



Rārangi Coast Operational Plan

Monkey Bay Cliffs to Wairau River
Mouth



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Rārangi Coast Operational Plan

Monkey Bay Cliffs to Wairau River Mouth

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1. Introduction

The Department of Conservation (the Department) manages the strip of coastal land along the edge of Cloudy Bay at Rārangī. The area considered here covers the coast from Monkey Bay cliffs in the north to the Wairau River mouth in the south, and includes the Wairau Diversion mouth. See Maps 1 & 2 (pgs 27 & 29). There are a significant number of conservation assets as well as a large number of recreational and developmental opportunities in this area, requiring an integrated approach to their management.

In order to achieve this South Marlborough Area Office has developed an operational plan for the management of this public conservation land. This Plan will provide short to medium term (5 – 10 years) actions for the integrated management of the whole Rārangī coastline.

This plan will also provide information to the Marlborough District Council when making decisions on future developments, and thereby potentially lead to further protection of conservation values.

This plan is not a legal requirement, but the unresolved issues require a coordinated approach. The legislation (discussed in more detail below) only provides general direction for management of conservation land, so this document will provide specific management directions for the area along with priorities for the work.

To help with management and with the planning process, the area has been divided into smaller sections, the boundaries of which are determined by the issues which define them.

Issues have been identified along the coast, by the Department, local Iwi, Marlborough District Council (MDC), the local community and other interest groups. The Department previously developed a draft plan, and consulted with local community and interest groups. This Plan is now the result of the Department's consideration of this feedback.

1.1 OVERALL ISSUE

The increasing use and development of the Rārangī Coast conflicting with the protection of ecological values.

Recent studies have increased the level of knowledge of the ecological values of the area, identifying high values and previously unknown species. At the same time the levels of development and use are increasing dramatically, conflicting with the protection of these important values.

Coastal land throughout the country is increasing in economic value. Subdivision of land immediately adjacent to the Rārangī Coast has occurred over the past ten years and there is potential for further development of more adjacent land in the future.

Vehicle usage along the Rārangī Coast has increased dramatically and is causing damage to important ecological values. Many people now own 4WD capable vehicles and have an increasing expectation that they will be able to drive them wherever they want. The subdivision development of adjacent land has further caused an increase in vehicle use and its effects, as shown by the development of tracks from new houses across sensitive areas.

1.2 STATUS OF CONSERVATION LAND

The strip of coastal public conservation land running north-south from Monkey Bay to the Wairau Bar is made up of sections of Esplanade Reserve, Recreation Reserve and Crown Land for Conservation Purposes (generally referred to as Conservation Area). The land directly in front of the residential section between the fire station and Blue Gum Corner is Recreation Reserve, with a twenty metre wide strip of the coast above MHWS gazetted as Esplanade Reserve. The remainder of the area is gazetted as Conservation Area. The parcels of land making up this coastal strip are collectively termed the Rārangī Coast. They comprise a land area of approximately 300 hectares in total. See Maps 1 & 2 (pgs 27 & 29).

1.3 LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The role of the Department of Conservation in managing these areas of public conservation land is set out in the Conservation Act 1987 and the Reserves Act 1977. The management of public conservation land on the Rārangī Coast must be consistent with these Acts, as well as the Conservation General Policy 2005 and the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Management Strategy 1996. Management of the Rārangī Coast must also be in line with all relevant requirements of the Resource Management Act 1991, administered by Marlborough District Council.

In general, that land which is classified as a recreation or esplanade reserve is managed under the Reserves Act and the conservation areas are managed under the Conservation Act.

See Appendix 3 for further details of the relevant legislation and policy.

Overall, the aim of this legislation and policy is to foster and allow the recreational use of public conservation land provided the natural and historic values are protected.

The purpose of this plan is to balance the broad legislative requirements with the specific values and uses of the area.

2. Description/values of the area

2.1 HISTORIC VALUES

The Wairau Bar has a long history of settlement, as shown by the various archaeological sites and remains at the Bar and on adjacent land. The lagoons, waterways and surrounding land were extensively used for food production, transport and village sites.

The Wairau Bar Heritage Group comprising of private landowner Allison Orchard, representatives of Rangitane, Ngāti Rārua, Ngāti Toa, NZ Historic Places Trust, Marlborough Historical Society, Marlborough District Council and the Department of Conservation are actively pursuing greater recognition and protection for this area.

Maori history

Three Wairau iwi have a long term interest in the area dating back well before any European settlement here. They are Rangitane, Ngāti Rārua and Ngāti Toarangitira. The Wairau River mouth and lagoons were an important moa hunter area, and there was a settlement there from an estimated 800 years ago until displaced by European settlers in 1840.

European history

The Wairau Bar area was settled by Europeans in the 1840s with the establishment of a port there. Later it was to remain a pilot station even when the settlement was moved inland to the present Blenheim site. It was the main access route to and from Blenheim for people and goods.

The Marlborough branch of the Historic Places Trust, with consent from the landowners, has successfully registered the 1860s Pilot's House with a Category 1 status under the Historic Places Act 1993.

