

The Racecourse

- The Timaru Racecourse Reserve Act, received assent on 20 August 1883, vested 117 hectares of land in a designated Public Domain near the Town of Timaru, within the Provincial District of Canterbury, for the specific purpose of establishing a racecourse.
- Legal description. Part **RES 251**



The Reserve Act

Timaru Racecourse Reserve Act 1883

Local Act 1883 No 8

Date of assent 20 August 1883

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	<i>[Repealed]</i>
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The Reserve Schedule

Schedule

ALL that piece or parcel of land, being Section No 251 (in red), situate in the Timaru District, and containing by admeasurement one hundred and ninety-seven acres, more or less, the boundary-lines of which are as follows: Commencing at a point on the western side of the South Road, the same being the first bend or turn in the road north of the north-eastern corner of Rural Section No 3789, following the said road in a northerly direction a distance of forty-one chains; thence westerly at a right angle a distance of thirty-five chains fifty links; thence again at a right angle southerly a distance of thirty-nine chains ninety-eight links to the north-easterly boundary of Rural Section No 3789, following south-easterly along that boundary a distance of twenty-nine chains eighty links to the north-western corner of the before-mentioned rural section, following easterly along the northern boundary thereof a distance of twenty-one chains eighteen links to the road above mentioned; and from thence returning along that road a distance of twenty-one chains seventy-five links to the starting-point.

Reserves Act
1977 – the word
racecourse
appears 24
times in 11
sections.....

Version as at 5 April 2025



Reserves Act 1977

Public Act 1977 No 66

Date of assent 23 December 1977

Commencement see section 1(2)



Racing Act 2020

23 Interpretation

In this subpart, unless the context otherwise requires,—

surplus racing venue or surplus venue—

- (a) means a racing venue owned in fee simple by a racing club determined by the racing code with which the club is registered to be a surplus venue; but
- (b) does not include any land that is a reserve under the [Reserves Act 1977](#) or any buildings on reserve land under that Act

What DOC said

The below is the explanation from the Trustees Statutory Land Management Advisor , regarding some questions I asked around the legalities of changing the reserve status.

'The legal status of the racecourse as a reserve vested in the Trustees can only be changed via the provisions of the Reserves Act or by special legislation like the original Timaru Racecourse Acts.'

The TDC is not the administering body of the reserve and has no ability to alter the status of the racecourse as a reserve.

Any use of this area for a Future Development Area would require the revocation of the reservation (section 24 Reserve Act).

Any revocation process would require consideration of reserve values, input from the Board and public notification.

It is puzzling how a process designed for private developers (FDA's) came to be applied to public land.'

What the
Consultants
said.....
Source Planz 2022
GM-Residential
Review Report

Greenfield Timaru sites

Four of the five greenfield sites selected in Timaru extend to the north of the town (north of Pages Road), while the fifth site ('Kennels Road') is located west of Washdyke (north of the Pleasant Point Highway). All of the sites had identified physical and environmental constraints and would require extensions to reticulated infrastructure. While there was little distinguishing the four sites north of Pages Road, preference between the sites was ultimately determined by their proximity to the existing urban boundary and their ability to be readily serviced (i.e., 'Richardsons Farm 1' and Kellands Hill Road sites were preferred over the others due to their location adjoining the existing urban boundary. With respect to the Kennels Road site, this was ultimately considered undesirable for residential growth due to it being furthest from the Timaru residential areas and associated community facilities.

More from the Consultants – source – GMS Business Review Report May2022

Kennels Road

With respect to Kennels Road, there are potential complications associated with the way the land is held in title and, in the case of the racecourse component, how it can be disposed of. This would need to be investigated in detail. Notwithstanding this, the Kennels Road land would be contiguous with the existing Washdyke industrial precinct (following the rezoning of the Seadown Road land) and sits further inland from the coast thus has reduced inundation risk. As such, the land at Kennels Road shown in **Figure 4** is recommended for a future development area overlay.

The question has been raised whether the racecourse should also be subject to the future development area overlay. At this stage, specifically in the absence of any business case or council directive, it is not considered appropriate to foreshadow the closure of the racecourse in favour of a possible future industrial use.



