

CHAPTER 14: RESERVES AND OPEN SPACE

14.0 INTRODUCTION

Reserves and open space provide for people's recreational interests, amenity values, protection of landscape and ecosystems, and recognise historic and cultural values. Provision for, and maintenance and enhancement of, the recreation and open space resources to meet the needs of the present and future District residents (the District's resident population is projected to increase from 37,973 in 1996 to 58,100 by the year 2031) and visitors are an essential part of sustainably managing the natural and physical resources of the District. The health and wellbeing of the District's residents and visitors will be enhanced by adequate opportunity to use recreational reserves and open space. A further category of open space is that which is held primarily for its natural values. National parks and scenic reserves fall into the latter category.

C10 10/07
Op 3/14

C20 8/10
Op 8/12

Open space varies in scale from the small neighbourhood park with limited facilities to the larger District reserves which are used for organised sport, clubrooms and parking, and can have significant environmental effects. The largest areas of open space in the District are the rural and coastal land resources. However, the open space and amenity values of privately owned rural land can vary with changes in land use and one of the adverse effects of development can be the loss of private open space, especially on the urban fringe.

Some recreational land, such as bowling clubs and showgrounds, is privately owned and may be valued by the community for open space and amenity reasons. However, these sites may be subject to development pressures and their long-term role as open space is not assured.

The quality of public open space and recreational facilities provided can affect the image of the District. Poorly maintained sites are unlikely to attract use and may result in a loss of natural values if weed infestation is allowed to occur. The principal issues are:

- (a) Adequacy of provision of reserves and open space for a growing population and addressing shortfalls.
- (b) Efficient and effective use of reserves and open space land.
- (c) Protection of natural values and education about those values.
- (d) Management of environmental effects from and onto reserve and open space sites.

Reserves and open space play a role in the management of stormwater, particularly within more dense urban areas. Reserves can be multi-functional, offering recreation opportunities, amenity values, ecological values, as well as performing stormwater management functions such as flood peak flow detention, water quality and flow management.

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Using a whole-catchment approach to stormwater management, open space and reserve areas can help to temper upstream stormwater contributions, reducing flow volumes into downstream parts of natural and man-made stormwater networks.

Open space and reserve areas can also contribute to a Low Impact Design approach to managing stormwater within urban catchments. Urban streams can be retained as features of subdivisions, riparian margins can be planted to enhance stormwater and ecological values, and storm detention basins can be grassed and planted for amenity or recreational use during the periods when it is dry.

The issue of provision of public access and protection of conservation values along the margins of lakes and rivers and along the coastline is addressed in Chapter 8. Provision through esplanade reserves or strips is governed specifically by rules in Section 16.4.

In coastal locations, reserve areas and open space can serve to provide a buffer to the adverse effects of coastal erosion and inundation as a result of sea-level rise as well as protecting plant and animal communities.

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14.1 PROVISION OF RESERVES AND OPEN SPACE

14.1.1 Issue

Adequacy of provision of reserves and open space for recreation and amenity.

14.1.2 Objective

Adequate area and distribution of a wide range of reserves and open spaces to maintain and enhance recreation, conservation, access and amenity values.

14.1.3 Policies

Refer to Policy sets 5.3, 6.7, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2.

Refer to Rule sections 16.3, 16.4, 16.5, 17.10, 18.1.

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| 14.1.3.1 | To provide at least four hectares of Council land per 1,000 residents for recreation and amenity space which is in addition to Crown and private land. | |
| 14.1.3.2 | To ensure additional open space is available in those areas (for example, Golden Bay and Motueka wards) which have high visitor numbers. | |
| 14.1.3.3 | To identify potential open space areas in advance of urban subdivision in order to provide for the open space needs of the future residents and workers in the area. | |
| 14.1.3.4 | To provide for new open space areas that are convenient and accessible for users, including the provision of walking and cycling linkages in and around townships, between townships and between reserves. | |
| 14.1.3.5 | To identify areas where there is a deficiency of open space. | |
| 14.1.3.6 | To adjust financial contributions for reserves and community services in lieu of the vesting of land for walkway/cycleway, open space and recreation reserve purposes, unless agreed otherwise. | |
| 14.1.3.7 | To identify, acquire, and manage land, including esplanade reserves and road reserves, to facilitate public access to water bodies and the coast. | |
| 14.1.3.8 | To encourage the integration of reserves and open space areas within a whole-catchment and Low Impact Design approach to drainage and the management of stormwater. | C7 7/07
Op 10/10 |
| 14.1.3.9 | To encourage effective and efficient design and establishment of parks and reserves that can integrate multiple uses and functions of open space, including for network infrastructure. | C69 6/19
Op 6/20 |

14.1.20 Methods of Implementation

14.1.20.1 Regulatory

- (a) Designation of proposed reserves on planning maps when required sites are well known or to address a local shortfall of reserve land or facilities.
- (b) Showing indicative reserves on planning maps when required sites are less well known.
- (c) Identification of zones for conservation and active and passive recreation.

