

**Underwood Park and Walmsley
Park**

Management Plan, 1989

Mt. Roskill Borough Council

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Appendix One: Landscape Concept Report

Part One – Background information

This Management Plan deals with two contiguous recreation reserves in the northwest of the Borough: Underwood Park and Walmsley Park.

1.1 Legal description

Underwood Park

Lot 12 DP 38570 (CT. 1098/20), 1.7966 ha. ; Gazette Notice 1956/P. 314

Pt. Lot III DP 38524 (CT. 1384/29), 1.7397 ha.; Gazette Notice 1959/P.314

Lot 550 DP 40646 (CT. 1384/29), 2074m²; Gazette Notice 1959/P.314

Walmsley Park

Lot 112 DP 43048 (pt.CT. 1098/25); 3,633 ha.; Gazette Notice 1958/P. 386

1.2 Classification

Underwood Park

Classified “Recreation”

NZ Gazette, May 1981 No. 58, P. 1130 (Lots 12 & 550)

NZ Gazette, Sept. 1983 No. 150, P. 3074 (Lot III)

Walmsley Park

Classified ‘Recreation’

NZ Gazette, 14 May 1981 No. 58, P.1330

1.3 Zoning

Both reserves are zoned “Recreation 1”. The purpose of this zone, as stated in the Operative District Scheme, is “to provide areas of open space for casual recreation pursuits and the preservation of existing amenities”.

1.4 Location and access

The Parks are situated in the northwest of the Borough with Underwood Park extending from the border of Auckland City in the west (Richardson Road) to Beagle Avenue 750m east. Street frontages to Richardson Road, Wainright Road and Beagle Avenue, plus two pedestrian accessways to O’Donnell Avenue give access to Underwood Park. The northern boundary of the reserve adjoins Mt. Albert City with Mt. Albert’s McGehan Close Reserve at the southern end of McGehan Close providing access to the north.

Walmsley Park which extends 540m from Beagle Avenue to Sandringham Road has frontages to those streets and is also served by pedestrian accessways to O’Donnell Avenue, Aurora Avenue and Sheppard Avenue.

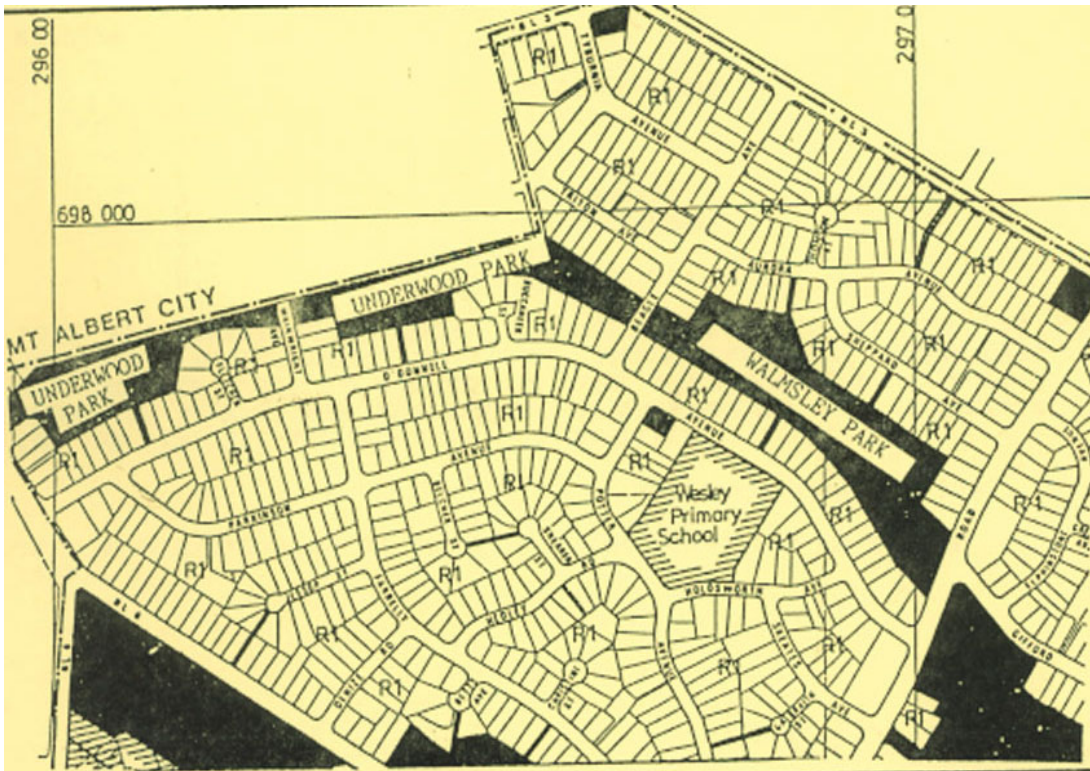


Figure 1 Location Plan

1.5 Description

The reserves are largely flat, open, exposed, and sparsely vegetated. Their major distinguishing feature is the open creek (the Oakley Creek) which skirts the northern border of Underwood Park then cuts through the middle of Walmsley Park. The western end of Walmsley is less exposed and has a more varying topography than the remainder of the reserves.

The reserves vary in width from approximately 125m (near Sandringham Road) to approximately 15m (near Wainwright Road).

There are no formed paths, pedestrian footbridges, seating, buildings or other facilities within the reserves.

Because of poor ground conditions in parts of the reserves, and a lack of formed pathways, current recreational use is fairly minimal and generally limited to walking and jogging.

