without the prior approval in writing of the Lessor (the Council).

Policy 13 -

To permit the demolition of specific buildings that are no longer required or are considered uneconomic to repair and maintain.

Explanation

Some of the existing buildings are old and considered not to merit repair because of their condition or the fact that they are no longer required. The demolition of identified buildings is permitted on the grounds that their retention is not cost effective. No building may be demolished without the prior approval in writing of the Lessor (the Council).

Policy 14

To permit the overnight camping on the reserve of the New Zealand Armed Forces and New Zealand Police and to permit overnight camping on the reserve by participants in equestrian events (such as the Springston Trophy or Trotting meetings) where overnight camping is considered necessary to supervise horses or large items of equestrian related equipment or other events such as Faith Festivals and Jamborees.

Explanation

From time to time, members of the New Zealand Armed Forces (sometimes accompanied by members of other countries' armed forces) or of the New Zealand Police may wish to camp temporarily on the reserve while conducting an exercise in the area. The Council supports such camping as an exercise in public relations.

From time to time, when a large equestrian event is conducted, it may be necessary for personnel associated with the event (such as stable hands and horse trainers) to remain on site overnight to supervise their horses and equipment. From time to time larger groups of people may wish to gather in the reserve for some special event, such as a Faith Festival or a Scouting Jamboree, and remain on site overnight. Overnight camping for these purposes is supported.

Policy 15

To prohibit the use of the reserve as a public camping ground.

Explanation

Except in accordance with Policy 14 above, overnight camping on the reserve is not supported. There are public camping grounds in Alexandra and Clyde able to cater for the needs of recreational campers, and the Council considers the use of the reserve as a public camping ground is not consistent with its goal of maintaining the reserve for equestrian oriented public recreation and sporting purposes.

Policy 16

To permit non-equestrian user groups, community organisations and individuals to use the reserve for community gatherings, picnics and the like.”

Explanation

Section 17 (1) of the Reserves Act 1977 states that recreation reserves are provided as areas for outdoor recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public. The Council recognises that community reserves should be freely available for use for picnics and the like.

6 3 - AMENITY, GROUND MAINTENANCE AND LITTER CONTROL

Policy 1

To develop all internal motor vehicle access, parking and manoeuvring areas to a dust free standard.

Explanation

Unsealed and untreated roads and parking areas have the potential to create a dust nuisance affecting users of the reserve and adjoining properties. Areas will be progressively formed, metalled and sealed as resources permit.

Policy 2

Permanent signs are permitted on the reserve only where their purpose is to provide directions to recreational facilities within the reserve, to name the reserve or its component parts or to advise Council policy eg “Dogs Prohibited in the Reserve”. Such signs shall be well built and well maintained and of a size suitable for the purpose.

Explanation

Signs may be required to inform users of their responsibilities or to identify the location of facilities and to guide users to those facilities. Large signs could detract from the amenity of the reserve It is anticipated that an entrance sign naming the reserve will be larger than other signs within the reserve..

Policy 3

Temporary signs which advertise sponsors of recreational activities being conducted on the reserve may be erected during the course of the activity and in a two week period prior to the start of an event.

Explanation

The Council recognises the desire of recreational groups to acknowledge the support of sponsors with the display of a sign which names the sponsor's product or product.

Policy 4

Signs promoting cigarettes, cigarette related products and illegal substances are prohibited within the reserve.

Explanation

The promotion of such products is contrary to the objects of the recreation reserve which aims to provide for the physical well being of the users.

Policy 5

To require that new and existing buildings on the reserve are maintained in a clean and tidy appearance.

Explanation

Shoddy, untidy buildings detract from the amenity of the reserve and detract from the public's enjoyment of the reserve.

Policy 6

To require that the toilet block within the reserve is maintained in a clean and tidy condition and is serviced as often as is necessary to meet the needs of the users and that it is well signposted.

Explanation

A clearly identified and well maintained toilet facility is essential to cater for the needs of the users of the reserve.

Policy 7

To reserve the right to prohibit any activity or to apply appropriate conditions to any activity which has the potential to damage any part of the reserve or its services.

Explanation

The intent of this policy is to protect the reserve from unnecessary damage.

Policy 8

To provide and service an adequate supply of permanent litter receptacles in appropriate locations within the reserve.

Explanation

A littered reserve would detract from the public's enjoyment of the area.

Policy 9

To maintain a satisfactory standard of fencing at the external perimeters of the reserve.

