



**YOUR PLAN OUR FUTURE**  
TIMARU DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW  
LAND USE PLAN

**Timaru District Plan Review**

Topic 17

# Recreation Zones

Discussion Document, December 2016



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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Purpose

Timaru District Council has commissioned this report to identify the 'issues' with how the Timaru District Plan manages recreation zones and cemeteries. The report subsequently identifies the potential 'options' to address these issues and the strengths and weaknesses of each option.

Please note that noise matters are being dealt with in Topic 11: Noise Discussion Document. Land use growth is being dealt with in the Timaru District 2045 Draft Growth Management Strategy.

The report is intended to inform and provide a basis for public consultation on this matter and to some degree stimulate debate. The report forms part of a suite of public consultation measures that may be used to inform a potential change to the District Plan.

### 1.2 Report Format

The remainder of the report has been set out as follows:

- Section 2** identifies and describes the issue.
- Section 3** summarises the relevant statutory matters.
- Section 4** briefly explains the current Timaru District Plan approach to recreation zones and cemeteries.
- Section 5** discusses some potential options to deal with recreation zones and cemeteries.

This document outlines the issues our district faces in relation to recreation zones.

We welcome your feedback on this topic.

**Paddy O'Reilly**  
Pleasant Point/Temuka Ward Councillor

## 2.0 Issue Identification

The key issues for the District relating to recreation zones and cemeteries are as follows:

### Recreation Zones

- Concern expressed by adjoining property owners about the effects generated by recreational activities, and conversely from operators of recreational activities who may be limited on the activities they can undertake on their sites. This includes matters like light spill, traffic generation and parking.
- The commercial use of recreational facilities i.e. the hiring of club rooms for private functions.
- Inconsistency with the Parks Strategy in terms of providing sufficient and appropriate open space to provide for future community needs.
- Vacant land is being used informally for recreation but is not zoned for such use.
- The number of activities in Caroline Bay requiring resource consent, for example any commercial uses such as the market and hiring of the Bay Hall.
- Temuka has private land zoned for recreational purposes due to the flooding hazard that may be more appropriately addressed by a 'no build zone' or 'high hazard zone'.

### Cemeteries

- The current Timaru cemetery is nearly at capacity and new land needs to be identified to provide for an extension to the existing cemetery or for a new cemetery.
- Some activities within the cemeteries require resource consent due to the zoning of the land. For example, only the Rural Zone specifically provides for cemeteries. Within all other zones, there is no specific provision for burials and in some zones, a monument may require resource consent depending on its size.

## 3.0 Statutory Matters

### Resource Management Act 1991

Section 5 of the Resource Management Act 1991 requires that the Council manages the use, development, and protection of natural and physical resources in a way, or at a rate, which enables people and communities to provide for their social, economic, and cultural well-being and for their health and safety. Of particular relevance is the provision for cultural well-being and health.

Section 6(d) requires the Council to maintain and enhance public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers.

Section 7(c) requires that the Council maintain and enhance amenity values.

### Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013

The Canterbury Regional Policy Statement 2013 provides direction for recreation zones in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 for the District Council, including that the Council:

- Establish a comprehensive approach to the provision of recreational activities.
- Identify proposed land uses including parks and other land for recreation.
- Specify appropriate provisions to manage tourism and recreational development in rural areas that are consistent and compatible with rural values and resources.
- Have regard to recommendations from the Regional Water Management Committee and Zone Water Management Committees in order to manage effects on recreational activities. These are mainly related to the improvement of water quality.
- Manage the effects of activities on and provide for public access to and within the coastal marine area.

### Reserves Act 1977

The Reserves Act 1977 administered by the Department of Conservation provides for the preservation and management for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand possessing, amongst other matters recreational use or potential, whether active or passive. It ensures, as far as possible, the preservation of access for the public to and along the coast, its bays and inlets and offshore islands, lakeshores, and riverbanks.

