

# SOUTH WAIRARAPA DISTRICT COUNCIL

27 JUNE 2012

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## AGENDA ITEM C3

### FEATHERSTON WALKWAYS & RESERVES TRUST MOU AND ACTION PLANS REPORT

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#### **Purpose of Report**

To obtain approval for the Featherston Walkways & Reserves Trust Action Plans 2009 and Memorandum of Understanding 2012.

#### **Recommendations**

Officers recommend that the Council:

1. **Adopt** the *Dorset Square Reserve, Otairua Reserve and Featherston Domain Draft Action Plans 2009*.
2. **Adopt** the *Memorandum of Understanding between the Council, Featherston Community Board and Featherston Walkways and Reserves Trust 2012*.

#### **1. Background**

On 16 March 2010 the Featherston Community Board resolved to receive the Featherston Walkways and Reserves Trust's Draft Action Plans for Dorset Square Reserve, Otairua Reserve and Featherston Domain (Appendix 1).

In July 2012 the associated Memorandum of Understanding between the Council, Featherston Community Board and the Featherston Walkways and Reserves Trust (Appendix 2) was accepted by the Featherston Community Board.

On 5 June 2012 the Featherston Community Board resolved to (retrospectively) adopt the Draft Action Plans 2009 and the associated Memorandum of Understanding, and now recommend that Council adopt them.

When the documents were brought forward in 2009 they were generally accepted and have been used to get work done on the ground. The documents are effective and do not need changing; they just need to be retrospectively formalised.

## **2. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Dorset Square Reserve, Otairira Reserve and Featherston Domain Draft Action Plans 2009

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding 2012

Contact Officer: Jen Olson, Resource Management Officer

Reviewed By: Glenn Bunny, Group Manager Planning & Environment

# **Appendix 1 – Dorset Square Reserve, Otairira Reserve and Featherston Domain Draft Action Plans 2009**

# FEATHERSTON WALKWAYS & RESERVES TRUST

## OTAUIRA RESERVE DRAFT ACTION PLAN

OCTOBER 2009

### Description

Otauirā Reserve (Part Section 338 Featherston Suburban) is approximately six and a half hectares of South Wairarapa Council reserve near the southern entrance to Featherston. The site is bounded by State Highway 2 and Abbott's Creek.

The reserve is frequently used by travelers as a rest and picnic stop and caravans sometimes overnight at the site. Before the pine plantation across the stream grew to a height that blocked the views, the reserve was known as Lookout Reserve and Lake Wairarapa was visible from the picnic area.

The picnic area is a grassy hill. The fairly short entrance off of State Highway 2 loops around this hill. The hill is a historic dump that is now grassed over. A small section of the hill is still used for clean fill and is progressively being earthed over and seeded in lawn.

The Wairarapa faultline crosses the site and a slip caused by the 1855 earthquake is easily visible across the creek from the grassy hill. This large slip altered the course of Abbott's Creek, which once flowed almost due south from this point, to its present course which is in a more southeasterly direction.

The northern half of the site is regenerating bush with a few large beech and matai trees. The understory is mainly manuka and tree lucerne. A walking track circles the inside of the bush and is the starting point for the larger track network promoted by the Featherston Walkways & Reserves Trust (FWRT) that connects Otauirā Reserve, Dorset Square, the Featherston Domain (One Tree Hill) and Barr-Brown Reserve.

### Vision      What we hope to accomplish & why

As one of the first stops for travelers to Featherston, the area used as a rest and picnic stop needs to be tidied up. This requires: 1. the remaining area used as a dumping ground to be earthed over and seeded; 2. barriers (e.g., post fence or boulders) placed to keep vehicles off the lawn; 3. the loop road resealed; 4. two additional picnic tables; 5. vandal-proof rubbish bins and an information sign (such as a blue rest stop sign or a yellow Otauirā Reserve sign) installed on SH2; 6. an interpretive/informational sign giving details about Featherston installed within the reserve..

We envision the entranceway can be made more attractive with native plants (flax and kowhai) and the sign to the bush walk can be moved closer to the picnic area and native plants used around this sign and along the start of the walk. Fruit trees planted now could provide sun-ripened treats to picnickers in the future. In addition, the site lends itself to an informative sign on the Wairarapa

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faultline.