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| (d) | Rules requiring financial contributions for recreation or amenity purposes at the time of subdivision and development. | |
| (e) | Rules requiring the use of Low Impact Design solutions to stormwater management, where appropriate. | C7 7/07
Op 10/10 |
| (f) | Standards of the Nelson Tasman Land Development Manual 2019 that can ensure the integrated design and efficient and effective provision of parks and reserves. | C69 6/19
Op 6/20 |

14.1.20.2 Investigations and Monitoring

- (a) Regular survey of, and consultation on, recreation and open space needs.

14.1.20.3 Education and Advocacy

- (a) Liaison and negotiation with other major open space providers.
- (b) Consultation with landowner representatives, community and environmental interest groups, relevant government agencies, and technical experts, to assess methods for maintaining and enhancing public access to and along the margins of the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers, and water bodies that are identified as priorities for public access.
- (c) Initiating a plan change within three years following the operative status of this chapter of the Plan, to incorporate outcomes of the consultation and assessment in (ii) above, if Plan amendments are required to implement those outcomes.

14.1.20.4 Works and Services

- (a) Land acquisition for recreation, including:
- Use of esplanade reserve entitlement to acquire land adjacent to rivers, lakes, and the coast.
 - Use of reserve funds to acquire land to facilitate public access to and along the coast and water bodies.
- (b) Land acquisition for stormwater management.

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14.1.30 Principal Reasons and Explanation

An adequate amount and equitable distribution of open space across the District is necessary to ensure all residents have easy access to open space. A standard of provision helps ensure adequate distribution. The Council will acquire new reserves primarily at the time of subdivision. The issue of access to and along water bodies and the need for riparian reserves is covered more fully in Chapter 8. Easy access to reserves is particularly important in urban areas where there is a higher density of population and individual recreation needs cannot be met on small urban allotments. It is also especially necessary for the younger and older residents of the District, who are less mobile. A range of reserves is needed to cater for the different activities favoured by the varying age groups in the population: for example, play areas, sports fields, walkways and nature areas. A Council survey has shown that walking is the most popular recreational activity. An indicative walkway network has been included as an appendix to the Plan.

Open space areas, parks, and reserves can play an important role in the management of urban stormwater. They contribute to a whole-catchment approach to stormwater management and can be consistent with Low Impact Design.

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Open space may be used for short-term detention of water during heavy rain events in built-up urban areas. Reserve areas may be created around existing natural or open-reticulation drainage networks, such as streams, grassy swales and ponds.

These areas of grass and vegetation will also slow down the rate of stormwater run-off from hard surfaces and can improve stormwater quality by intercepting the water before it enters the drainage system. Vegetation and soils can help to cleanse contaminated water before it enters the system. It is

therefore particularly important to recognise and accept the role of un-built open space in managing stormwater in urban areas.

The identification of three different types of open space zoning emphasises the difference of purpose for each type of open space. The demand for recreation is constantly changing with new activities being devised. The level of provision of reserves and facilities needs to be regularly surveyed to ensure that the needs of all sections of the community are being met.

The Council will work with other open space providers such as the Department of Conservation in areas with conservation values and subject to high visitor use.

The amenity values referred to in the objective may include intrinsic, spiritual, cultural and educational values. Reserves often include some or all of these values.

Council's Land Development Manual aims to deliver a standard of design and establishment of parks and reserves that are efficient, effective and integrated with other Council infrastructure networks such as stormwater management corridors, roads and non-vehicle accessways.

C69 6/19
Op 6/20

14.1.40 Performance Monitoring Indicators

- 14.1.40.1 Surveyed changes in the proportion of land in reserves or open space per capita in the District.
- 14.1.40.2 Surveyed satisfaction of the community, including visitors, with the quality of reserves and open space.

14.2 USE OF RESERVES AND OPEN SPACE

14.2.1 Issue

Use of reserves and open space for recreation and amenity.

14.2.2 Objective

Efficient and effective use of open space and reserves to meet community needs for recreation and amenity.

14.2.3 Policies

Refer to Policy sets 5.3, 6.7, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2.

Refer to Rule sections 16.3, 16.4, 17.9, 17.10, 17.11.

- 14.2.3.1 To maintain and where necessary improve the quality of reserves, open space and public recreational facilities.
- 14.2.3.2 To identify and protect areas that are important for organised recreational pursuits.
- 14.2.3.3 To encourage multiple use of reserves and open space and recreational facilities where practical.
- 14.2.3.4 To identify and protect areas that are important for informal low key recreation and community activities.
- 14.2.3.5 To advocate and promote that the relevant authorities make land and facilities at schools further available to the general public for recreation.

- 14.2.3.6** To relinquish land that is unsuitable (following consultation with the community) and deemed to be surplus in Council's reserve/open space register and acquire more suitable land.
- 14.2.3.7** To consult with the community on the management, development and design of open space and reserves.
- 14.2.3.8** To ensure that any urban reserve land acquired has sufficient road frontage for visibility from the street.

14.2.20 Methods of Implementation

14.2.20.1 Regulatory

- (a) Rules for the Recreation Zone to allow for both recreational buildings, organised recreation and green space.
- (b) Rules for traffic and parking requirements for the Recreation Zone.
- (c) Rules relating to Open Space Zone for informal recreation.
- (d) Standards of the Nelson Tasman Land Development Manual 2019 that can encourage integrated design of the parks and reserves.

C69 6/19
Op 6/20

14.2.20.2 Works and Services

- (a) Production, implementation and review of reserve management plans under the Reserves Act 1977.
- (b) Liaison between Council and other open space providers and reserve users.
- (c) Development and maintenance of open spaces.

14.2.20.3 Financial Incentives

- (a) Council may provide funding to help rural schools maintain facilities for public use in remote areas.

14.2.30 Principal Reasons and Explanation

Open space and reserves are a valuable and scarce resource that needs to be well managed. Differentiating between different open space zones has been undertaken to group different categories of open space. Many areas of open space in the District valued by the community are not gazetted as reserves and do not have management plans. Zoning provides some protection of these existing open spaces and unreserved land.

Multiple recreational use of the larger District reserves and open space is encouraged to make efficient use of the resource. However, careful management, design and consultation are necessary to ensure that conflicts and over-utilisation do not occur. Management plans prepared under the Reserves Act 1977 can provide a detailed management regime for land that is held as reserve.

Cemeteries in urban areas have generally been zoned as open space, where as cemeteries in the rural area have a rural zoning.

Policy 14.2.3.5 aims to increase the availability of non-Council owned open space in school grounds for recreation outside school hours. In some remote areas the Council has purchased recreational assets such as swimming pools for community use when schools have closed.

Relinquishing unsuitable or surplus land can release funds to use in upgrading or purchasing more valuable open spaces. However, the community will be consulted carefully to ensure the land is definitely not required.

The reason for Policy 14.2.3.8 is that urban reserve land needs to be visible to residents. Reserves that are visible are likely to be safer and contribute to the visual amenity of urban areas more than those that are secluded.

A high quality of reserve land will attract public use. Preparation and implementation of management plans under the Reserves Act provides a means for users to participate in the detailed planning of reserves.

14.2.40 Performance Monitoring Indicators

14.2.40.1 Surveyed satisfaction of users of reserves and open space with the ways in which such areas are available for recreational activities, and the effectiveness of management of effects.

14.3 CONSERVATION OF AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT VALUE

14.3.1 Issue

The identification, protection and enhancement of areas of significant natural and scientific value.

14.3.2 Objective

The conservation of those areas in the District that have significant natural and scientific values such as landform, ecosystems, natural character and heritage values.

14.3.3 Policies

Refer to Policy sets 5.3, 7.2 – 7.4, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2, 10.1, 10.2.

Refer to Rule sections 16.3, 16.4, 16.6, 17.5 - 17.8, 17.10, 17.11, 18.1, 18.2.

14.3.3.1 To identify and protect areas of conservation value by incorporating them into land with a protective status.

14.3.3.2 To manage the range of activities permitted in areas of specific natural value so that they are of a type that provides for the maintenance and enjoyment of the special natural values with least adverse effect on those values.

14.3.3.3 To enhance the District's natural areas by encouraging the formation of protected linked corridors between them, especially in the Takaka Hill area.

14.3.3.4 To provide information about significant natural values of the District.

14.3.20 Methods of Implementation

14.3.20.1 Regulatory

- (a) Rules for Conservation Zones controlling the effects of activities, including building scale, location, height and noise, and requiring setbacks and parking (in some circumstances).