2.2 WAIRAU BAR AND LAGOONS

The Wairau Bar lies at the southern end of the Rārangi coastline. It comprises a short peninsula on the northern side of the Wairau River mouth. The lagoons north of the river mouth are referred to as the Wairau Bar Lagoons, and are separate from the larger Wairau or Vernon Lagoons to the south. Prior to the construction of a rock training wall along its river boundary, the Bar was a mobile estuarine landform made up of sea-borne deposits of sand and gravel. The training wall, constructed in the 1960s, keeps the Bar stable by controlling the movement of sand and gravel between the estuary and the lagoons at its centre. However, it has also kept the natural tidal water flows from reaching the Wairau Bar Lagoons.

In January 2006 the connection was re-established, via a culvert between the river and the lagoons to the north, enabling the re-watering of the Wairau Bar Lagoons. This re-watering of the lagoons is already resulting in an increase in natural values in this area and further improvement in biodiversity is expected.

Wairau Bar vegetation

The Wairau Bar has a mosaic of native coastal communities which have been highly modified by exotic weeds. It is estimated that 75% of the vegetative cover is exotic ice plant, gorse and tall fescue grasses. The ecological interest of the site is more in the lagoons and their margins.

Predominant native plant species in the lagoons include glasswort (*Sarcocornia quinquefolia* ssp. *quinquefolia*), sea rush (*Juncus kraussii* var. *australiensis*), three square (*Schoenoplectus pungens*) and purua grass (*Bolboschoenus caldwellii*). The lagoon margins support saltmarsh ribbonwood (*Plagianthus divaricatus*), the herbs remuremu (*Selliera radicans*), maakoako (*Samolus repens*), native sea spurge (*Spergularia media*), native musk (*Mimulus repens*), fireweed (*Senecio hispidulus*) and broad leaved fleabane (*Conyza albida*). Of interest also are the sedge; three square (*Schoenoplectus pungens*) and grasses; purua grass (*Bolboschoenus caldwellii*) and erect salt grass (*Puccinellia stricta*). Specimens of wharariki (*Phormium cookianum*) and cabbage tree (*Cordyline australis*) are present but scarce. Akeake has been planted along the roadside.

The native musk is listed in the recently published survey report for the Protected Natural Areas Programme as being "At risk (naturally uncommon)". It is also referred to in this document alongside wharariki as being unknown elsewhere in the district. The only known pingao plant in Cloudy Bay is found just north of the bar (status "At risk (relict)").

Freshwater fauna

Before the installation of the culvert, the Wairau Bar Lagoons were very saline and contained only long-finned eels. It is hoped with the recent re-connection to the sea that the aquatic fauna will become restored to its former diversity.

2.3 THE WAIRAU DIVERSION

The Wairau Diversion was created in the 1960's to divert half of the Wairau River's flow straight across the plain to the sea, overcoming flooding problems at Spring Creek and Tuamarina. This extra river mouth comes out approximately 8km north of the main river mouth. The area is very popular for whitebaiting and other fishing, and its small estuary has become an important feeding and roosting area for birdlife.

2.4 BEACH RIDGES

From a geological perspective the 'beach ridges' system running parallel to the coastline is of great interest and is listed as being of regional importance in the Geopreservation Inventory of the Nelson/Marlborough Region (Hayward et al., 1999). At around the time of the last ice age the coast ran inland as far as where Blenheim is now situated. The stabilisation of the sea, which occurred after the last ice age, created the long-shore drift condition which introduced marine sands and gravels to the coastline – building it up, eastwards, to its current level. The ridges resulted from the varying rates of sediment deposition over the past hundreds of thousands of years.

These bouldery beach ridges and the more sandy stretches in between are habitats for a number of common and rare native plants and animal species. While most of this area is not included in this operational plan, the areas that are included, i.e. the foredune and parts of the most recent ridge, are an integral part of this system.

2.5 VEGETATION ALONG THE COAST

Along the northern stretch of the coastline shore bindweed (*Calystegia soldanella*) and sand sedge (*Carex pumila*) are most prominent. A small area of dune depression holds saltmarsh ribbonwood (*Plagianthus divaricatus*) and oioi (*Leptocarpus similes*). Also found here are scattered patches of the native sand tussock (*Austrofestuca littoralis*). From Blue Gum Corner to the Wairau there are numerous scattered *Muehlenbeckia ephidroides* and a distinctive prostrate form of matagouri (*Discaria toumatou*). Spinifex (*Spinifex sericeus*), sand tussock, native daphne (*Pimelea urvileana*) and the mat daisy (*Raoulia* aff. *Hookeri* "coast" and the more common *R. australis*) are found in mobile sand areas. There are also significant areas of stable boulders coated in lichen, home to the endemic stone moth.

Sand tussock and mat daisy are listed as being 'chronically threatened, gradual decline'. *Muehlenbeckia ephidroides* is listed as being "At risk (declining)".

Although not classified as threatened or at risk, sand sedge, as well as a herb *Triglochin striatum* and a grass *Zoysia minima* are recorded on the foreshore. These species are rare or absent elsewhere in the district and therefore regionally uncommon.