One fairly worn metal sign announcing “Walmsley Park” is located on the Sandringham Road frontage.

The reserves are surrounded by residential properties with 108 lots in Mt Roskill alone having a common boundary. The Wesley Primary School is within 100m of Walmsley Park.

1.6 History

Both reserves were vested in the mid 1950s as recreation reserves, subject to state housing subdivisions of surrounding areas. Like the streets in the vicinity, the reserves were named after local body politicians.

A number of recreational uses have been proposed for the reserves over the year although most have not eventuated.

Walmsley Park

In 1996 the Western Suburbs Indoor Basketball League proposed to build a basketball stadium on part of Walmsley Park.

At the time the Town Clerk stated:

“It is a fact that Walmsley Park is not developed as a recreation area other than to the extent that it is kept cut as much as possible and even the cutting is extremely difficult and often has to be left for long periods in the Winter owing to the wet state of the ground”.

A condition stipulating adequate drainage of the area was recommended. The proposal involved the siting of the stadium on the northern side of the watercourse with provision for a possible 300 vehicles on the southern side. Despite the consent of the Minister of Lands the Club decided not to proceed with the stadium.

Subsequent approaches from the Sparta-Newmarket Association Football Club in 1975 and the Central Soccer Club in 1984 to use Walmsley Park for junior sports fields were declined on the grounds that the physical characteristics of the area were not favourable for the playing of ball games and that the whole park required major drainage and earthworks to develop if for sporting purposes and this was not the Council's intention at it was planned to develop the Reserve as a passive recreation area.

In June 1985 an approach was made by the Mt Roskill Pony Club to use part of Walmsley Park between 1st September and 31st May each year. It was proposed to fence the perimeter of the area required, form two areas of 40m x 20m for dressage training, seek permission to erect a clubhouse and some permanent obstacles for jumping. In July 1985 Council approved in principle the use of Walmsley Park by the Club, because of alternative use of temporary facilities elsewhere, but the approval was extended for the twelve (12) month period prior to 31 March 1988, in March 1986, although likewise was not taken up.

Underwood Park

In 1961 a Scout Hall was located near Wainwright Avenue. In 1983 the Borough Engineer sought Council approval to tidy up the area since the Scout Group using the Den had gone into recess 8 years previously. The Den was subsequently demolished.

In 1971 Council investigated the possibility of developing a Caravan Park at Underwood Park. Between Beagle Avenue and Wainwright Avenue. An initial proposal involved 52 caravan sites, 30 cabins and one service building.

In May 1987 Council received a Notified Planning Application from the Manukau Indoor Bowling Centre Inc to construct a 918m² hall and associated carparking for Indoor Bowls and affiliated activities near the former site of the Scout Den.

Objections were received from a number of individuals and organisations including the Auckland Regional Authority, Mt Albert City Council and the Department of Conservation. As a result, the Centre decided to withdraw its application until Oakley Creek was upgraded.

In mid 1987 Council commissioned the Landscape Architect firm LA4 to prepare a Landscape Concept Report and Plans to assist in the preparation of a Management Plan for the two parks. (The report and plans are included as Appendix 1 to the Management Plan).

During preparation of the above landscape plans 7th Form Geography students from Mt Roskill Grammar School undertook a survey of residents living adjacent to Underwood and Walmsley Parks to assess the current use made of the parks by local residents as well as the residents views on existing problems and potential development options.

The students findings and recommendations were subsequently incorporated into the Landscape Report and Plans. Council acknowledges the work and enthusiasm of the students in undertaking this project.

Part 2 – Objectives

To encourage and facilitate the use of the reserves for casual recreational pursuits.

To maintain or develop the reserves as attractive open spaces in a built-up environment.

To encourage the use of the reserves as a means of pedestrian access and as links in a series of reserves.

To maintain the reserves as open space by restricting the encroachment of buildings, roading and parking areas.

Part 3 – Policies

3.1 Buildings and future users

The reserve is to remain generally as open space and informal use by the public shall be encouraged.

The main priorities for the reserve shall be footpath construction (to enable the reserves to be more effectively utilised) and framework tree planting (to help improve the reserves visually).

No buildings except storage or implement sheds associated with the maintenance of the reserve and not exceeding 50m² in floor area, shall be permitted within the reserves. Any such sheds shall be unobtrusively located and of a design in keeping with the surrounding environment.

Uses, (not necessarily involving the need for buildings), shall not be permitted where these are likely to:

- a) Alienate public land from use by the public as a whole;
- b) Render either or both of the parks unable to be developed as part of a network of parks along Oakley Creek.
- c) Conflict with a comprehensive footpath network.
- d) Be unsuited to ground conditions.

For the above reasons Council does not consider that the reserves are a suitable location for the establishment of a Pony Club headquarters involving grazing, training and dressage areas, clubhouse and parking.

The use of the reserves for occasional outdoor church services and similar activities shall be permitted provided that conditions relative to the use of Councils reserves are applied (i.e. that no traffic hazards are created, that the level of noise from the public address system is reasonable and that the grounds are left in a tidy condition.) Leases or licences for such activities shall normally be not required.

Council shall create several children's play areas within the reserves with the choice of areas dependent upon factors such as ground conditions, and distance from existing play facilities, etc.

Two play areas, (one at the western end of Underwood Park and the other at the western end of Walmsley Park), identified in the Landscape Concept Plans, shall be the principal areas considered for such development although modification of locations may be undertaken for reasons such as visibility, supervision and safety.