Figure 4: Identify the hatched area with a future development area overlay

PLANZ response to my questions

Hi Mary,

Thanks for your email. I was away from the office most of last week, but I've now had a chance to review the report and refresh my memory. Some comments from me:

- This land was suggested by the council for inclusion in the Planz report.
- It did not 'score' well against the metrics that Planz used (which were comprehensive)
- Therefore, it was not a parcel of land that Planz recommended for rezoning / future development (I acknowledge that this doesn't mean that there isn't still interest in the area by others, as per the article you shared).
- Notwithstanding the above, a rezoning of the land (which we wouldn't support based on the current information) does not alter the reserve status. This would stay in place and would continue to dictate the actual use of the land.

I hope that's of some assistance.

Please let me know if you have any other questions.

Best

Extract from the Timaru District Council - Urban Variation Report September 2023

Wellness rating - Moderate significance

- Modern, affordable housing would be a welcome addition to the Timaru community of approximately 450 homes across FDA 14 and is fully supported by Venture Timaru as meeting the market niche to house key workers coming into the district. Similarly, interest for industrial expansion within FDA13 has already been expressed to Council staff.

LGOIMA request information – email to Mayor from a TDC Group Manager – June 2023

We are trying to encourage Timaru Developments Ltd to support “our” variation in terms of their land *and* for other land currently zoned Recreation owned by the racing trust. A bigger picture approach to the justification for any variation or “out of sequence” development will in my opinion improve the chances of success - and it will save doing all the work twice! As you might appreciate, there’s a little hesitancy in taking this approach from Timaru Developments Ltd, but maybe it’s something Council can direct us to do should it wish to (based on the report when it comes to Council).

What success looks like

Turnover Information by Venue Year on Year

Year	Month	Day	Day of Week	Venue	2024/25 Turnover	2023/24 Turnover	Turnover +/-	By Race ...	By Starter +/-
2024	December	26	Thu	Ellerslie	6,440.3K	5,192.7K	24.03%	24.03%	9.68%
2024	December	26	Thu	Otaki	2,066.9K	1,583.7K	30.51%	14.19%	28.62%
2024	December	26	Thu	Wingatui	1,754.2K	1,833.6K	-4.33%	-14.96%	-14.01%
2024	December	27	Fri	New Plymouth	1,189.2K	1,328.3K	-10.47%	-10.47%	9.63%
2024	December	28	Sat	Rotorua	1,765.9K	1,426.2K	23.82%	39.29%	34.39%
2024	December	28	Sat	Timaru	2,215.9K	1,454.8K	52.32%	35.39%	26.50%
2024	December	29	Sun	Wanganui	1,162.1K				

On Course Turnover Breakdown by Venue

Year	Month	Day	Venue	24/25 Terminal	23/24 Terminal	Terminal +/-	24/25 Mobile	23/24 Mobile	Mobile +/-
2024	December	26	Ellerslie	482.4K	215.5K	123.87%	375.5K	101.1K	271.41%
2024	December	26	Otaki	77.6K	87.0K	-10.86%	25.4K	32.4K	-21.47%
2024	December	26	Wingatui	44.2K	31.0K	42.49%	46.4K	18.3K	153.96%
2024	December	27	New Plymouth	100.8K	102.1K	-1.31%	44.6K	35.4K	25.89%
2024	December	28	Rotorua	97.9K	106.3K	-7.95%	39.9K	25.2K	58.00%
2024	December	28	Timaru	63.6K	51.0K	24.74%	25.0K	7.0K	255.75%
2024	December	29	Wanganui	24.4K		0.00%	10.3K		0.00%

Saturday 28 December 2024 Race Meeting – the stars aligned

125 nominations and nine races from an eight-race programme. The Club had a sensational day aided by the sunny weather and the local community coming out in force to attend the races.

Facts from the day: -

- A new record turnover, totaling just over \$2.2 million – 52.3 % increase on the previous year.
- 35.39% increase in turnover per race.
- 25.60 % increase per starter





Racing counts

THE NEW ZEALAND RACING INDUSTRY COUNTS



LOVERACING.NZ

\$1.63 Billion

CONTRIBUTION TO THE NEW ZEALAND ECONOMY. THOROUGHBRED RACING ACCOUNTING FOR 67% OF THIS.

58,100

PASSIONATE PARTICIPANTS 34,700 OF THESE IN THE THOROUGHBRED SECTOR

\$743 Million

IN ANNUAL WAGES AND SALARIES FROM FTE POSITIONS.

14,398

FULL TIME EQUIVALENT JOBS 9,600 OF THOSE IN THE THOROUGHBRED SECTOR

Source: 'Size & Scope of the New Zealand Racing Industry', prepared by IER for the New Zealand Racing Board in 2018.