2.6 INVERTEBRATES

The Rārangi Coast has recently been shown to be of considerable entomological importance. The Department conducted an entomological survey of the Rārangi foreshore between October 1998 and March 1999. Thirty six species of *Lepidoptera* (butterflies and moths) were found, of

which seven are either endemic to Cloudy Bay or not previously known from the area.

The two endemic species are the Cloudy Bay mat daisy jumper (*Kiwaia* sp. cf. *jeanae*) and a stone moth (*Dichromedes* sp. nr. *Sphaeriata*). The mat daisy jumper appears to be associated with the *Raoulia* mats. After the drought in 2000 many of these mats died and *Kiwaia* could not be found, however it appears that the population is gradually recovering. The stone moth is associated with the stable lichen covered boulder fields. Other significant invertebrate species are found associated with the native daphne (*Pimelea*) plants.

2.7 BIRDS

A range of birds frequent the Wairau Bar Lagoons area at various seasons including grey teal, paradise shelduck, black swan and mallard. Pied Stilt have been known to breed here, and one pair re-established and bred last season. Black-fronted dotterel are also occasionally seen. New Zealand dotterel has also been recorded here, as has a species of crake, and the area is seasonally important for shoveler. Before the tidal flow was blocked the wetland was renowned as a site for occasional vagrant waders such as golden plover, lesser yellowlegs, red-necked stint, sharp-tailed sandpiper and pectoral sandpiper. The recent reinstatement of tidal flushing should attract these species once again.

The Wairau Diversion is an important feeding and roosting site for pied shags, spotted shags and white-fronted terns, and royal spoonbills from the Wairau (Vernon) Lagoons also use the area.

The beach and intertidal areas are used by shags, oystercatchers, gulls, terns and black-fronted dotterel, which have been seen nesting along the top of the beach.

2.8 REPTILES

There are records of three species of lizard present in the area. The common skink (*Oligosoma nigriplantare polychroma*) is found along the Cloudy Bay coastline and the spotted skink (*Oligosoma lineocellatum*) at the mouth of the Wairau River. Recent genetic work on the common gecko (*Hoplodactylus maculatus*) has shown it to be comprised of several different species. The Marlborough mini gecko (*Hoplodactylus* sp. "Marlborough mini") is the one found at coastal Rārangī.

2.9 RECREATIONAL USE

The Rārangī Coast (including the Wairau Bar) is special to Marlborough people because it is one of the few pieces of local coastline providing easy and public access to a beach, compared with rocky shores elsewhere.

Recreational activities occurring regularly along this coastline include walking, dog exercising, fishing, whitebaiting at the river mouths, 4 wheel motorbiking, 4 wheel driving, bird watching, and beachcombing.

2.10 VEHICLE ACCESS AND DAMAGE TO ECOLOGICAL VALUES

One of the main issues along this coast is the damage being done to the vulnerable ecosystems by motorised vehicles. The values of this type of coastal shrubland and the invertebrates living in it are little understood by most members of the public, and past attempts to reduce the impacts of vehicles using information signs has had limited success.

As much of the vegetation is low growing it is possible to drive over it in a 4WD or ATV vehicle. This will kill the invertebrates living in the plants and eventually kill the plants themselves. This is clearly illustrated by the increase in formation of permanent tracks now apparent along the coast. The existence of these tracks then encourages further use of the area and further damage.

The Department has been monitoring the impacts on part of the Rārangi coast (see Section 7, page 21) using aerial photographs (see Appendix 1). The comparative photos show the increase in tracks in this area from 2002 to 2006. Furthermore, the 2006 photos show only 4 houses along this stretch. There are now 20 houses built along this stretch and the same number of still empty sections. At least half of the houses have vehicle width gates and several have developed their own track across to the beach.

The legal issues surrounding vehicle access in this area are complicated. Under the Nelson/Marlborough Conservation Management Strategy 1996, Policy 16.3.2 (see Appendix 3), vehicles are not allowed to be driven in Conservation Areas except on formed roads, unless specifically allowed for. None of the tracks along the coast comply with the definition of "formed" as there has never been any base material laid or subsequent maintenance work done. Vehicle access has become a problem with the increasing number of vehicles and the increasing recognition of the important values of the ecosystems. One of the purposes of this plan is to protect the Rārangi Coast from further damage.

3. Management issues and actions

In order to ensure all issues are thoroughly considered and managed, the Rārangī Coast has been divided into 10 separate sections. Each section has its own set of particular values, opportunities and issues which will direct management actions, though there are a number of common issues along the coast. The sections and their issues are set out in order from north to south. See Maps 1 & 2 (pgs 27 & 29).

3.1 MONKEY BAY CARPARK

3.1.1 Current management

Weed control – broom, wilding pines.

Maintenance of rock wall, lookout, stairway, walk, end of roadway and carpark.

3.1.2 Objective

An amenity area comprising a well designed and maintained carpark and walking track.

3.1.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Site needs upgrading

- Upgrade car park.
- Provide picnic tables and seating at beach level when car park upgrade is completed.
- Continue to provide quality track surface. Consider providing a permanent surface for the entire length of the track.