Play equipment to be installed in play areas shall be similar to that being installed elsewhere in the borough. Safety surfacing shall be provided in conjunction with the equipment.

3.2 Access and parking

Council shall encourage the use of use of the reserve by pedestrians by improving all-weather access across the Oakley Creek and along the length of the reserves.

A comprehensive network of footpaths shall be constructed generally as shown in the Landscape Concept Plans.

In the eastern part of Underwood Park paths shall be constructed on both sides of the creek. On the northern side the path shall link through to the Mt. Albert City Council reserve land at the end of McGehan Close.

Footpaths shall be a minimum of 1.8m wide and constructed of concrete rather than tarseal to reduce frequency of resurfacing and enable easier control of Kikuyu Grass.

The footpaths shall also fulfil the function of cycleways and shall form an integral part of a wider cycleway network through the borough.

To overcome the physical obstacles of Oakley Creek and to improve pedestrian access to Wesley Primary School a footbridge shall be located in Walmsley Park to link with the existing accessways from Sheppard Road and O'Connell Avenue. The footbridge shall be designed to match those of adjacent War Memorial Park.

Additional footbridges may be provided at a future date should these be considered feasible.

The main entry points to the parks shall continue to be from Richardson Road, Beagle Avenue and Sandringham Road. These entry points shall be upgraded to make them welcoming to pedestrians and informative to passing motorists.

Improvements to park entrances shall include:

- i) Richardson Road entrance to Underwood Park

Removal of existing low timber fence, and installation of a low post and chain fence (with removable posts where necessary for maintenance vehicle access), following construction of footpath.

ii) Beagle Avenue entrances to both Parks

Removal of existing rocks unless concrete parapets above the creek are to be extended as part of the ARA drainage proposals; provision of post and chain fencing to restrict vehicle access by public; replastering or painting and treatment to reduce graffiti; and positioning of new park name and signs on parapets

iii) Sandringham Road entrance to Walmsley Road

Provision for similar fencing to other entrances and removal of old, unsightly footbridge inside entrance.

Council shall continue to prohibit public vehicular access on the reserves.

Additional large-scale carparking areas are considered inappropriate for the reserves since only the Sandringham Road frontage is large enough to accommodate carparking and a carpark already exists in War Memorial Park opposite. Furthermore the reserves are seen likely to attract residents of the numerous properties bordering them (i.e. pedestrians) rather than those from further afield arriving by vehicle. However Council may provide limited additional parking (possibly angled kerbside parking) in the vicinity of the Beagle Avenue and Sandringham Road entrances.

3.3 Landscaping

The Landscaping Concept Report and Plans shall form the basis for future landscaping of the parks although some modification of certain elements may be necessary in order to give Council greater flexibility in matters such as drainage, land-shaping and location of play areas.

Recognition shall be given to the 4 distinct landscape character areas, as identified in the Landscape Concept Plans in the provision of different landscape treatments.

- i Underwood Park – between Richardson Road and Fletcher Street.
- ii Underwood Park – narrow portion to the north of Fletcher Street.
- iii Underwood Park – from Wainwright Ave to Buccaneer Street.
- iv Underwood Park from Buccaneer Street East and whole of Walmsley Park.

A comprehensive programme of tree planting shall be undertaken as illustrated in the Landscape Concept Plans.

Three different types of tree planting shall be undertaken:

- i. Few *Weeping Willows* shall be planted close to the creek edge where no shaping of the bank has taken place. Care shall be taken to plant and maintain trees in such a manner that the likelihood of problems arising from plant material dropping into waterway and reinfesting other areas downstream is minimised. Care shall also be taken not to place drains in close proximity to willows.
- ii. *6 metre tall deciduous trees*
Shall be planted together with native species to create a sense of human scale and enclosure in the vast open spaces of the parks. Where the trees are closer to neighbouring properties deciduous species shall be used.

iii. Native trees

These shall continue to be used where ground conditions permit, in association with deciduous species to give year round colour and texture.

Almost all new planting shall be tall, clear stemmed tree species allowing clear visibility beneath the canopies, in order to allay possible fears that increased planting could give cover to undesirables.

The shaping of the banks of Oakley Creek shall be carried out as shown in the Landscape Concept Report and Plans, to reduce the area of spraying and to increase safe public access to the waters edge.

3.4 Drainage

Subsurface drainage schemes shall be installed where necessary to improve ground conditions for public use of the parks and for successful tree establishment.

A full evaluation of the soil and rock types present and costs involved shall be made prior to final systems being chosen.

Council shall investigate the possibility of removal of clay fill dumped on part of Underwood Park, and assess the soil beneath and steps required to improve its quality.

Council shall investigate the possibility of raising the level of a portion of the Park so that it may be used all year round and, if necessary, lowering a portion of the park so that it can take retention waters.

3.5 ARA drainage proposals

Flood control measures developed by the ARA to control regular flooding of Oakley Creek along its whole length shall be implemented within the near future.

Works proposed by the ARA include a new 3.5m wide culvert at Richardson Road and an associated new retaining wall on the south side of the creek in Underwood Park, widening of the southern side of the creek to improve the flow; a second culvert at Beagle Avenue; and improvements to the Sandringham Road culvert.

Council shall liaise with the ARA during planning and construction of works over matters such as bank shaping so that mutually acceptable designs are implemented.

3.6 Signs and park furniture

Signs shall be provided at the main entry points to the reserves to encourage pedestrian access.

