

MINUTES

TITLE: Waimea River Park Draft Management Plan Hearing
DATE: Wednesday 28 April 2010
TIME: 9.30 am
VENUE: Tasman District Council Chamber, 189 Queen Street, Richmond

PRESENT: Cr S G Bryant (Chair), Crs T B King, R G Currie, B W Ensor, G A Glover and T E Norriss

IN ATTENDANCE: Community Services Manager (L L Kennedy), Manager Property Services (J K Frater), Consultant (M Harding), Executive Assistant (T Cater), Administration Officer (J A Proctor)

1 REPORTS

1.1 Waimea River Park Draft Management Plan – Report RCS10-04-02

Community Services Manager, Mr Kennedy, spoke to the report contained in the agenda.

2 SUBMITTERS

2.1 Rhys Barrier and Lawson Davey – Fish and Game New Zealand

Mr Davey spoke to the submission.

Map 2 - the Challies Island restoration area in the North East should be extended out to the river. This would ensure that full benefits were obtained in relation to enhancing freshwater species as a linkage to the river was required. Map 3 – indigenous forest restoration was ideally suited to wetland creation. 98% of the wetlands had been lost in the Plains area. The saltwater edge provided whitebait spawning opportunities. Fish and Game suggested using rainbow trout and salmon for the fish out ponds as brown trout were difficult to raise. The fish out pond should be designed to ensure that salmon and rainbow trout did not escape.

Turning to the issue of locked gates, Mr Davey felt that installing locked gates would not solve the issue of rubbish being dumped illegally. Gates would only restrict legitimate users.

Whilst Fish and Game New Zealand did not have a formal view on gravel extraction, it would ask that the Council considered the implications of moving such sites as it would prove difficult to identify alternative locations. It was stated that in its present location, gravel extraction assisted with the regeneration of wetlands and that the gravel extraction companies were providing good opportunities for the creation of further wetland areas.

The Waimea bermlands were extremely important for hunting pheasants which had a very short season and occurred at a time when public usage of the area was low. Fish and Game New Zealand were extremely keen to see this continue as it was one of the few areas that had a wild population of pheasants.

In response to questioning, Mr Davey advised that pheasant shooting occurred on 3 defined weekends and that the water fowl and quail season lasted 4 months. Most game bird hunting occurred by the river or at Challies Island. The bermland area provided excellent habitat for pheasants and that any further development was likely to impinge on the population.

2.2 Hugh Challies

Mr Challies spoke to his submission and advised that his family had historically owned the land and permitted locals access to Challies island.

Mr Challies stated that his brother had offered to gift land for the extension of Cotterell Road to Rabbit Island to prevent the farm from being split in half. Council declined and chose the Redwood Road route, therefore splitting the farm and making stock movements difficult. In 1996 as a result of a survey, land changed from limited to guaranteed titled and Council took possession of the stock bank and now had a right of way in place. Mr Challies believed that the Council should approach him directly if it wished to turn part of his land into a park.

In response to questioning, Mr Challies advised that no members of the public had approached him for access across his land as they believed that access was permitted.

2.3 Clive and Margaret Richards

Clive and Margaret Richards spoke to their submission and said that they were pleased to hear that Council had a plan for the area and agreed with the comments regarding motor vehicle restricted access. Regarding clause 9.4 horse riding, they advised that not a great many people used the stop bank and that their horses co-existed well with cyclists. The proposed plan allowed for shooting in the park which they were not opposed to.

The relocation of the paintball was an issue for them as the 40m buffer zone was not sufficient to stop the noise of the guns and horn. They suggested a 200m buffer zone and continued that the access to the bermlands via River Road was difficult. Relocating the paintball to Rabbit Island was preferable and would provide better access to users.

Mrs Richards regarded the river as part of her back yard and used it on a daily basis. In the last year Mrs Richards had reported a fire, a regular overstayer, rubbish and abandoned cars and felt that if access to the area was denied it would upset her greatly.

In response to questioning Mrs Richards stated that meeting shooters in the park had made her anxious but that there had not been any incidents.

2.4 L Davey & Mr Luce – Sport Fishing for Youth Charitable Trust

Mr Davey spoke to his submission and advised that he felt that the draft language of the plan was ambiguous in certain areas and required further clarification.

In response to questioning Mr Davey advised that it was initially thought that users of the fish out pond would be 15 years of age. Further discussion with Fish and Game New Zealand may revise that to 12 years of age and under. The new fish out pond would not be connected to the Waimea River. A local company had indicated that they would do the earthworks and landscaping if required.

2.5 William Cook

Mr Cook spoke to his submission and stated that the Cotterell Road and right hand access to the park was the last stronghold for certain types of birds and suggested that it be removed from the plan.

In response to questioning from Mr Harding, Mr Cook advised that he would still have concerns even if there were greater restrictions placed on dog access as it was difficult to police. Mr Cook suggested screening the area to provide a safe haven for the birds.