Issue 2 - Interpretation panels are outdated

- Review and update interpretation panels – in medium term.

Reason

- Not high priority for site.

Issue 3 - Boat launching and other vehicular access over the edge of the carpark is lowering fore-dune resulting in the risk of inundation at very high tides

- A single beach access/boat launching point from the campground, with hard surface, has been completed.

- A fence from campground to Monkey Bay carpark has been built to prevent vehicle access at other points.

Reasons

- It is the most popular and suitable place for small boat launching at Rārangi.
- It is unclear how much of a problem the fore-dune lowering is. However, it will be mitigated by the campground and carpark upgrade. The only vehicle access points are now through the campground, and the hard surface should prevent vehicles getting stuck thereby reducing fore-dune lowering.

Issue 4 - Litter

- Continue pack in – pack out rubbish management.
- Place signage requesting visitors take their rubbish away with them.

Reasons

- Consistent with general Departmental policy. Rubbish bins would get used as rubbish dump by campers and other visitors.

Issue 5 - Minor weed problems, including marram invasion

- Continue with scheduled annual weed control.
- Investigate inclusion of marram control in annual weed programme.

Reasons

- This is part of wider responsibilities for weed control.

3.2 CAMPGROUND AND AMENITY AREA

3.2.1 Current management

Weed control - broom, ice plant, lupin.

Maintenance of campground, toilets, gravel roads and picnic area.

3.2.2 Objective

A well designed and maintained self-registration campsite for short-stop travellers, and amenity area for general use.

3.2.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Impacts of campers on residents (noise, visual) / Capacity of campground facilities

- Campground has been upgraded. Landscape planting underway.
- New toilet block to be built, increasing capacity.

Reasons

- Landscaping and upgrade will screen campsite, reducing visual and noise impacts on residents.
- New toilet block will increase capacity of facilities in line with demand.

Issue 2 - Beach access from camping area causing damage to dunes/ridges

- Formalise and manage limited access points. A total of 3 vehicle access points to the beach, with hard surfaces through fore-dune area, have been created to allow for small boat launching. One at campground, one in amenity area carpark and one at the Fire Station (Area 3).
- Amenity area is being fenced off to prevent vehicle access to pea gravel, preventing vehicles getting stuck.

Reasons

- This will reduce the damage to vegetation and fore dunes and prevent vehicles getting stuck in soft ground.

Issue 3 - Pine trees – safety hazard issue as well as site suitability issue / Source of wildings

- Remove pine trees between the power lines and the road (in conjunction with Marlborough Lines), and replant clumps of appropriate native species.
- Monitor annually and remove hazardous trees.
- Remove juveniles/wildings to prevent self-sustaining population.
- Replanting options will be looked at in the future.

Reasons

- Currently provide shelter to campground and houses.
- Removal of all the pine trees would leave campground and houses vulnerable to wind and salt spray. Completely replanting with other species will be a difficult job requiring time and resources. However, it is important that this occur in the long term.
- Replanting between power lines and road will provide a useful trial for future replanting of native species.
- Full replanting programme is longer term than this plan.

Issue 4 - Dogs

- Continue to allow dog exercising in the area.
- Place signage requesting dog owners to remove their dog's waste.

Reasons

- It is desirable for the Department to provide dog exercising areas where appropriate. The campground and amenity area is a large, spread out area and therefore suitable for allowing dog exercising/staying. Dogs are frequently exercised along the beach.

Issue 5 - Requests for further mountain bike and BMX opportunities

- Development of BMX/MTB jump track under pine trees.

Reasons

- This will be part of the walking/biking track currently being developed between the Diversion and Monkey Bay.
- It is an appropriate use of this site, and an alternative to other tracks in the area.

3.3 FIRE STATION/COMMUNITY CENTRE

3.3.1 Current management

Weed control - broom, ice plant, lupin. Identified need to control tree lucerne.

3.3.2 Objective

A well designed and maintained amenity area for use by the Fire Station and community groups.

3.3.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Fragmentation of facilities/plantings

- Support local community project to investigate a boardwalk or similar to allow pram and wheelchair access to beach.
- Medium term retention of tree lucerne under pine tree areas. Removal in longer term when all pine trees removed.

Reasons

- The Fire Station and Community Centre are built on the road reserve bordering the reserve managed by the Department. However, any future development would be likely to include the public conservation land, and the Department will want to be part of any future discussions and development plans.
- There is community support for retention of tree lucerne under the pine tree areas as food for native birds. The Department will leave these until they are replaced with native species.

Issue 2 - Pine trees creating power line hazard and potential risk to structures

- Remove pine trees between the power lines and the road (in conjunction with Marlborough Lines), and replant clumps of appropriate native species.
- Monitor annually and remove hazardous trees.
- Remove juveniles/wildings to prevent self-sustaining population.
- Replanting options will be looked at in the future.
- Encourage Marlborough Lines to put the power lines underground in the long term.