14.3.20.2 Education and Advocacy

- (a) Promotion of covenants under the Conservation Act and Queen Elizabeth II National Trust Act through pamphlets and advice.
- (b) Protected private land agreements.

- (c) Encouragement of revegetation projects, particularly within linking corridors.

14.3.20.3 Works and Services

- (a) Purchase of land and gazettal as reserve.

14.3.20.4 Financial Incentives

- (a) Rates rebate for covenanted areas
- (b) Council may assist with fencing and pest control

14.3.30 Principal Reasons and Explanation

An extensive area of the District lies in one or other of the three national parks in the District: Nelson Lakes, Abel Tasman and Kahurangi. These and other parts of the conservation estate are managed principally by the Department of Conservation under its Conservation Management Strategy. The Council has endeavoured to make policies that will complement the Conservation Management Strategy and promote natural values in these areas.

Areas with special natural values that are in private ownership are not included in the Conservation Zone. However covenanting of these areas will be encouraged and in special circumstances the Council may endeavour to purchase these areas. These matters are also discussed in Chapter 10 of the Plan.

Natural areas can be enhanced by forming or maintaining protective linking corridors between them for wildlife to use. Particular areas of the District such as Big Bush and parts of the Takaka Hill have value as wildlife corridors. In some cases, esplanade reserves can provide very good linkages.

14.3.40 Performance Monitoring Indicators

- 14.3.40.1** Changes in extent of indigenous vegetation or natural features being formally or voluntarily protected by incorporation in a reserve or covenant.

14.4 EFFECTS OF ACTIVITIES AND FACILITIES ON RESERVES AND SURROUNDING AREAS

14.4.1 Issue

Activities and facilities that have the potential to cause significant adverse effects on reserves, open space and surrounding areas.

14.4.2 Objective

The avoidance of significant adverse effects of activities and facilities on open space and recreational areas, and on the amenity values of surrounding areas.

14.4.3 Policies

Refer to Policy sets 5.3, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 8.1, 8.2, 9.1, 9.2, 9.3.

Refer to Rule sections 16.1, 16.3, 16.4, 16.6, 17.1 – 17.11, 18.1, 18.2.

- 14.4.3.1** To control the scale, extent and location of buildings and structures to ensure the open space character of reserves is maintained.

14.4.3.2 To ensure that activities associated with open space and reserves do not give rise to adverse environmental effects (such as noise, glare, traffic, pesticide discharge) without adequate mitigation.

14.4.3.3 To design open space and recreational areas to complement and, where necessary, to improve the visual amenity of the surrounding area.

14.4.20 Methods of Implementation

14.4.20.1 Regulatory

- (a) Rules limiting the height, setback and coverage of buildings in Open Space, Recreation and Conservation zones.
- (b) Rules limiting noise and pesticide discharges in Open Space, Recreation and Conservation zones.
- (c) Rules requiring car parking and landscaping in Recreation Zones.
- (d) Rules restricting hours of activities in Recreation Zones.
- (e) Rules limiting activities which have an adverse effect on environment and health in Open Space Zones and reserve areas.
- (f) Rules controlling glare and lighting overspill in Recreation and Open Space Zones.

14.4.20.2 Works and Services

- (a) Detailed layout of reserves in site-specific management plans.

14.4.30 Principal Reasons and Explanation

Open space generally enhances the locality in which it occurs. It can also provide sites for large trees which are inappropriate on smaller residential sections. The maintenance of open character is often important in a neighbourhood. Any buildings placed on a reserve or open space should not detract from this character. Some recreation facilities such as gymnasiums are large and bulky. Effective use of colour and landscaping can reduce the bulk of these buildings. There can be other effects from recreational activities such as noise, traffic and dust that need to be mitigated by on-site parking requirements and noise limits to protect residential neighbours. Parking is not usually required for local neighbourhood reserves. The sale of liquor to patrons at clubrooms late at night can result in noisy and disruptive behaviour which adversely affects neighbours.

As reserves and open space areas are important to the health and wellbeing of the residents of, and the visitors to, the District, any adverse effects of activities will be controlled.

14.4.40 Performance Monitoring Indicators

14.4.40.1 Recorded incidence of complaints across boundaries of Recreation and Open Space zones with adjoining activities.

14.50 ENVIRONMENTAL RESULTS ANTICIPATED

14.50.1 The provision of open space and a range of different reserves for recreation and conservation throughout the District.

14.50.2 Improved design of facilities on reserves, and maintenance and use of reserves, to minimise environmental effects.

14.50.3 Reduced conflict between reserve activities and the neighbouring environment.