### The Local Government Act 2002

The Local Government Act 2002 provides for democratic and effective local government that recognises the diversity of New Zealand communities. It provides for local authorities to play a broad role in meeting the current and future needs of their communities for good-quality local infrastructure, local public services, and performance of regulatory functions. This includes the disposal of a park or part of a park and the lease of a park for longer than six months.

## 4.0 Timaru District Plan

The current District Plan identifies Recreation Zones on the planning maps.

Part D5 – Recreation Zones sets out three Recreation Zones as follows:

- Recreation 1 (Holiday Residential) that provides for the hut settlements.
- Recreation 2 (Urban) that includes recreational land and open space along the coast within urban areas and recreational activities adjacent to residential zones.
- Recreation 3 (Rural) provides for recreational land in the rural areas.

The District Plan contains objectives and policies that apply to all the Recreation Zones, whilst each zone has its own set of rules and standards. Activities in the hut settlements are generally managed to minimise the risks to health, safety and property from natural hazards. Accessory buildings to household units or holiday huts up to 50m<sup>2</sup> per residence and replacement huts at South Rangitata huts are provided for as discretionary activities. New holiday huts are a prohibited activity.

In the Recreation 2 and 3 Zones, recreational uses are permitted but clubrooms, grandstands, changing rooms and toilets are discretionary activities. However, household units and associated accessory buildings for caretakers or for other uses ancillary to the recreational use are provided for as permitted activities.

There are also a number of General Rules that apply to the Recreation Zones; vehicle access and loading; parking; signs; and natural hazards. No noise standards apply to activities in the Recreation Zones.

Cemeteries are provided for as discretionary activities in Rural Zones and non-complying activities in the Residential, Commercial, Industrial and Recreation Zones. They are not subject to any form of specific zoning or overlay i.e. schedule or designation.



## 5.0 Options

The main options to manage recreation zones and cemeteries are summarised as:

- Status quo (i.e. retain certain aspects from the current District Plan approach).
- Amend (i.e. current District Plan approach requires amendment to align it with current best practice).

These options are briefly described in turn below, followed by a brief assessment of their strengths and weaknesses. Please note other options exist for the identified issues that have not been reflected here to keep the document concise.

### Option 1 – Status quo

The following strategic approach in the current District Plan is still relevant and should be included in the next District Plan:

- Zoning approach to enable recreational activities into specific locations.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Land remains available for recreational uses.</li> <li>▪ The public understand the term 'recreation'.</li> <li>▪ Provides for recreational activities in a manner that is well established and understood by the community.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The term 'recreation' does not appropriately provide for areas of open space that contribute to the amenity of the District's towns or cemeteries.</li> <li>▪ The Recreation Zone covers a range of activities that are not necessarily related to recreation i.e. a rural training centre and cemeteries. Conversely, land being used for recreational purposes may not be appropriately zoned.</li> <li>▪ In some cases, the Recreation Zone is currently being used to manage flood hazards instead of directly addressing management of the hazard.</li> <li>▪ Council owned and private recreation facilities are treated the same.</li> <li>▪ The District Plan does not adequately recognise potential growth of the urban settlements in the District or the potential changing demographic. Recreational needs of the District will change as the population ages. However, an economic upturn could increase the number of families in the District.</li> <li>▪ Many activities in Caroline Bay and the District's cemeteries require resource consent as they are not adequately provided for by the zoning in the District Plan.</li> <li>▪ The District Plan rules and standards may not be providing adequate protection for amenity values in the areas adjacent to recreation activities.</li> <li>▪ A consistent approach is not applied to providing for facilities, such as clubrooms and changing rooms, in all recreation zones.</li> <li>▪ Cemeteries are not appropriately zoned as the existing zoning does not reflect their use and provides no certainty over activities that may be undertaken in the future.</li> <li>▪ Cemeteries, despite being an important community asset, are not provided for as a permitted activity in any zone.</li> </ul>

## Option 2 – Amend – Recreation Zones / activities

The intent of the strategic approach in the current District Plan is still valid but the approach requires amendment to align it with current best practice as follows:

- Amend land zoned Recreation but not being used for recreation purposes to reflect its current use i.e. the Council may wish to consider a Rural Zoning over the ARA Institute of Technology rural training centre.
- Consider renaming the Recreation Zone as 'open space' and then split into a passive open space zone (i.e. neighbourhood parks and holiday huts) and an active open space zone (i.e. Aorangi Park / sportsfields).
- Include 'no build' zones or a hazard management zone / line to address risk from natural hazards rather than relying on the Recreation Zone to achieve protection of lives and property.
- Include specific standards that apply to Caroline Bay as a whole or include a 'major facilities zone' to manage large recreation facilities such as Caroline Bay, the Caroline Bay Trust Aoraki Centre and the Southern Trusts Event Centre.
- Consider amending the boundary setback and recession plane standards that apply at the zone boundary of large recreation facilities to manage effects on adjoining properties.
- Include controls that manage large recreation facilities building scale rather than controlling the activity itself. For example, provide for changing rooms as a controlled activity with a performance standard that limits the scale of any building to 100m<sup>2</sup>.
- Consider including impermeable surface controls to ensure the open space aspect of large recreation facilities is retained as well as managing potential overland flow effects.
- Consider including hours of operation that recognise the proximity of many large recreation facilities / activities to Residential Zones. This may also reflect conditions of resource consent applied to many large recreational activities.

<p><b>Strengths</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The new zone names are potentially more descriptive and more accurately reflect what is occurring on the sites.</li> <li>▪ Land is zoned appropriately according to its use or purpose and can be clearly identified and managed accordingly.</li> <li>▪ May reduce the need for resource consents if activities / land uses are appropriately zoned.</li> <li>▪ Enable most activities in Caroline Bay and at other large facilities to be undertaken without the need for resource consent thus providing a more efficient approach to managing established recreational facilities that support a wide variety of activities.</li> <li>▪ Provide for anticipated large recreation activities whilst effectively managing potential effects on the environment.</li> <li>▪ Maintain anticipated amenity values in the surrounding area and on sites adjoining large recreation facilities / activities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If private recreational facilities are zoned for recreational purposes, this could reduce flexibility in changing the land use if the existing activity ceases.</li> <li>▪ Land that is rezoned from commercial or residential to a recreation or a similar zone may be devalued.</li> <li>▪ Specifically providing for activities at large facilities or introducing a 'major facilities zone' may lead to a more complex rule framework and set a precedent whereby other activities seek a similar approach.</li> <li>▪ Additional controls may lead to an increase in the number of applications for resource consent. This may be offset by the more effective management of anticipated amenity values and effects on adjoining sites from large recreation facilities / activities.</li> </ul>

### Option 3 – Amend – Cemeteries

The current District Plan strategic approach that provides for cemeteries is not considered to be efficient or effective and could be amended by adopting one of the following options:

- Consider rezoning cemeteries as a 'special purpose zone' or an 'open space zone' and specifically provide for cemeteries and any associated activities.
- Alternatively, consider retaining the rural / residential / recreation zoning and designate or schedule cemeteries.

<b>Strengths</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Cemeteries are more appropriately zoned reflecting their use and providing adjoining landowners with certainty over the anticipated future use of the sites.</li><li>▪ May reduce the number of resource consents required to undertake anticipated works in cemeteries.</li><li>▪ Provides protection of the land for use as a cemetery.</li></ul>
<b>Weaknesses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Land that is rezoned from residential or rural to open space or special purpose may be devalued. However, the Council would have to acquire land to extend the existing cemetery or create a new cemetery.</li></ul>

Note: The District requires additional land to extend the existing cemetery or to establish a new cemetery. This will be achieved outside of the District Plan as it requires a purchase of land that is likely to be achieved through the Annual Plan. Once the land has been purchased, it can be zoned by way of a plan change or designated and any activities will be managed according to the applicable planning mechanism.



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