Reasons

- Pine trees currently provide shelter to Fire station/Community Centre and houses. Removal of the pine trees would leave Fire station/Community Centre and houses vulnerable. Completely replanting with other species will be a difficult job requiring time and resources. However, it is important that this occur in the long term.
- Replanting clumps of natives between power lines and road will provide a useful trial for future replanting of native species.
- Full replanting programme is longer term than this plan.

Issue 3 - Haphazard beach access

- Maintain one vehicle access point to beach to allow for small boat launching.
- Finish amenity area fencing to prevent vehicle access to this part of the Reserve

3.4 RESIDENTIAL STRIP

3.4.1 Current management

Weed Control – most weeds controlled by Landcare Group. The Department previously controlled old man's beard and bone seed, and continues to monitor for reoccurrence.

Extensive replanting project being carried out by Landcare Group.

3.4.2 Objectives

A natural area of regenerating native coastal vegetation.

Continue to encourage the Landcare Group to manage the area, providing support and advice where needed.

3.4.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Restoration planting areas established by local Landcare group

- Most management of the area carried out by Landcare Group according to their management plan.
- Continue to encourage and support the Landcare Group planting project.

Reasons

- Keeps management consistent.
- Uses skills and work force of keen local group.
- Engenders 'ownership' of the area and therefore helps solve issues.
- Support/advice is provided where necessary from the Department and MDC.

Issue 2 - Spread of weeds (garden escapees), many potentially extremely invasive

- Landcare group to carry out weed control in conjunction with planting programme.
- The Department to monitor area, and act if any problems occur.
- Increase public awareness of natural values in conjunction with Landcare Group.
- Continue to encourage and support the Landcare Group planting project.

Reasons

- Some of the locals don't want sprays used close to houses.
- Keeps management consistent.
- Uses skills and work force of keen local group.
- Engenders 'ownership' of area and therefore helps solve issues.
- Support/advice is provided where necessary from the Department and MDC.
- Ice plant and gazania are undesirable as they are very invasive, smothering native plants and covering open areas.

Issue 3 - Encroachment of resident's gardens on reserve land behind houses (an offence under the Reserves Act)

- No new plantings of exotic species allowed. Only plantings consistent with Landcare Group plan.
- Enforce land boundary/encroachment offences particularly with main problem species – very invasive or listed weeds.

- Increase public awareness of natural values in conjunction with Landcare group.
- Continue to encourage and support the Landcare group planting project.

Reasons

- It is an offence under the Reserves Act to plant exotic species within the Reserve.
- The Landcare Group is working towards removing and controlling other exotic species, so extra control by the Department is only required if an urgent or extensive problem occurs.

Issue 4 - Encroachment of residents buildings and structures onto reserve land (an offence under the Reserves Act)

- No new developments/encroachments allowed.
- Enforce land boundary encroachment offences where problems exist or public access is blocked.
- Increase public awareness of natural values in conjunction with Landcare Group.
- Continue to encourage and support the Landcare Group planting project.

Reasons

- It is an offence under the Reserves Act to build unauthorised structures within the Reserve. It prevents others from using a public area.

Issue 5 - Beach access points - number and accessibility to visitors / Vehicle damage to planting programme

- Maintain some of the beach access points. Consider placing bollards in future if vehicle access remains a problem.
- Need to maintain ability for the Department to have vehicle access to beach for management purposes.

Reasons

- There are currently a number of access points which require only limited maintenance.
- Some vehicle access is desirable for residents for trade vehicle, eg septic tank maintenance.
- The problem of vehicle damage to plantings has been partially fixed by driftwood surrounds.
- The Department will reassess this situation if vehicle access becomes a problem.

Issue 6 - Multiple quasi access ways from private property

- Reassess vehicle access to foreshore if problems occur.

Reasons

- Public access is legal – the main problems come from vehicle access.
- Some vehicle access is desirable for residents for trade vehicles, eg septic tank maintenance.

Issue 7 - Burning of rubbish (an offence under the Reserves Act and local bylaws)

- Enforce rubbish burning ban when necessary.

Issue 8 - Firewood gathering

- Continue with current general fire ban.
- Consider permits for bonfires at community events on a case by case basis.

Reasons

- Fire ban prevents large bonfires and therefore use of firewood for them. Driftwood is habitat for lizards and invertebrates.
- There is considerable support for allowing occasional bonfires for community events, subject to stringent conditions.

3.5 BARE LAND NORTH OF BLUE GUM CORNER

3.5.1 Current management

Weed control - broom, lupin.

Biodiversity – monitoring of key species.

3.5.2 Objective

Maintain the area free from woody weeds with a view to establishing a natural coastal community in the future.

3.5.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Weediness - seed source, fire risk

- Very thick broom and lupin.
- Dumping of garden rubbish.
- Control woody weeds by mulching and spraying regrowth.
- Support/endorse any biocontrol opportunities as they arise.

- The woody weeds need controlling as they are a seed source and high fire risk.

Reasons

- Other management of the area is currently not a high priority for either the Department or the Landcare Group. By controlling these weeds future management options are kept open.
- Good management of the area will discourage illegal dumping.

Issue 2 - Large concentration of threatened sand tussock populations

- Implement scheduled weed control.
- Include in fenced off area with sections 6 and 7.