Explanation

The Council has an obligation to adjoining property owners to maintain boundary fences in good repair. Where major repairs are required, the Council may seek a contribution from adjoining property owners.

Policy 10

To maintain existing amenity plantings, to replace any plantings that require removal with well grown, mature species and to provide an adequate water supply and protection from pests to new plantings to ensure their unchecked growth.

Explanation

The public's enjoyment of and ability to make full use of the reserve depends to a considerable extent on the preservation of suitable amenity plantings to provide a green open space and an attractive environment sheltered from the affects of a harsh climate.

Policy 11

“To permit access for the general public (pedestrians, push cyclists and horse riders only) to and from the Otago Central Rail Trail (OCRT) and for the Department of Conservation (in motor vehicles if they wish) to maintain and service the Rail Trail toilet that is sited on the recreation reserve and to keep the willow trees in the immediate area trimmed”

Explanation

The Otago Central Rail Trail Trust has provided a toilet close to the rail trail but within the recreation reserve, for the convenience of the users of the Rail Trail. Access to the toilets and the willows will be permitted via the rear gate. The general public is not permitted to use motor vehicles within the Rail Trail so there should be no question of them using a motor vehicle to access the toilets. The Department is permitted to drive across the reserve but not to drive vehicles on the formed racecourse as this could damage it.

Policy 12

To permit access for pedestrians, horse riders and push cyclists to and from the Dunstan Recreation Reserve to the Otago Central Rail Trail.

Explanation

The recreation reserve is adjacent to the Rail Trail and will potentially provide a base from which pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders can utilize the Rail Trail and its features.

A Proposal

To the Central Otago District Council

Following the achievements of Springston Trophy 1998, a small group of equestrian minded people began to discuss the possible formation of a new equestrian incorporated society. By bringing together the different equestrian organizations, and pooling the abilities, expertise and experience of the broad spectrum of equestrian minded people, the incorporated society will be able to accomplish much more than any of the groups standing alone. A committee has subsequently been formed and wishes to proceed with formation of the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated. The Dunstan racecourse has long been the centre of equestrian activity and by focusing our attention on the potential, in both the short & long-terms, for equestrian and broader community usage, we propose a change in the existing lease between the council and the Alexandra Trotting Club. While the existing lease has been satisfactory for the Trotting Club, a new lease is necessary in order to actively pursue the objectives of the Incorporated Society.

The primary objective of the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated is stated in the rules "to promote all equestrian activities." To promote these activities you need to have someplace to have them, so sharing of the racecourse facility is of key importance. By sharing the responsibilities of farming, maintaining the grounds, and all related expenses and also by planning towards being self-funding the Incorporated Society is balancing the maintenance work load. Events planning will be done jointly, with emphasis on shared access to all facilities. Combining also gives us the added benefits of greater potential for grants and the sharing of people who bring a broader spectrum of skills to the group. Of course the member clubs will continue to operate on their own as they always have, by being represented at the Society they will have a voice in the longer-term directions that the Incorporated Society takes. There is also more potential for cross-over amongst the clubs and for general promotion which can encourage all the clubs to grow.

Once the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated is fully set up we can start working towards our medium term goals. To improve access for all users, we plan for an upgraded, handicapped access, toilet block, including showers. We would like to improve existing buildings wherever possible, planning for an indoor meeting facility, with kitchen. Each user group has unique storage needs, so joint planning for this is necessary. Also to benefit the user groups, we plan to set up areas for boarding of horses and ponies. This is also important to our longer term plans, as being able to share animals with Riding for the Disabled and Pony Club would enable us to reach more people currently outside of the equestrian community. We also plan for the eventual hiring of a caretaker to handle the routine maintenance.

Our vision for the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated also includes an all weather dressage arena. With an improved facility we will be able to host other major events, drawing top level instructors and other notables from the equestrian world for training and demonstrations. Taking note of our advantageous location on the Rail Trail, we also see the potential for a conference type facility, using the meeting rooms, kitchen and other plant, coordinated into an attraction package benefiting the member clubs and any other user groups.

In conclusion, we envisage a continuously improving facility at the Dunstan Racecourse. We plan to start slowly, focusing on expanding both the usage and the user groups, while keeping costs minimized. By working together the individual clubs plan to build a self-funding and user friendly facility that furthers both our immediate goal "to promote equestrian activities", but will also be an improving asset to the wider community.

From the Steering Committee of the Dunstan Equestrian Centre Incorporated