Park furniture (seats, litter bins, lights, etc) shall be provided in appropriate locations throughout the reserves.

A co-ordinated design concept shall be developed for all park furniture within the reserves.

3.7 Leases/Licences

Because of the unsuitability of the reserve for organised sporting activities and the Council policy of excluding buildings from Underwood and Walmsley Parks, Council is unlikely to enter into any formal leases or licences relating to the reserve.

Outdoor church services and similar activities as permitted elsewhere in this management plan shall normally not require leases or licences.

3.8 Maintenance and administration

Maintenance of the reserve shall be the responsibility of Council.

Council shall maintain and improve the reserves to a high standard.

Council shall ensure suitable paths, bridges, seating, signs and rubbish receptacles are provided and maintained.

Council shall liaise with the ARA and other relevant bodies on matters relating to the Oakley Creek, and pedestrian links beyond current Council boundaries.

Any use of the reserve shall comply with relevant Council bylaws.

All works proposed in this Management Plan are subject to availability of finance.

The Landscape Concept Report and Plans (Appendix 1) shall be considered as an integral part of this Management Plan, although some modification of certain elements may be undertaken to give Council greater flexibility in development of the reserves.

Council shall endeavour to review this Management Plan at five yearly intervals.

Appendix One
Landscape Concept Report
Mt Roskill Borough Council

Introduction

Scope of the Report

This report has been prepared for Mt. Roskill Borough Council to be read in conjunction with the three Landscape Concept Plans, to assist in the preparation of Management Plans for Underwood & Walmsley Parks. A number of factors influencing development possibilities have been prior to finalising the Landscape Concept Plans and these are discussed in detail within this report.

Location of the Parks

Underwood & Walmsley Parks are part of an extensive belt of open space which runs either side of Oakley Creek right through Mt. Roskill and onto Auckland City to the west. See Figure 2.

Underwood Park extends from Richard Road in the west to Beagle Avenue in the east. Only Beagle Ave. separates Underwood Park from Walmsley Park which runs east as far as Sandringham Road. There is a strong visual link between Underwood & Walmsley Parks and between Walmsley and War Memorial Park to the east of Sandringham Road. A Landscape Concept Plan has already been prepared for War Memorial Park and reference will be made to it within this report.

Mt. Roskill Grammar School Submissions

During the preparation of this report and the Landscape Concept Plans the 7th Form Geography students at Mt. Roskill Grammar undertook a survey of residents living adjacent to Underwood & Walmsley Parks. From the information gained the students were able to assess the current use made of the parks by local residents as well as the residents' views on existing problems and potential development options. The conclusions of the student's studies took the form of four "Management Plans" incorporating and a model. Their findings and recommendations have been incorporated into this report and the accompanying plans.