Reasons

- The tussock is out competed by weeds so control is necessary. See above.
- Vehicular use is a major threat to the sand tussock.

3.6 BLUE GUM CORNER

3.6.1 Current management

Weed control - broom.

Maintenance of gravel road and carpark.

3.6.2 Objective

A well maintained carpark.

3.6.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - General untidiness and planting of unsuitable species at Millennium Rock site/carpark

- Encourage MDC and Rārangī Residents Association to enhance Millennium Rock site - surfacing, plantings and barriers.
- Maintain seaward carpark to relevant standard.

Reasons

- Millennium Rock itself is on road reserve managed by the MDC. The seaward carpark is on Conservation Area and managed by the Department.

Issue 2 - Presence of threatened sand tussock populations - these have largely been obliterated by vehicles

- Include in fenced off area with section 7.
- Maintain one vehicle access point with hard surface to beach to allow for small boat launching.

Issue 3 - Informal camping activity

- 'No camping' signage directing visitors to the Monkey Bay/Rārangi campsite.
- No toilets planned for this area.
- Monitor for human waste and police where required.

Reasons

- Informal camping can cause rubbish and waste problems.
- Camping facilities are provided by the Department at Rārangi.

Issue 4 - Rubbish dumping at beach carpark

- See above decisions.

Reasons

- Good management of site should help minimise dumping.

3.7 BLUE GUM CORNER TO DIVERSION

3.7.1 Current management

Weed control - lupin, gorse, broom, pine, ice plant, smilax and Californian poppy.

Biodiversity – monitoring programme for key species and vehicle impacts.

3.7.2 Objective

An ecologically functioning community of high biodiversity value restored and protected from damage by visitors.

3.7.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - High biodiversity values including sand tussock, pimelea and its associated invertebrates, stone moth habitat and Kiwaia habitat

- Improve interpretation signs. More information on threats and impacts.

- Encourage participation by wider community with a view to extending the boundaries of the restoration project to include this section.

Reasons

- There is still limited understanding and acceptance by some people of the very high ecological values of this area and the level of threats to these endemic and highly threatened species.

Issue 2 - Vehicle impacts - vehicle access from new houses to beach forming new tracks and damaging ecosystem

- Fence off one longitudinal vehicle track behind the houses and several cross tracks to the beach.
- High priority to draw up exact details of the fencing.
- Consult with stakeholders on fencing details.

Reasons

- There has been overwhelming support from all stakeholder groups for the Department to limit vehicle access. Fencing will allow some vehicle access along the coast but reduce vehicle impacts on the vulnerable ecosystem.

Issue 3 - Weeds, including marram

- Continue with scheduled annual weed control.
- Implement marram control programme, particularly at southern end.
- In the longer term replant with spinifex, sand tussock and other appropriate coastal native species if natural restoration does not occur.

Reasons

- This is part of wider responsibilities for weed control.
- Marram control is needed as it out-competes the native species.

3.8 CONSERVATION LAND NORTH OF DIVERSION

3.8.1 Current management

Weed control - wilding pines.

Since the pines trees were removed the natural vegetation is re-establishing in the area.

3.8.2 Objective

An ecologically functioning community of high biodiversity value restored and protected from damage by visitors.

3.8.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Vehicle access to coast causing damage to vulnerable ecosystem

- Include in fence development in Sections 6 & 7 and manage the area's ecological values the same as the 'Blue Gum Corner to Diversion' section.

Reasons

- Vehicle access has already damaged the high natural values of the area.
- This will also limit vehicle access to the 'Blue Gum to Diversion' area to the north and prevent camping.

Issue 2 - Illegal camping

- See above decisions.

Reasons

- Camping in this area is undesirable as vehicles cause damage to the vulnerable ecosystem, and there are limited toilet facilities (provided by MDC at Diversion).
- MDC is trialling limited camping opportunities for whitebaiters in self contained campers at the Diversion. Other camping facilities are provided by the Department at Rārangi.

3.9 DIVERSION TO WAIRAU BAR

The area has high natural values that are different from areas to the north of the Diversion. At the northern end is the best spinifex population in Cloudy Bay and the southern end has the only remaining pingao in Cloudy Bay. There is scattered sand tussock and *Muehlenbeckia ephidroides*. The area also has gravel and lichen fields with a previously unknown and endemic species of lichen moth. These gravel/lichen fields are being damaged by vehicle activity.

3.9.1 Current management

Weed control - pines, ice plant, gorse, broom, tree lucerne, asphodel, barbary and boxthorn. Plan to include kikuyu control in near future.

3.9.2 Objective

A protected natural ecosystem.

3.9.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Weeds

- Status Quo. Annual weed control work, mostly brush weeds.
- Review weed control along whole coast.

Issue 2 - High ecological values - needs further ecological surveys

- Survey as funding allows.

Reasons

- The limited survey work done to date has identified high ecological values. Potential for still more rare and unusual species to be identified.

Issue 3 - Impacts of vehicles

- Prevent public vehicle access to this area, by stopping access through the Wairau Bar.
- Monitor boundary fences for other access points.