The track through the regenerating bush area should continue to be maintained with volunteer labour from the Department of Corrections. The tree lucerne should remain for now as a valuable food source for the numerous kereru and tui. A native forest will naturally regenerate underneath these bushes or could be assisted by planting and pest control at some time in the future. Expanding the track so it links to the Lake Wairarapa Domain will also be pursued in the future.

The old toilet block within the bush needs to be demolished and the concrete from the small building put into the remaining dump site.

A FWRT sign should be located at the end of Brandon Street to direct people walking to the reserve from Dorset Square.

Finally, the Welcome to Featherston sign (First Stop Featherston!), currently located near the Hi-Tech lumber store, should be moved just north of and opposite to the entranceway to the Otairua Reserve (near where the Fire Danger Level sign is). A welcome sign to town at this location would alert people to slow down before they approach the curving descent into town, where several speed related crashes have occurred, and where people walk along the road to the reserve. Ideally the speed limit should be reduced at this location, but we suggest the relocation of the welcome sign as an alternative until the speed limit can be reduced.

#### **Strategies    How we can achieve this**

We propose a cooperative approach between the FWRT and the SWDC. Council would arrange for the tidy-up of the rest stop and picnic area, installation of the two signs on SH2 and removal of the old toilet block. Council would also be responsible for the ongoing maintenance of the lawn, rubbish bins and road.

The Trust would use our volunteers and advertise to the general public to help beautify the entrance to the reserve and to the walking track with native plants. Young fruit trees would be planted discretely along the edges of the lawn to reduce the risk of them being stolen. The Trust would continue liaising with the Department of Corrections to maintain the track through the bush, and the Trust would seek grants and sponsorships to pay for the new picnic tables, signs and plants.

#### **Actions**

1. Remove toilet block
2. Earth over and lawn the remaining dump area
3. Reseal loop road
4. Install vehicle barriers along loop road
5. Replace plastic rubbish bins with vandal-proof bins
6. Relocate "First Stop Featherston" sign
7. Install blue or yellow information sign opposite entrance
8. Install FWRT sign at end of Brandon Street
9. Install two additional picnic tables
10. Plant around entranceway

11. Relocate sign to walkway and plant around sign and start of walk
12. Plant fruit trees

**On-going maintenance**

1. Lawn maintenance and rubbish collection
2. Track maintenance through the bush

**Wish List (apply to community organisations for funds)**

1. Design and placement of sign regarding Wairarapa faultline
2. Linking reserve to Lake Wairarapa Domain
3. Design and placement of interpretive Featherston sign

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**FEATHERSTON WALKWAYS & RESERVES TRUST**  
**DORSET SQUARE DRAFT ACTION PLAN**  
**June 2009**



**Description**

Dorset Square is approximately one hectare of land in Featherston, bounded by Moore, Ludlam/SH2, Renall and Brandon Streets. It is owned by the South Wairarapa District Council, as per Section 338 of the District Plan.

**Vision**

**What we hope to accomplish & why**

Since the planting out of the former paddock/wasteland in 1995-1997 the Square has been left to grow more or less unchecked, with only minimal maintenance of paths. While this has resulted in some impressive growth and healthy regeneration of native bush (1-4 metres in height), it has also raised some serious concerns about safety, aesthetics, functionality, and honoring of commemorative trees.

The most pressing concern is safety. There is virtually no visibility from the outside roads (SH2/Ludlam, Moore, Brandon and Renall Streets) into the Square, and within the Square itself the paths are overgrown to the extent that it is impossible to see beyond a few metres in any direction. The border fence increases both the perceived and the actual threat to safety in the Square. There is no lighting within the Square and unauthorised vehicles are able to drive in through the Renall Street entrance. Currently, the Square is the most sheltered/secluded public space in the central town area for vandalism and other crime to occur without detection. We are fortunate that to date there have been only relatively minor episodes of vandalism in the Square, but there is growing concern about the potential for more serious crime in this area.

Aesthetically, the Square is long overdue for a good 'spring clean'. Many of the paths have been overgrown by as much as half their width, self sown seedlings (including many pest species) are rampant, and the Square generally looks untidy and unkempt.

The key problem with the functioning of the Square is the stone drain that runs along the Brandon and Moore Street edges of the reserve. Because it is completely overgrown and filled with forest debris it floods easily and spills out onto the roads. Local residents have been monitoring this and contact Transfield for maintenance. A more efficient system needs to be set in place so that it is maintained proactively rather than reactively.