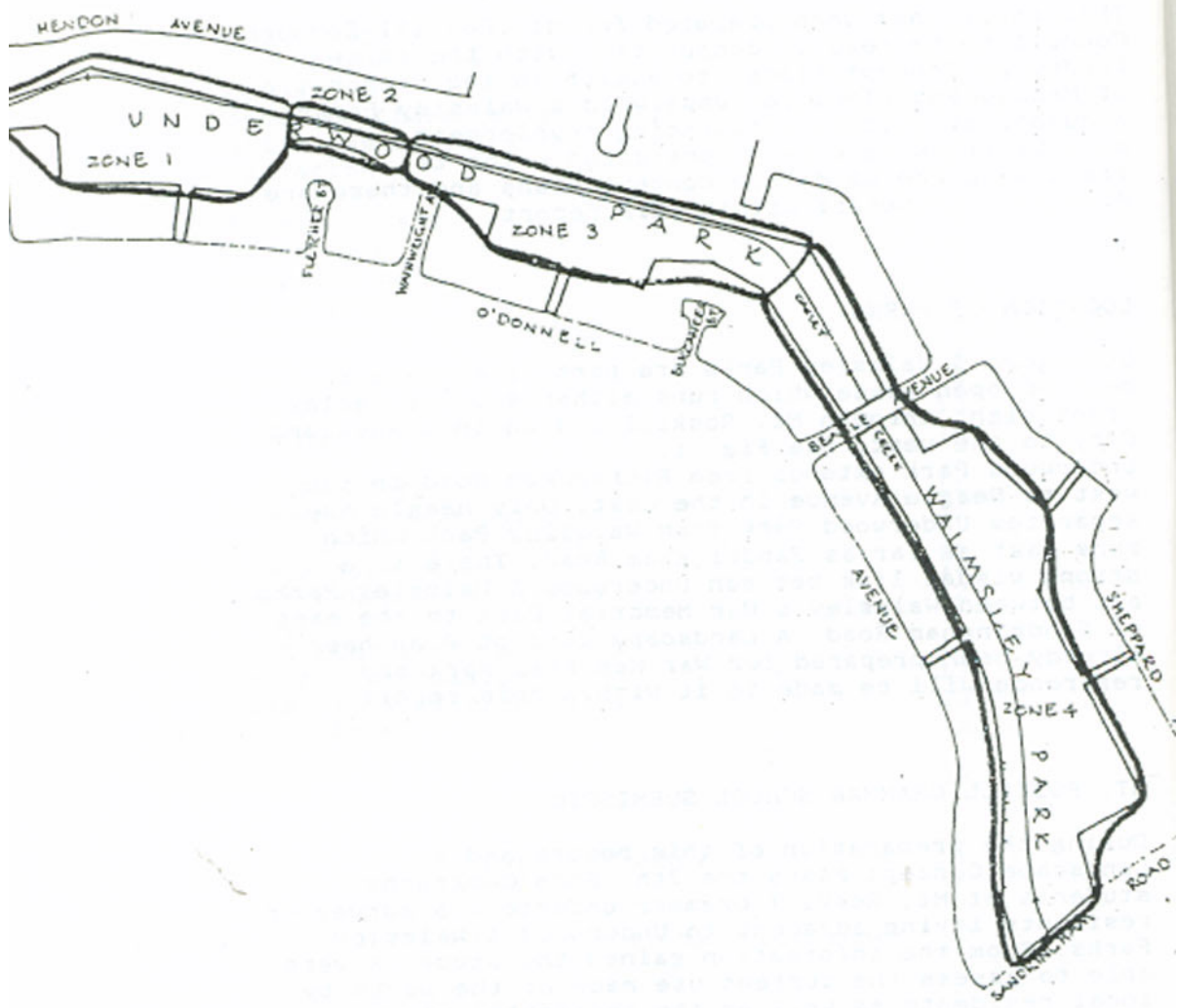


Figure 2 Location and Zoning of Underwood Walmsley Park

Existing Conditions

Ground Conditions

Oakley Creek is one of Auckland's major urban water catchments being fed from large parts of Mt. Roskill. It is subject to regular flooding during periods of heavy rain. This flooding together with the nature of the soil and subsoil in Underwood & Walmsley Parks has created very difficult ground conditions.

The clay soil and poor percolation of rainfall which this allows means that during periods of wet weather large areas of both parks are permanently saturated with areas of standing water in places.

Part of Underwood Park has had clay fill dumped on it at some time in the past. This material has proved impossible to mow, impervious to rainfall percolation and makes this part of the park unusable and unsightly.

Access

The major roads to the east and west of each park, Richardson Road, Beagle Avenue and Sandringham Road provide immediate access to the parks. However only the Sandringham Road entrance invites pedestrian access unhindered. Most of the Beagle Avenue entrances are blocked by large rocks and the Richardson Road entrance is completely fenced. Both the rocks and fence have been installed to reduce misuse of the park by motor vehicles.

Both parks have a number of narrow accessways between houses leading to nearby roads. No permanent footpaths exist within the parks and free pedestrian movement from north to south is blocked in the east of Underwood Park and the whole of Walmsley Park by Oakley Creek. The only pedestrian crossing points of the creek are adjacent to the three roads already mentioned.

Landscape Character Zones

Underwood & Walmsley Parks have 4 distinct character zones. See Figure 2.

Zone 1:

Between Richardson Road and Fletcher Street.

Underwood Park opens into a pleasant undulating space with a number of young trees already becoming established. Oakley Creek is in a deep gorge at this point and the creek is broken by rock outcrops. The sense of enclosure is quite strong particularly in the lower areas.

Zone 2:

To the north of Fletcher Street, Underwood Park tapers down to a narrow gap between the houses around Fletcher Street and the creek which is already well below the level of the park. The zone feels totally separated from the rest of the park, a feeling which will be exaggerated by the creek widening proposals, to be discussed later.

Zone 3:

From Wainright Avenue to Buccaneer Street, Underwood Park is well enclosed especially on the northern side by the creek wall and fences. Ground conditions are very poor in this area with clay having been stored on the site which has interrupted normal maintenance operation.

Zone 4:

Underwood Park, from Buccaneer Street east and the whole of Walmsley Park are within the same character zone. It is a vast, open, barren space almost devoid of trees and broken only by the harsh

line of the creek. Beagle Avenue cuts through this zone but makes very little visual impression on it. This zone does offer fine views of Mt. Albert.

Each of these character zones requires different treatments.

Public Use of the Parks

The lack of a defined pedestrian network means that public use of the park is very limited. During periods of wet weather even the informal tracks that have developed become impassable. During dry periods informal recreation takes place but the lack of play equipment of any sort restricts activities considerably.

Vegetation

Poor ground conditions and the lack of an overall planting concept mean that most of both parks are devoid of any significant vegetation. This situation is slightly better in the west than in the east.

Development Concept

Ground Conditions

Both Underwood and Walmsley Parks require subsurface drainage schemes to be installed. This will improve ground conditions both for public use of the parks and for successful tree establishment. There are several types of subsurface drainage systems available, including:

- Field tiles
- Novaflo piping
- Mole ploughing
- Sand slitting
- A mixture of the above

Careful evaluation of the soil types present and costs should be made in liaison with the Parks Manager before a final system is chosen.

That subsurface drainage systems be installed in both parks where existing ground conditions are poor.

The clay fill dumped on part of Underwood Park should be removed. The soil beneath should be assessed and steps taken to improve its quality as necessary.

Footpath Network

A comprehensive footpath network is proposed for both parks, linking them to each other and to adjacent streets. Most of the proposed paths run parallel to the creek because the parks tend to be long and narrow.

In moat of Underwood Park the creek forms the northern boundary and is therefore not an obstacle to pedestrian movement. In Walmsley Park the creek is very much an obstacle and thus a footbridge is proposed. This should be located to link with the existing accessways from Sheppard Road and O'Connell Avenue. The style of the bridge should be designed to match those in the adjacent War Memorial Park.

In the eastern part of the Underwood Park it is proposed that paths be constructed on both sides of the creek. On the northern side the path should link through to the Mt. Albert Borough Council land at the end of McGehan Close.