Reasons

- Development at the Wairau Bar will include blocking of public vehicle access to this area.
- The Department needs to retain vehicle access for management purposes.

Issue 4 - Illegal dumping, including car bodies and garden waste

- Prevent public vehicle access to this area.

Reasons

- Preventing vehicle access will minimise illegal rubbish dumping.

3.10 WAIRAU BAR

3.10.1 Current management

Maintenance of access road, 4WD road, picnic area and toilets.

3.10.2 Objective

An integrated part of the Wairau Lagoon system, with restored ecological functioning, appropriate, low impact recreational opportunities and recognition of historical values.

3.10.3 Issues/Management decisions

Issue 1 - Illegal camping / Vehicle tracks substandard and network irrational / Weeds

- A landscape and development plan is currently being formulated. This will be fully implemented over a number of years, based on priorities and resources. A specific plan will be developed in conjunction with the Wairau Heritage Group comprising representatives from Iwi, MDC, the Department, and Historic Places Trust.
- Landscape and Development Plan to include:
 - protection of historic and cultural values;
 - interpretation of area's values;
 - restrictions on vehicle access;
 - provision of walking tracks;
 - investigate establishment of camping area;
 - upgrading picnic area and toilets;
 - management of boat ramp;
 - weed control work;
 - enhancement of biodiversity by replanting with appropriate native coastal species.

Issue 2 - Roading substandard

- Seal main road and hand over to MDC as soon as practicable.

Reasons

- Road area must be officially vested in MDC.

Issue 3 - Rubbish dumping, including car bodies

- Fires (eg. burning wrecks).
- See above decisions.

Reasons

- Restricting vehicle access to much of the reserve will reduce opportunities for dumping and burning cars.

Issue 4 - Vehicle impacts on lagoons

- See above decisions.

Reasons

- Mainly dealt with by re-watering of lagoon. The sand flats are now too wet or boggy for vehicle access.

Issue 5 - Improving ecological values since re-watering

- Investigate the potential of a second culvert to further increase tidal flow in the lagoons and implement if ecological gains will be significant.
- Enhance biodiversity by replanting with appropriate native coastal species.

Map 1

Map 2

Appendix 1

COMPARISON OF VEHICLE TRACKS 2002 - 2006

Figure 1. View from south looking north - May 2002.



Figure 2. View from south looking north - May 2006.



Figure 3. View from north looking south - June 2002.



Figure 4. View from north looking south - May 2006.



Figure 5. Monitoring points
at 300m and 350m -
June 2002.



Figure 6. Monitoring points
at 300m and 350m -
May 2006.



Figure 7. Monitoring points
at 1550m and 1600m -
June 2002.



Figure 8. Monitoring point
1600m - May 2006.



Figure 9. Monitoring points
at 1800m and 1850m -
June 2002.

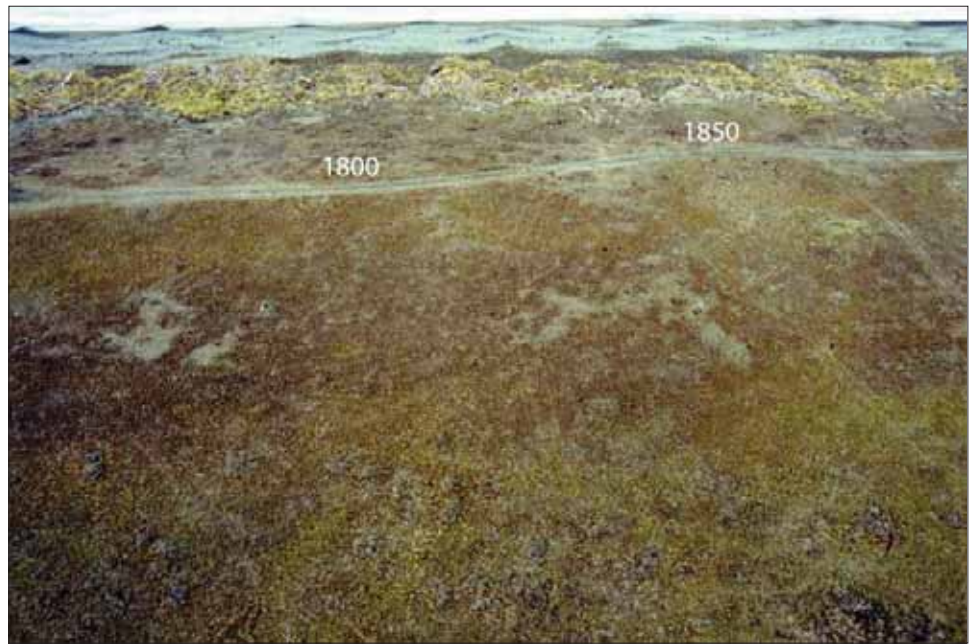


Figure 10. Monitoring point
at 1850m - May 2006.



Figure 11. Monitoring points at 1900m and 1950m - June 2002.



Figure 12. Monitoring point at 1950m - May 2006.