Lastly, many of the memorial trees and benches throughout the Square

have been neglected and their plaques are no longer visible. This is potentially insulting or distressing to those who planted the trees and is deserving of immediate attention.

### **Strategies How we can achieve this**

We propose a cooperative approach between the FWRT and the SWDC. The Trust would outline the work to be done, suggest a reasonable timeline for achieving it, advertise to the general public in order to organise volunteer labour for manageable tasks, provide for signage, plaques, maps and seating within the Square, oversee the project from start to finish, and draft plans for the maintenance and upkeep of the Square in the future. The Council would contract for the use of heavy or specialised equipment such as chain saws, diggers and chippers, be responsible for the removal or mulching of green waste, oversee the maintenance of the drain, remove the border fence wires, install parking on Moore Street and signs on SH2, and contribute to the ongoing maintenance of the Square. We have indicated below under Operations, Ongoing Maintenance and Wish List how we envisage the work will be shared by FWRT and SWDC.

We have consulted the CEPTED Principles (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) throughout the process of drawing up this Action Plan. Please see the attached summary of these principles.

### **Prioritisation of six areas (see map)**

1. RSA/Maori Battalion (July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2009 & ongoing)
2. Corner of Ludlam/SH2 and Moore Streets
3. Corner of Moore and Brandon Streets
4. Corner of Ludlam/SH2 and Renall Streets
5. Corner of Brandon and Renall Streets
6. Interior

### **Operations**

1. Removal of exotic nursery species (i.e. lucerne) (FWRT)
2. Thinning of native trees (FWRT)
3. Clearing undergrowth (FWRT)
4. Digging up flax along Ludlam and Brandon Streets (SWDC)
5. Mulching and redistributing/removal of green waste (SWDC)
6. Clearing paths back to their original size/width (shared)
7. Clearing growth around all commemorative trees & maintenance of plaques (FWRT)
8. Clearing drain (SWDC)
9. Shifting Moore Street sign out 2 metres towards road (SWDC)
10. Installing new Messines sign at entrance to Messines Walk with \$100 donation from Delia Smith and free artwork by Michele



Stokes (FWRT)

11. Removal of border fence wires (leave posts to prevent vehicle access) (SWDC)
12. Dividing the Square into quarters and putting in new paths to allow for easier access at all times (see map) (shared)
13. Installment of locked bollard/chain on Renall Street to keep out unauthorised vehicles (provide key access for maintenance vehicles and police) (SWDC)
14. Installment of vandal-proof street light in middle of Square (SWDC)
15. Installing map signage at both entrances for orientation and safety (FWRT)
16. Installation of a parking area along Moore Street (SWDC)
17. Signage along SH2 (both directions) indicating Square parking (SWDC)

### **Ongoing Maintenance**

1. tree thinning (FWRT)
2. path clearance (shared)
3. clearing drain (SWDC)
4. organising regular events or gatherings at the Square (FWRT)
5. rubbish removal (SWDC)

### **Wish List (apply to community organisations for funds)**

1. new picnic table (FWRT)
2. new benches (FWRT)
3. interpretive signage (FWRT)
4. plaques on trees (FWRT)



**FEATHERSTON WALKWAYS & RESERVES TRUST  
FEATHERSTON DOMAIN ACTION PLAN  
Adopted by the FWRT Board March 2010**

**Description**

The Domain is approximately twenty hectares of forest and scrub land on a ridge to the west of Watt Street in Featherston. Much of the land is steep, and the reserve is traversed by the Wairarapa Fault. It is owned by the South Wairarapa District Council. The Domain is commonly known as "One Tree Hill" and has a popular, but steep, walking track accessing two different viewpoints.

The Domain consists of a mixture of exotic and native forest, and several open areas including a hilltop offering panoramic views. Most of the native forest has regenerated in recent decades and therefore has less amenity value than the "old-growth" forest in the nearby Barr-Brown Reserve. As a result, the main amenity values associated with the Domain are larger area, and opportunity for a vigorous walk to achieve a panoramic view. The "lone pine" is also viewed by many as a local landmark.

**Vision: What we hope to accomplish & why**

The main management requirement for Domain is the maintenance of the footpath and viewpoints. Erosion in steep areas is the main threat to the footpath, while regenerating vegetation endangers views, particularly at the upper viewpoint. We propose to trial and employ suitable trail building techniques to control erosion and to establish a plan for managing vegetation near viewpoints.