It is proposed that the footpaths be constructed of concrete between 2.5 and 3m wide. Concrete is recommended in preference to tarseal because resurfacing will be necessary less frequently and encroachment by Kikuyu grass will be less damaging and easier to control.

It is recommended that the narrow accessways from adjacent streets be paved across their full width. This will avoid a narrow strip of grass or planting being necessary which would prove to be a maintenance problem.

Recommendations

That a comprehensive network of concrete footpaths be constructed as shown on the Landscape Concept Plans.

That a pedestrian footbridge be constructed across Oakley Creek in Walmsley Park to link with the footpath network and to match the style of those in War Memorial Park.

That Mt. Roskill and Mt. Albert Borough Councils liaise with each other over construction where the footpaths cross the Borough boundaries.

Access Points

The main entry points to the parks are from Richardson Road, Beagle Avenue and Sandringham Road. These should all be as welcoming to pedestrians as possible and informative to passing motorists. Vehicle access should be restricted to authorised Council vehicles.

Richardson Road Entrance to Underwood Park

The existing low timber fence should be removed. Once the new footpath has been installed a low post and chain fence should be installed, as illustrated. To allow access for maintenance vehicles the end post should be removable and lockable.

Beagle Avenue Entrance to both parks

The existing rocks should be removed altogether. However if the existing concrete parapets above the creek are to be extended as part of the A.R.A. drainage proposals then the rocks could be used for this purpose. Posts and chain should again be used to restrict vehicle access to the parks with removable posts adjacent to the paths to allow for maintenance vehicle access. The existing concrete parapets should be either replastered or painted and then treated with Graffiti Guard, or similar, to reduce the amount of graffiti they attract. It is proposed that the new park name signs be fixed to the parapets, which should also help.

Sandringham Road Entrance to Walmsley Park

This entrance should be treated in a similar manner to the other entrances with post and chain fences to restrict vehicle entrance. It is proposed that the old footbridge immediately inside the entrance be removed. It serves no purpose and is very unsightly.

Recommendations

That the main entry points to both parks be upgraded as illustrated to make them welcoming to the public with free pedestrian access and restricted vehicle access.

Bank Shaping to Creek

The A.R.A. currently employ spraying contractors to keep the Oakley Creek watercourse clear. Unfortunately the contractor is unnecessarily enthusiastic in his work and regularly sprays out a strip between 5 and 2m wide at the top of the creek bank. The resulting grass death leads to bad erosion problems especially on steep parts and close to structures such as sewer pipes and culverts. To overcome this problem and to allow for safe pedestrian access to the creek it is proposed that the banks be shaped to a more natural shape. This will improve the visual appearance of the creek and allow mowing operations to continue almost to the creek edge thus reducing the need for spraying. See Figure 3.

Recommendations

That shaping of the banks of Oakley Creek be carried out as shown on the Landscape Concept Plans, to reduce the area of spraying and to increase safe public access to the waters edge.

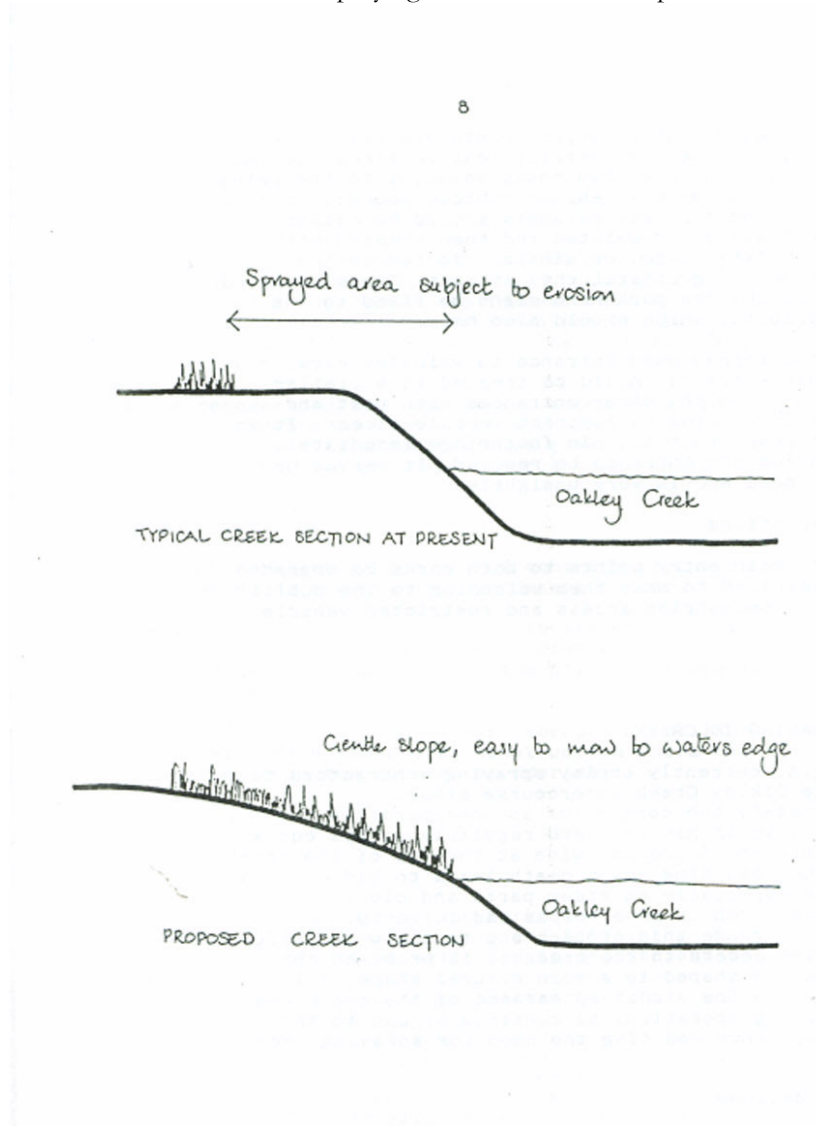


Figure 3 Proposed Spraying Area and Sloping of Bank

Planting

It became clear from the research work done by the Mt. Roskill Grammar students that the residents close to the parks are concerned that any further planting carried out in the parks should

not give cover to undesirables. To this end it is proposed that almost all the new planting should be tall, clear stemmed tree species allowing clear visibility beneath the canopies.

Three different types of tree planting are proposed:

Weeping Willows

These are proposed to be planted in groups close to the creek edge where no shaping of the bank has taken place. Beneath the willows drifts of flax can be planted to reduce the amount of bank spraying even further. Willows will also help reduce the amount of surface water in the parks.

6 metres Tall Deciduous Trees

These are proposed to be planted, together with native species to create a sense of human scale and enclosure in the vast open spaces of the parks. Where the trees are closer to neighbouring properties it is proposed that the deciduous species be used.

Native Trees

A number of native species are already doing well within the parks. It is proposed that they should continue to be used where ground conditions will permit. Being evergreen they are proposed to be used in association with deciduous species to give year-round colour and texture to the tree canopy.

Recommendations

That a comprehensive programme of tree planting be undertaken, as illustrated in the Landscape Concept Plans.

Play Areas

Two proposed play areas are illustrated on the Landscape Concept Plan, one at the western end of Underwood Park and the other at the western end of Walmsley Park. There is an existing play area in War Memorial Park, close to Sandringham Road. For this reason the play area for Walmsley Park should be located close to Beagle Avenue. Also the ground rises in this corner, reducing the likelihood of problems with ground conditions. The site shown for the Underwood play area is also elevated and has been chosen over the other possible site, just east of Wainwright Avenue, because of possible problems with ground conditions in this area as result of the clayfill already discussed.

It is recommended that the play equipment to be installed be decided in liaison with the Parks Manager and to fit in with play equipment already proving popular elsewhere in the Borough.

Safety surfacing, complying with N.Z.S. 5828 should be installed at the same time as the play equipment.

Recommendations

That play areas be developed as shown on the Landscape Concept Plans and in liaison with the Parks Manager.

Park Furniture

No details of park furniture have been included in the plans as they are still only a development concept at this stage. However it is recommended that seats, litter bins, lights and signs all be designed in a co-ordinated style to suit the particular character of the two parks.

Recommendations

That a co-ordinated design concept be developed for all park furniture with the parks.

Parking

The Mt. Roskill Grammar students also established in their research that the local residents are against the introduction of car parking to either park. Only the Sandringham Road frontage is large enough to accommodate car parking and a car park already exists in War Memorial Park, just on the other side of the road.

Recommendations

That no car park be developed in either Underwood or Walmsley Parks.

A.R.A. Drainage Proposal

Regular flooding of Oakley Creek along its whole length has led the A.R.A. to develop a comprehensive scheme of flood control measures. Several of these are proposed to be implemented in Underwood & Walmsley Parks within the foreseeable future.

Richardson Road Culvert

As Oakley Creek leaves Mt. Roskill at the western end of Underwood Park the channel it has been running in suddenly narrows right down to a 2m. wide culvert under Richardson Road. Because of the depth of this part of Underwood Park, this seldom leads to flooding problems at this point but it does cause water to back up the creek and cause flooding further upstream.

The A.R.A. plan to construct a new culvert 3.5m. wide during the summer of 1988. Apart from the work necessary to Richardson Road itself, there will also be work going on in Underwood Park. The retaining wall forming the south side of the creek will be cut out for a distance of 15 metres upstream of the culvert to allow a new wall to be constructed to tie in with the new culvert.

Creek Widening in Underwood Park

Approximately 45m. upstream from the Richardson Road culvert and extending as far as Wainwright Avenue the southern side of Oakley Creek is to be widened to improve the flow. The width of the widening averages about 1 m. and for much of its length will involve cutting through the volcanic base rock. This widening of the creek will have little impact on most of the park, once it is complete, but at the end of Fletcher Street, where the park is already narrow, the effect will be to exaggerate the sense of separation of the western and central portions of Underwood Park. Because of the sense of being squeezed between the creek and garden fences it is proposed that only the footpath be constructed at this point, avoiding any planting which would make the sense of being confined even greater.

Beagle Avenue Culverts

The culvert beneath Beagle Avenue separates Underwood Park from Walmsley Park. As part of their flood control measures, the A.R.A. propose to construct a second culvert next to the existing one on the southern side. The side bed will then be widened both upstream & downstream to allow increased water flows through the two culverts. No firm date has been set for this work to be carried out but it is likely to be in the fairly near future.

The shaping of the ground around the new inlet structure is critical to ensure that slopes are not so steep that mowing is impossible. If this were to happen, spraying would almost certainly be carried out with the resultant likelihood of erosion. It is recommended that close liaison between the Borough Council or their representative and the A.R.A. be continued to ensure a mutually satisfactory design is implemented. This liaison should include on site supervision as work progresses. Ground shaping adjacent of the new inlet will be minimal.