Appendix 2

MANAGEMENT OF DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION VISITOR ASSETS ON RÄRANGI COAST

SITE NUMBER	SITE NAME	ASSET NUMBER	ASSET NAME	VISITOR GROUP	ASSET TYPE	ASSET GROUP	PROPOSAL
1000755	Wairau Bar picnic area	98069	Wairau Bar rd 2	DV	4WD Road	Track/Road off tracking	Identify, maintain and block
1000755	Wairau Bar picnic area	98070	Wairau Bar rd 1	DV	Gravel Road (2WD)	Track/Road to MDC	Upgrade, seal and transfer
1000755	Wairau Bar picnic area	100600	Wairau Bar amenity/picnic area	DV	Amenity area	Amenity area	Upgrade
1000755	Wairau Bar picnic area	3095	Wairau Bar Toilets	DV	Toilet - pit	Building	Upgrade
1000756	Wairau Bar picnic area	New asset	Wairau Bar Camp	DV	Standard campsite (maintained area)	Amenity area	Develop camping opportunities
1000763	Monkey Bay walk	2633	Rock Wall	SST	Safety Fence/Barrier	Structure	Maintain
1000763	Monkey Bay walk	2634	Lookout	SST	Safety Fence/Barrier	Structure	Maintain
1000763	Monkey Bay walk	2641	Stairway	SST	Staircase	Structure	Maintain
1000763	Monkey Bay walk	95010	Monkey Bay walk	SST	Short Walk	Track/Road	Upgrade
1000763	Monkey Bay walk	98015	Monkey Bay rd	SST	Sealed Road	Track/Road	Maintain
1000763	Monkey Bay walk	101372	Monkey Bay carpark	SST	Carpark (maintained area)	Amenity area	Upgrade
1000764	Rärangi picnic area	2610	Rärangi Toilets	ON	Toilet - septic tank	Building	Maintain
1000765	Rärangi picnic area	New asset	Rärangi Toilets	ON	Toilet - septic tank	Building	Build New
1000764	Rärangi picnic area	98027	Rärangi picnic area rd	ON	Gravel Road (2WD)	Track/Road	Maintain
1000764	Rärangi picnic area	100594	Rärangi amenity/picnic area	ON	Amenity area (maintained area)	Amenity area	Maintain
1000764	Rärangi picnic area	101660	Rärangi campsite	ON	Standard campsite (maintained area)	Amenity area	Upgrade
New Site	Blue Gums Corner	New asset	Blue Gums Roadway	DV	Gravel Road (2WD)	Track/Road	Upgrade
New Site	Blue Gums Corner	New asset	Blue Gums Carpark	DV	Carpark (maintained area)	Amenity area	Upgrade

NB: Upgrading of Wairau Bar assets will be according to Landscape and Development Plan

DV – Day Visitors

SST – Short Stop Travellers

ON – Overnight Visitors

Appendix 3

LEGISLATION AND POLICIES

Conservation Act 1987

Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987 states that the functions of the Department include:

“(a) To manage for conservation purposes, all land, and all other natural and historic resources, for the time being held under this Act, and all other land and natural and historic resources whose owner agrees with the Minister that they should be managed by the Department:”

And:

“(e) To the extent that the use of any natural or historic resource for recreation or tourism is not inconsistent with its conservation, to foster the use of natural and historic resources for recreation, and to allow their use for tourism”

Section 4 of the Conservation Act requires the Department to:

‘Give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi’

Section 25 Management of Stewardship areas:

“Every stewardship area shall so be managed that its natural and historic resources are protected.”

Reserves Act 1977

Functions of the Department prescribed by the Reserves Act 1977 include:

“(a) Providing, for the preservation and management for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand possessing—

(i) Recreational use or potential, whether active or passive, or

(ii) Wildlife; or

(iii) Indigenous flora or fauna; or

(iv) Environmental and landscape amenity or interest; or

(v) Natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, biological, geological, scientific, educational, community, or other special features or value:

- (b) *Ensuring, as far as possible, the survival of all indigenous species of flora and fauna, both rare and commonplace, in their natural communities and habitats, and the preservation of representative samples of all classes of natural ecosystems and landscape which in the aggregate originally gave New Zealand its own recognisable character:*
- (c) *Ensuring, as far as possible, the preservation of access for the public to and along the sea coast, its bays and inlets and offshore islands, lakeshores, and riverbanks, and fostering and promoting the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment and of the margins of lakes and rivers and the protection of them from unnecessary subdivision and development."*

Conservation Management Strategy 1996

Relevant implementations from the Conservation Management Strategy – Nelson/Marlborough Conservancy 1996, relating to vehicle use, include:

16.3.2 Motor vehicles will be confined to formed roads and designated parking areas unless otherwise authorised.

16.3.4 Off-road motor vehicles will be permitted only on designated, established 4-wheel drive roads.

Conservation General Policy 2005

The Conservation General Policy 2005 states:

9.5 The use of vehicles and other forms of transport

9.5(a) The use of vehicles and any other forms of transport should be compatible with the statutory purposes for which the place is held, or be necessary to enable the Department to perform its functions.

9.5(b) Conservation management strategies and plans will identify where the use of specified types of vehicles and other forms of transport may be allowed and will establish any conditions for use.