**Strategies: How we can achieve this**

We propose a cooperative approach between the FWRT and the SWDC. The Trust would outline the work to be done, suggest a reasonable timeline for achieving it, advertise to the general public in order to organise volunteer labour, oversee the project from start to finish, and draft plans for the maintenance and upkeep of the Domain in the future. The Trust would continue liaising with the Department of Corrections to help with this work. The Council will assist where possible with materials and equipment.

### **Actions**

- Improve structures to remove water from walking track, focusing on steep areas (various) and blocked drain (100 m up from Bell St.).
- Improve steps, addressing areas where steps are too high for many walkers or have adjacent erosion which will someday undermine the steps.
- Close and revegetate "bootleg" tracks.
- Work with the community to identify and implement a plan for the hilltop viewpoint that is becoming overgrown with broom.
- Add fill to areas of track with excessive exposed roots on the section connecting Bell St. to West Harrison St.
- Examine the potential to develop a forest management plan for the area of large pines and eucalypts above the Revans St. entrance, with the purpose of abating tree fall as a hazard and potential reason for trail closure.
- Improve accessibility and traction (apply gravel) for winter use.

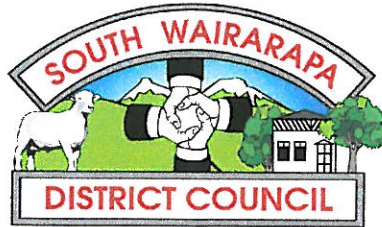
### **Ongoing Maintenance**

1. tree thinning
2. path clearance
3. clearing drains
4. planting and revegetation

### **Wish List**

1. Materials for steps and water control structures (apply to community organisations for funding).
2. Plant appropriate vegetation in hilltop area currently overgrown with broom. Suggestion include mountain flax, native tussock grasses or other sub-alpine and escarpment-dwelling natives
3. Weed control
4. Evaluate opportunity to extend tracks through private land

# **Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding 2012**



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF VOLUNTEER-BASED MANAGEMENT  
PURSUANT TO THE RESERVES ACT 1977  
BARR BROWN RECREATIONAL RESERVE, DORSET SQUARE RESERVE,  
FEATHERSTON DOMAIN AND OTUAIRA RESERVE**

**1. THE PARTIES**

This Memorandum of Understanding is an agreement among the following parties:

- The South Wairarapa District Council, hereafter known as "Council".
- Featherston Community Board, hereafter known as "the Community Board".
- Featherston Walkways and Reserves Trust, hereafter known as "the Trust".

**2. PURPOSE OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

The purpose of the Memorandum of Understanding is to set out the roles and responsibilities of Council, the Community Board and the Trust in the implementation of the volunteer based management of Featherston's Barr Brown Recreational Reserve, Dorset Square Reserve, Featherston Domain and Otuirara Reserve.

**3. COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS ACTION PLANS**

The Trust will manage the operational details and governance requirements relating to the following reserves, as detailed in the Action Plan for each reserve and in this Memorandum of Understanding. This shall be carried out according to the responsibilities outlined in Section 5, noting particularly that a Councillor and/or Community Board member shall be appointed to any action plan committee, and the Trust shall liaise with the Council's Group Manager Infrastructure and Services regarding operational issues. The Trust will review and update the Action Plans as needed, obtaining approval from Council and Community Board for the updated Action Plans.

**Barr-Brown Recreational Reserve**

Council resolved (DC2008/347) on 24 September 2008 to approve the Trust's Barr Brown Recreational Reserve Action Plan (appendix A).

### **Dorset Square Reserve**

The Trust's Dorset Square Reserve Action Plan was adopted by the Featherston Community Board at the March 2010 meeting and by Council at their March 2010 meeting (appendix B).

### **Featherston Domain**

The Trust's Featherston Domain Reserve Action Plan was adopted by the Featherston Community Board at the March 2010 meeting and by Council at their March 2010 meeting (appendix C).

### **Otuaira Reserve**

The Trust's Otuaira Reserve Action Plan was adopted by the Featherston Community Board at the March 2010 meeting and by Council at their March 2010 meeting (appendix D).

## **4. PARTNERSHIP PRINCIPLES**

By this MoU the parties record their intention and commitment to establish a responsive, positive and balanced working relationship exercising co-operation, flexibility and trust.