2.6 Pamela Sirett – Brightwater Community Association Inc.

Ms Sirett spoke to her submission and said that the people of Brightwater felt it was a wonderful concept and were supportive of the plan.

2.7 Mark Paynter – Paintball Nelson Ltd

Mr Paynter spoke to his submission and advised that he would prefer to retain their current site and were not against hunters using the land for shooting game birds.

Mr Wayne Stockdale, club president of Appleby Paintball advised that they had 45 affiliated members who were mostly teenage boys. Paintball was a growing sport and the present site was an excellent venue.

In response to questioning Mr Paynter advised that there had never been any incidents with neighbours or members of the public. Mr Paynter ran a skirmish type field and if the pine trees were removed from the proposed new site, then it would be like a desert. He continued, that if relocation took place, then it would be preferable for the pine trees to remain.

The meeting adjourned at 10.30 am.

The meeting resumed at 10.47 am.

2.8 Karen Sutherland

Ms Sutherland spoke to her submission and said that her concern was that rather than improve the area, it could lead to vandalism. If the paintball site is relocated, this is a flood zone.

Ms Sutherland asked if Council would pay for a resource consent if the paintball site needs to be relocated? Mr Frater said it would either be a new consent or a variation to the existing consent.

She asked if there has been an estimated budget and has it been disclosed. Mr Kennedy said there is not a a budget yet.

2.9 Martin Conway

Mr Conway spoke to his submission and congratulated Mike Harding on the way he compiled the plan. He said the scale of the A4 plans which were included in the plan are quite difficult to read and would prefer larger plans. He said it may be better if a zoning approach is not used.

2.10 Gillian Bishop

Ms Bishop spoke to her submission and said the Nelson Riding Club is very supportive of the plan and do appreciate protecting and enhancing the conservation values.

Cr Glover asked if there is a lot of usage from horses from Rough Island to Waimea River or would equestrians use Rabbit Island generally? Ms Bishop replied saying people who are riding on Rough Island may do a circuit outside the park in the area out to Redwood Road but generally do not go along the road and access other areas. Similarly, riders at Rabbit Island generally stay on Rabbit Island. Riders on the Waimea River Park would stay on the river side.

Cr Glover asked if in the past have there been any issues with pheasant shooting or paintball? Ms Bishop said that they have not had any reports on people being negatively impacted by paintball. She said that guns and horses are not a good mix but good signage would be sufficient.

Cr Glover asked why horses cannot ride on the stop banks? Mr Harding replied that they could cause damage to the stop banks and another point is conflict with other users.

Mr Harding asked if there would be problems if horses rode on the stop banks and Ms Bishop said she didn't think so. She knows there are riders that currently ride on stop banks.

Cr Currie asked how many active members of the equestrian club would use the area? Ms Bishop said there could be 20 riders during the weekend.

In response to questioning from Cr Bryant, Ms Bishop said that Clover Road West is the only designated horse floating area in the plan and that it would be preferable to have a Lower Queen Street parking spot.

2.11 Stephen Wynne-Jones

Mr Wynne-Jones spoke to his submission and said that the Department of Conservation is very supportive of the Park. He also said they would prefer it to be a reserve under the Reserves Act.

In response to questioning from Cr Norriss, Mr Wynne-Jones said there is vacant industrial land at Eves Valley for the gravel extraction and processing.

2.12 Bruce Taylor

Mr Taylor talked to his Challies Island submission and in response to questioning from Cr Glover, said that stock piles of gravel have never washed away in a flood. He said he didn't have any issues with the public coming up from river park into the crusher site.

Mr Taylor then talked to his bermlands submission. He said that aggregates are very important to New Zealand.

Mr Taylor asked the Committee to visualise the area by Appleby Bridge and Lower Queen Street which is an area which he leases off Council. He saw in the plan about putting in a parking area and toilet and he doesn't think it would last as it is very flood prone.

2.12 Tim Robinson

Mr Robinson spoke to his submission and in response to questioning from Cr Glover, said young people generally use their vehicles on the gravel and it does not affect the flora and fauna which are on the bermlands. She asked when he lived there did he see a fire get out of hand? Mr Robinson said he had not.

2.13 Fergus O'Connor

Mr O'Connor spoke to his submission and said that their cow herd crosses the stopbank four times a day (300 cows) which may make it inconvenient if a walk/cycle way was on top of the west side stop banks from the Appleby Bridge. He suggested that Council have a good look at the possibility of using the old road down the river bed for a walkway/cycleway as this would be shorter and it would have river access.

Mr O'Connor said he would like a site visit and Mr Kennedy said he would coordinate the meeting with Mr O'Connor in due course.

Cr Glover asked Mr O'Connor if he thinks that people need access by vehicle to the true left area in order to fish and whitebait? Mr O'Connor said that he would prefer that they did have this access but that people do take rubbish down to the river. Cr Glover asked if there is currently good signage to say no rubbish dumping? He said there was one big sign.