Sandringham Road Culvert

The A.R.A. are also preparing the designs for improvements to the Sandringham Road culvert. No date has yet been set for when this work will be carried out.

Mt. Roskill Pony Club Proposals

Earlier this year the Mt. Roskill Pony Club made an application to the Borough Council to establish a permanent headquarters for the club at Walmsley Park.

Specific Proposals

The Pony Club proposal involves fencing the whole of Walmsley Park to the north of the creek, apart from the two narrow areas adjacent to Beagle Avenue and Sandringham Road.

Within the area the park would be subdivided into three paddocks to allow for independent training for different ability levels during teaching sessions and different grazing areas when teaching is not taking place. The eastern area of the three would also contain a dressage arena and clubhouse with storage area. Parking for the proposed Club headquarters would be off-street, from Sandringham Street, north of the creek. See figure 4.

The proposal is seen by the Club as being a staged development with the fencing being carried out first, followed by the dressage arena, clubhouse and parking area. Finally a tentative suggestion has been made that the area south of the creek be developed for cross-country jumps, although no mention has been made of whether this area would be fenced or not.

Suitability of Proposals

Although public use of the park is at present minimal, as has been mentioned earlier, the types of development proposed within the Landscape Concept Plans would greatly increase the ability of the public to make use of the park, which is in fact public land.

If the Pony Club proposals were to go ahead prior to any of the proposed developments taking place then the aim of increasing public use of the park would be negated. If however the footpath network were to be constructed within the park as outlined, this would necessitate the fencing of the three paddocks separately, involving the club in erecting more fencing than anticipated and making the footpaths run in gaps between fenced off paddocks.

Conclusions on Pony Club Proposal

It is recognised that Pony Clubs offer a valuable focus for young people interested in equestrian sports, fostering specific riding skills as well as care of animals and equipment. The desirability of locating such clubs in suburban areas, thus encouraging a great number of members and increasing public awareness of their activities is obvious but it is considered that this site would prove unsuitable for the the following reasons:

- Alienation of public land from use of the public as a whole
- Inability to develop Walmsley Park as part of a network of parks along Oakley Creek
- Inability to develop successfully, both a comprehensive footpath network and the Pony Club proposals
- Unsuitability of the ground conditions for intensive use by horses.

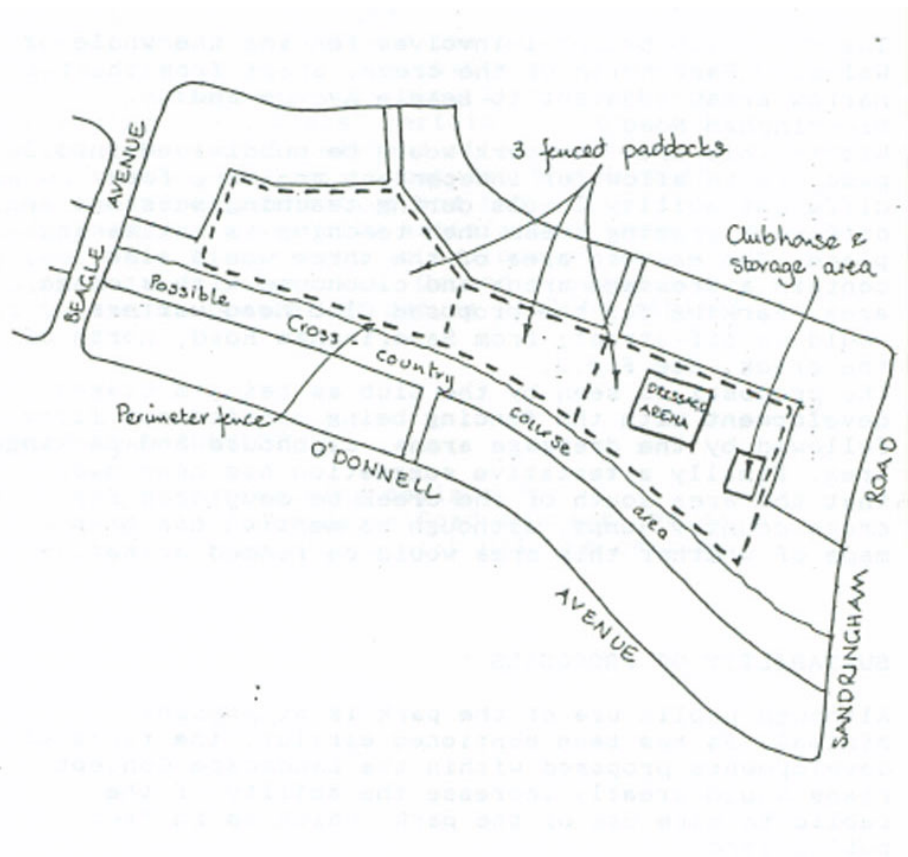


Figure 4 Pony Club Proposals

Conclusions

Underwood and Walmsley Parks are an integral part of a network of public open space within Mt. Roskill Borough Council. To date their full potential as areas of both passive and active recreation have hardly been realised, primarily because ground conditions and the lack of comprehensive footpath system have kept the public out.

The developments outlined in the Landscape Concept Plans and this report are seen as the first step towards realising the parks' full potential so that the public may make use of one of its own assets. Further developments in the future can be accommodated within the park structure as outlined here, to be carried out as and when the public need and ability to fund is recognised.

Melean J. Absolum A.N.Z.I.L.A.

28th September 1988