In doing so the parties;

- Will work together towards maintaining and developing the health, vitality, functionality, sustainability and appearance of the respective areas;
- Recognise that these projects require a long term approach and commitment;
- Agree to always act in the best interests of the respective areas and the community;
- Will work together to proactively resolve any issues that arise in the delivery of the respective action plans;
- Acknowledge that the management of the areas is a dynamic process that may need to be reviewed from time to time in order to achieve the best results.
- Agree that the key deliverable of the MoU is the effective and successful implementation of the respective action plans.

## **5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARTIES INVOLVED**

The roles and responsibilities of the main parties to the agreement are clearly identified below.

### **South Wairarapa District Council:**

Ensures that concept designs, detailed drawings and construction works comply with the Reserves Act 1977 and meet other statutory requirements i.e. RMA and Building Act, OSH, (particularly those areas affecting functioning of roads and footpaths so that vehicle and pedestrian safety are maintained)

- Ensures that any roading or network utility operators (including NZTA, TranzRail, PowerCo, Infrastructure and Services) requirements are met re. roading, railway, lighting underground services
- Ensures appropriate project management skills are applied to any development works
- Approves final plans, expenditure and processes payments



**Featherston Community Board: –**

- Approves concept designs for restoration and amenity enhancements.
- Endorses expenditure of funds from any funding secured by the Trust in consultation with Council.
- Monitors and addresses issues affecting local businesses and the wider community.
- Works with the Trust in seeking funds for restoration and amenity development.

**Featherston Walkways and Reserves Trust: –**

- Includes a Councillor and/or a member of the Featherston Community Board any Action Plan Committee convened by the Trust.
- Includes a Councillor and a member of the Featherston Community Board on the Trust Board.
- Liaises with Council's Group Manager Infrastructure and Services on all operational issues including any aspects requiring compliance with statutory requirements (i.e., OSH requirement regarding felling of trees), roading (i.e., traffic safety) or network utility operators.
- Initiates and seeks funds for restoration and amenity development.
- Coordinates volunteers to implement the approved Action Plan.
- Obtains Community Board and Council approval for any proposed changes to approved Action Plans and any other development plans.
- Recommends restoration and amenity development works and budgets to the Community Board and the Council within available funds.
- Liaises with wider community on general matters.
- Monitors work progress against approved budgets in conjunction with the Council.

**6. OWNERSHIP**

The ownership of any capital works and improvements on the reserves or other Council land (i.e., road reserves) as a result of the implementation of the Action Plans and any other Council approved development plans are the assets of the Council. Any equipment purchased by Council or with funds allocated by Council associated with the implementation of the action plans remains the ownership of Council.

**7. ISSUE RESOLUTION**

Should any issue or disagreement arise in relation to the interpretation, application or operation of this agreement, it shall be addressed, in the first instance, between the Community Board and the Trust to see if the issue or disagreement can be resolved. The three parties will act in good faith to resolve the issue or disagreement.




If the issue cannot be resolved then Council will agree to provide an independent mediator.

**8. REVIEW**

This agreement will be reviewed on a three yearly basis or earlier if all the parties agree.

**9. TERMINATION**

This agreement may be deemed to be terminated if the Trust ceases. This agreement may also be terminated by Council if, in Council's sole view, the Trust is no longer actively functioning and/or is no longer performing its obligations as set out in this Memorandum. This agreement may also be terminated at any time by the written agreement of the parties. Any termination of this agreement shall be without prejudice to the rights of either party against the other and the Council in terminating this Memorandum under this clause shall not be required to give reason or any explanation as to why pursuant to this clause, it has elected to terminate the Memorandum.

<p><b>Signed on behalf of South Wairarapa District Council</b></p> <p></p> <p>.....</p> <p>Chief Executive Officer</p> <p>Date ..... 26/3/12 .....</p>	<p><b>Signed on behalf of Featherston Walkways and Reserves Trust</b></p> <p></p> <p>.....</p> <p>Chair <i>Acting</i></p> <p>Date ..... 14/3/12 .....</p>
<p><b>Signed on behalf of the Featherston Community Board</b></p> <p></p> <p>.....</p> <p>Chairperson</p> <p>Date ..... 19/3/12 .....</p>	

**Appendices: Action Plans**