2.14 Gabrielle O'Connor

Ms O'Connor spoke to her submission and said it is impractical to remove the floodgate at Pearl Creek. Cr Glover asked how Ms O'Connor sees the lower end of the river? Ms O'Connor said that quite healthy strands of ribbonwood are growing and there has been revegetation on the southern side of Pearl Creek.

2.15 Fulton Hogan – Nigel McFadden

Nigel McFadden from McFadden McMeeken Phillips was in attendance to speak to the submission, representing Fulton Hogan.

Cr Norriss said that one of the issues was safety around the plants. He asked if the company has a policy about keeping people away while they are operating? Mr Taylor said that people must make sure the loader driver has observed their presence.

Cr King said if the plan was changed to be either more or less encouraging / discouraging how much scope would there be to make people access the area and how much room to modify to enable a greater level of public use? They could fence off a walking track by the stock bank.

Cr Currie asked how often would horses be going through the area where the crusher plants are during the course of a day? Mr Taylor said there would be very few and the only horses he has observed were by the river bed.

In response to questioning from Cr Bryant, Mr Taylor said he was unaware of any quarry areas being located elsewhere?

Cr Glover asked if there was any accident history with members of the public. Mr Taylor said there was not.

Mr Harding asked what proportion of gravel processed at the plant comes from Waimea River berm land? Mr Taylor replied one third.

3 DELIBERATION ON SUBMISSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Mr Harding spoke to the following submissions that were received and that were not here to present their submission.

Submission number 2 – Waimea Hops Ltd. There is no pedestrian access but there is legal access.

Submission number 3 – Downer EDi Works

Submission number 6 – Tasman District Gun Dog Society

At 12.00 pm the meeting was adjourned until 1.00 pm.

Submission number 7 – Yvonne Lilian Burbridge and Anthony Ian Russ. Cr Ensor asked if there will be some restriction used on maimais? If someone builds something and no longer used it, who is responsible? Mr Frater said that most shooters are responsible people and he doesn't think there will be an issue with construction or abandonment of maimais. Mr Smith said that there are dual benefits.

Submission number 8 – Margaret Cotton

Submission number 9 – NZ Horse Recreation Group

Submission number 10 – Jason and Vicki Deer

Submission number 11 – Kevin King. Cr Ensor asked what was the main reason Mr King is opposed to vehicle access from the bridge to Clover Road. Mr King said that this section of road is a great playground for young people to use.

Submission number 14 – Anita Pearless

Submission number 15 – Kay and Gavin Bradley

Submission number 17 – NZ Transport Agency

Submission number 19 – William Byrne

Submission number 21 – Peter Burton

Submission number 24 – Alan and Vicki Gardner

Submission number 25 – National Council of Women of New Zealand (Inc). Cr Glover asked if there have been any issues with electric fences? Mr Frater said no that the majority are at the base of the stock banks.

Submission number 26 – Brian and Hilary Ford

Submission number 27 – Transpower New Zealand Ltd

Submission number 28 – Federated Farmers

Submission number 30 – Nelson Tasman Branch Royal Forest & Bird Protection Society Inc

Submission number 31 – Nick, Joy, Conor and Freya Jackson

Submission number 32 – D S Melville

Submission number 33 – Daelyn Partnership

Submission number 35 – Marie O'Connor and Glenn Leys

The meeting was adjourned at 2.30 pm.

Discussions pursued regarding particular issues that submitters had raised.

Mr Frater is going to investigate the access over Mr Challies land.

Vehicle access was an issue that was discussed. Cr Norriss said if we restricted vehicle access, this would restrict access to a lot of people. Cr King said that it should be investigated where we should or should not provide vehicle access. Mr Frater said there is limited access at present. Cr Glover suggested signage be provided at the river

prohibiting rubbish dumping. Mr Harding noted that 19 submissions wanted greater vehicle access. He thought permitted access to the northern part of the park (by Appleby Bridge) would be logical. Cr King said that we should look at amending the blanket 'no vehicle' policy to looking at the possibility of vehicle access in the areas that Mr Harding suggested. Also to investigate areas or times and see if any of the options make a practical way to make it accessible.

Another issue that was discussed was the gravel processing plants. It was thought that any interested parties should come back to Council showing how they might operate in the objective of the plan. Cr Norriss said that he thought the processing plants were in the appropriate place.

The next issue that was discussed was dogs and whether or not they should be on leashes only or be prohibited. Cr Norriss stated that leash control should be in appropriate areas. It was suggested that this issue should be left to the Dog Control Bylaw.

Paintball was another issue that was raised. Paintball Nelson Limited's preference was to stay at the present site but they understand about the wetland situation and they are okay about moving. Their lease expires at the end of next year so they may need a bit more time.

The meeting was concluded at 4.12 pm.

Date Confirmed:

Chair: