

1 Introduction

In New Zealand, national parks are areas of publicly-owned land that are preserved in perpetuity for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use and enjoyment of the public. They consist of areas that contain scenery of such distinctive quality, ecological systems, or natural features so beautiful, unique or scientifically important, that their preservation is in the national interest.

Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park (see Figure 1) protects qualities and attractions that range from historic features of local interest, through ecosystems of national scientific importance, to major physical features of international significance. The Park, together with Westland/Tai Poutini and Fiordland National Parks, comprised New Zealand's first world heritage area in 1986. In 1989 the much larger 2.6 million hectare South West New Zealand (Te Wahipounamu) World Heritage Area included the three Parks, recognised by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as one of the world's outstanding natural areas.

The Park is unique in the New Zealand context in that it contains a cross-section of landforms and vegetation that extends from the South Island high country's braided riverbeds to the highest peaks of the Southern Alps/Ka Tiritiri o te Moana. It also includes New Zealand's highest mountain Aoraki/Mount Cook, which is also highly significant to Ngāi Tahu as their most sacred mountain.

Public recreation and tourism interests in the best-known features, the mountains and the glaciers, have been significant for over a century. For this reason, accommodation, guiding and ski plane services have a long-standing tradition in the Park.

The Park has been established to preserve its valued scenery, ecological systems and natural features in perpetuity. These values can be considered scarce and irreplaceable. As development proceeds elsewhere, they will become even more valuable, which may bring greater pressure on them. The purpose of this plan is to provide for the management of the Park in accordance with the Act so that the Park's intrinsic worth can be retained.

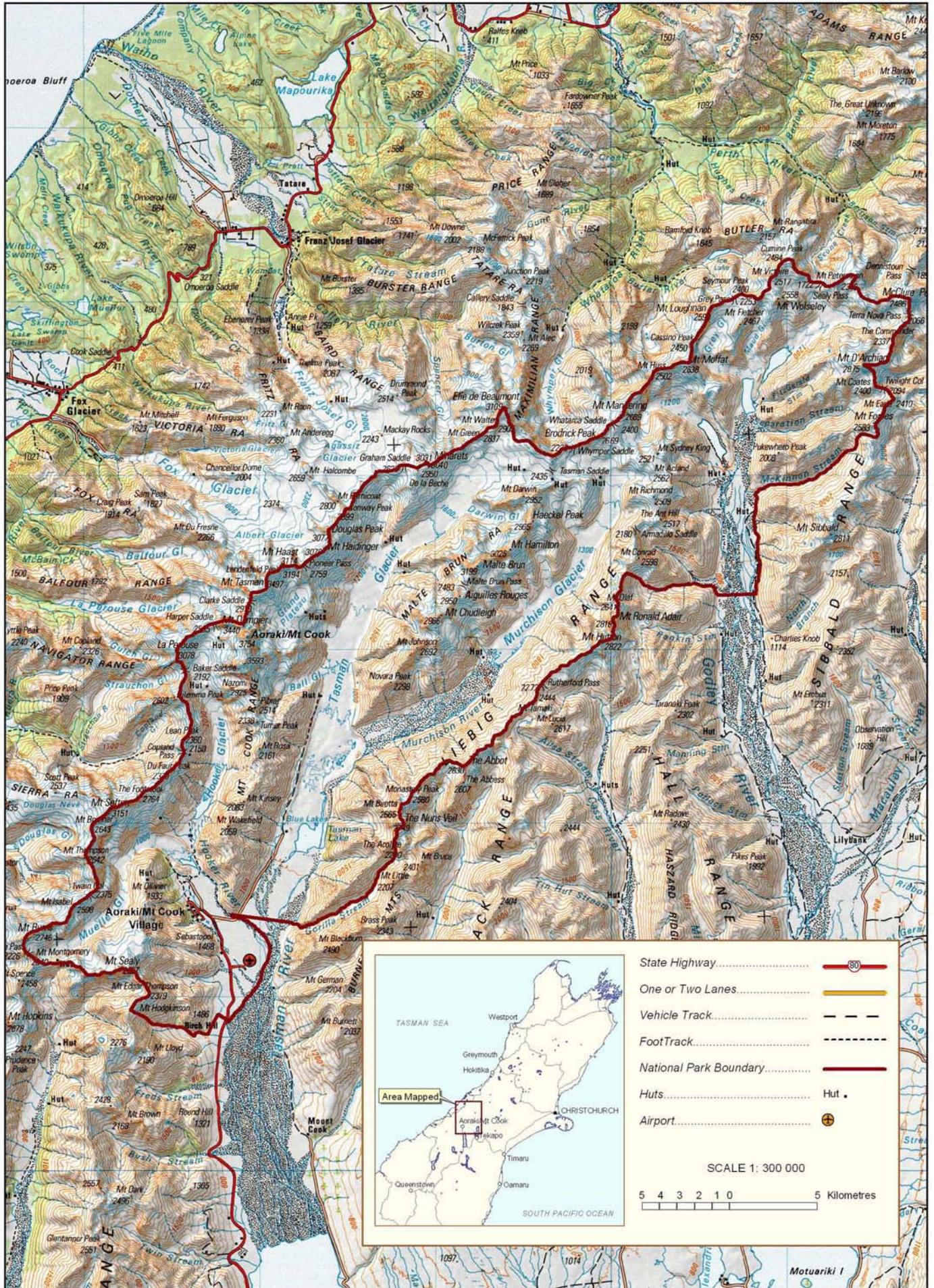
A challenge facing the managers of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park lies in establishing the nature and level of adverse environmental effects that may be allowed in the interest of freedom of public entry, access and use. A further challenge is also to manage that entry and access in order to ensure the Park's character and distinguishing features remain for the benefit, use and enjoyment of future generations.

The Canterbury Conservancy of the Department of Conservation administers Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. Day-to-day management is undertaken by the Aoraki Area Office based in Aoraki/Mount Cook Village.

1.1 MANAGEMENT PLANNING

The purpose of a management plan is to provide for the management of the Park in accordance with the National Parks Act 1980, the *General Policy for National Parks* (1983) and the *Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy* (2000).

FIG 1: AORAKI/MOUNT COOK NATIONAL PARK



The plan will direct the work of the Department in the Park from 2004–2014. As a guide for the next ten years, the plan seeks to give clear directions for management, while remaining flexible enough to allow for changing circumstances within the ten-year time frame.

The process for the preparation of a management plan is set out in Section 47 of the National Parks Act and is summarised as follows:

- an initial notice is published asking for suggestions and comments (completed December 1998);
- a draft management plan is prepared in consultation with the Conservation Board;
- the draft management plan is released for public submission for at least two months;
- those wishing to be heard in support of their submissions appear before representatives of the Department and the Conservation Board;
- the draft plan is revised in light of submissions;
- the Conservation Board considers the revised draft and the summary of submissions and may make further amendments.

When satisfied, the Board recommends the revised draft to the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA) for approval.

The NZCA considers the amended draft, modifies it as it considers appropriate and refers the draft to the Minister of Conservation for comment.

When satisfied, the NZCA approves the management plan and this approval is publicly notified.

This Plan is the third management plan for Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, replacing the Plan released in 1989.

1.2 LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

1.2.1 *The National Parks Act 1980*

Section 4(1) of the National Parks Act, states:

“It is hereby declared that the provisions of this Act shall have effect for the purpose of preserving in perpetuity as national parks, for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, use, and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand that contain scenery of such distinctive quality, ecological systems, or natural features so beautiful, unique, or scientifically important that their preservation is in the national interest”

Section 4(2) provides that:

“It is hereby further declared that, having regard to the general purposes specified in subsection (1) of this section, national parks shall be so administered and maintained under the provisions of this Act that -

- (a) They shall be preserved, as far as possible in their natural state:

(b) Except where the Authority otherwise determines, the native plants and animals of the parks shall as far as possible be preserved and the introduced plants and animals shall as far as possible be exterminated:

(c) Sites and objects of archaeological and historical interest shall as far as possible be preserved:

(d) Their value as soil, water, and forest conservation areas shall be maintained:

(e) Subject to the provisions of this Act and to the imposition of such conditions and restrictions as may be necessary for the preservation of the native plants and animals or for the welfare in general of the parks, the public shall have freedom of entry and access to the parks, so they may receive in full measure the inspiration, enjoyment, recreation, and other benefits that may be derived from mountains, forests, sounds, seacoasts, lakes, rivers, and other natural features.”

This management plan must be in accordance with the Act.

1.2.1.1 National Park Bylaws

Section 56 of the National Parks Act provides for the Minister of Conservation to make bylaws. Bylaws allow for the enforcement of activities that cannot be enforced through policies. The *Mount Cook National Park Bylaws 1981*¹ include bylaws regulating pollution of parks, disposal of rubbish, camping, use of park huts, fires, vehicles, parking of vehicles, aircraft, competitive sports, use of spotlights for hunting, portable generators and public address systems. This management plan must be consistent with current park bylaws or, if not, request additions or changes to them. The *Mount Cook National Park Bylaws 1981* came into force on 1 April 1981, were amended in 1996, and are attached as Appendix A.

1.2.2 The General Policy for National Parks 1983

The *General Policy for National Parks* (1983) was prepared pursuant to section 44 of the National Parks Act 1980 by the New Zealand National Parks and Reserves Authority, now replaced by the New Zealand Conservation Authority (NZCA). It is a guide for the interpretation and exercise of discretion contained in the Act and is directed at achieving the broad objectives of that Act. From time to time the NZCA may approve additional statements of General Policy or may review General Policies, through a public notification and submission process.

This management plan must be in accordance with the *General Policy for National Parks*.

1.2.3 The Conservation Act 1987

The Conservation Act 1987 established the Department of Conservation and directs the administration and management of all land and natural and historic resources under the Department's control (other Acts also direct the management of lands administered by the Department).

Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 requires of the Department that the Act and the Acts listed in the First Schedule to that Act, which includes the National Parks

¹ The by-laws and other documents pre-date the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 so place names do not reflect the current terminology (e.g. Mount Cook instead of Aoraki/Mount Cook).

Act, shall so be interpreted and administered as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, to the extent that the provisions of any of these Acts are not clearly inconsistent with those principles².

Section 6 of the Conservation Act 1987 sets out the functions of the Department. Of particular relevance to this plan are sections 6(ab), (b), (c)(i) and (e) which state:

“(ab) To preserve so far as is practicable all indigenous freshwater fisheries, and protect recreational freshwater fisheries and freshwater habitats:

(b) To advocate the conservation of natural and historic resources generally:

(c) To promote the benefits to present and future generations of –

(i) The conservation of natural and historic resources generally and the natural and historic resources of New Zealand in particular;

(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 allow their use for tourism.”

The general functions of the Conservation Act must be read subject to the National Parks Act. In consequence, where there is a conflict or difference between the two, the National Parks Act will apply.

1.2.3.1 The Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy (CMS)

Under section 17D of the Conservation Act each Conservancy must prepare a Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) which applies to all land administered by the Department in that Conservancy. The *Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy* was approved in June 2000.

“The purpose of a CMS is to implement general policies and establish objectives for the integrated management of natural and historic resources, including any species, managed by the Department under the Wildlife Act 1953, the Marine Reserves Act 1971, the Reserves Act 1977, the Wild Animal Control Act 1977, the Marine Mammals Protection Act 1978, the National Parks Act 1980, the New Zealand Walkways Act 1990, or the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000, or any of them, and for recreation, tourism, and other conservation purposes” [*Conservation Act 1987, Section 17D(1)*].

The Canterbury CMS is the umbrella document which sets the general direction for the management of all land administered by the Department within the conservancy, including this National Park. The Canterbury CMS must not derogate from the *General Policy for National Parks* and this management plan not derogate from the CMS.

1.2.4 The Resource Management Act 1991

The purpose of the Resource Management Act is:

“...to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources”, where “sustainable management” means “...managing 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 wellbeing and for their health and safety while –

² Ngāi Tahu Maori Trust Board v Director-General of Conservation [1995] 3NZLR 533.

- (a) Sustaining the potential of natural and physical resources (excluding minerals) to meet the reasonably foreseeable needs of future generations; and
- (b) Safeguarding the life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and ecosystems; and
- (c) Avoiding, remedying, or mitigating, any adverse effects of activities on the environment.” (Section 5, Resource Management Act 1991)

The Resource Management Act is administered by the Ministry for the Environment and is implemented by local government through district and regional plans and statements prepared by councils. The activities of the Department are affected by the provisions of the *Canterbury Regional Policy Statement (1998)*, the *Proposed Mackenzie District Plan (1999)* and regional plans. The Department must apply for resource consents for activities as required under these plans. Section 4 of the Act however, provides a limited exemption to the Department for those land use activities within the Park that are provided for in a management plan or a CMS and which do not have significant adverse effects outside the boundary of the Park.

Under sections 61(2)(a), 66(2)(c), (74)(2)(b) and 104(2) of the Act councils need to have regard to the *Canterbury Conservation Management Strategy* and to this management plan when preparing their plans, policies and/or in the context of resource consent applications, to the extent that they have a bearing on resource management issues.

1.2.5 Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996

The Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996 established Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as a corporate body with the authority to act on behalf of all Ngāi Tahu whanui, subject to the provisions of the Act.

1.2.6 Deed of Settlement between the Crown and Ngāi Tahu 1997 and Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998

The purpose of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 is:

- “(a) To record the apology given by the Crown to Ngāi Tahu in the deed of settlement ...; and
- (b) To give effect to certain provisions of that deed of settlement, being a deed that settles the Ngāi Tahu claims.”

The Act binds the Crown. It is to be interpreted in a manner which best furthers the agreements expressed in the *Deed of Settlement 1997*. This Deed prescribes a number of values and principles that are to be addressed by the Department of Conservation in the management of the lands that it administers within the Ngāi Tahu tākiwa/territory. These have been specifically addressed, where relevant, within this plan.

Introductory section U of the Act records:

“On 21 November 1997, the Crown and Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu entered into the deed of settlement in which the Crown acknowledged that Ngāi Tahu suffered grave injustices which significantly impaired Ngāi Tahu’s economic, social and cultural development and which recorded the matters required to give effect to a settlement of all of Ngāi Tahu’s historical claims.”

The settlement resolved the long-standing grievances of the WAI 27 claim.

Mechanisms established in the *Deed of Settlement* 1997 and the subsequent Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 place a number of specific obligations on the Department with respect to the land that it administers, including Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. These obligations are in addition to the obligations imposed by section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987. Several major provisions of the Settlement are relevant to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park and this Plan.

While some provisions are specific to the Tōpuni area shown in Figure 2 it is clear that activity within the National Park beyond that area could also have an effect on Ngāi Tahu values for the Tōpuni. The Department's management must recognise this. The actions required of the Department in respect of the Settlement are included throughout this Plan's policy sections.

1.2.6.1 Aoraki/Mount Cook and Tōpuni

Within the Park a more specific area has been defined as shown on Figure 2. In a highly significant and symbolic action the Crown will vest the ownership of Aoraki/Mount Cook in Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu which, in turn, will within seven days, gift the mountain to the Crown on behalf of the people of New Zealand.

The Figure 2 area is also subject to the Aoraki/Mount Cook Tōpuni. The concept of Tōpuni derives from the traditional Ngāi Tahu tikanga (custom) of persons of rangatira (chiefly) status extending their mana and protection over a person or area by placing their cloak over them or it. In its current application, a Tōpuni confirms and places an 'overlay' of Ngāi Tahu values on Aoraki/Mount Cook. A Tōpuni does not override the National Park status of the land, but ensures that Ngāi Tahu values are also recognised, acknowledged and provided for.

A Tōpuni involves three levels of information:

- A statement of the Ngāi Tahu values in relation to the area (see Appendix B);
- A set of principles aimed at ensuring that the Department avoids harming or diminishing those values;
- Specific actions which the Director-General of Conservation has agreed to undertake to give effect to those principles.

The Canterbury Aoraki Conservation Board and the New Zealand Conservation Authority are required to have particular regard to the Ngāi Tahu values and specific principles in relation to Tōpuni. They are also required to consult with and have particular regard to the views of Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu as to the effect on the Ngāi Tahu values of this management plan in relation to the Tōpuni area.

1.2.6.2 Deed of Recognition

The Deed of Recognition for Aoraki (see Appendix C) requires consultation with and particular regard to the views of Ngāi Tahu during the preparation of this management plan and other listed actions of the Department, in relation to the Aoraki/Mount Cook Tōpuni area.

1.2.6.3 Protocols

Pursuant to section 282 of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998, the Minister of Conservation has issued Protocols in relation to the Department's relationship with Ngāi Tahu. Section 281 of the Act provides:

“...the term protocol means a statement in writing, issued by the Crown through the Minister of Conservation to Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu , which sets out:

(a) How the Department of Conservation will exercise its functions, powers, and duties in relation to specified matters within the Ngāi Tahu claim area; and

(b) How the Department of Conservation will, on a continuing basis, interact with Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and provide for Te Runanga o Ngāi Tahu’s input into its decision-making process.”

The ‘specified matters’ dealt with in the protocols are:

- cultural materials;
- freshwater fisheries;
- the culling of species of interest to Ngāi Tahu;
- historic resources;
- Resource Management Act 1991 involvement;
- visitor and public information.

The protocols make general statements about how the Department should conduct work with Ngāi Tahu in these areas. The protocols have been quoted where relevant within this Plan and are included in Appendix D.

1.2.6.4 Taonga Species

Schedule 97 of the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 lists those species of indigenous plants and animals that have been identified as taonga species in the *Deed of Settlement*. Those taonga species found in or near the Park are listed in Appendix E.

Ngāi Tahu value taonga species as highly prized treasure and negotiated with the Crown to have these species identified as taonga species in the Settlement. Provisions were also negotiated with the Crown to enable Ngāi Tahu to participate in the management of taonga species.

The Crown acknowledges the cultural, spiritual, historic, and traditional association of Ngāi Tahu with taonga species. These values have been addressed in the Plan policies where relevant.

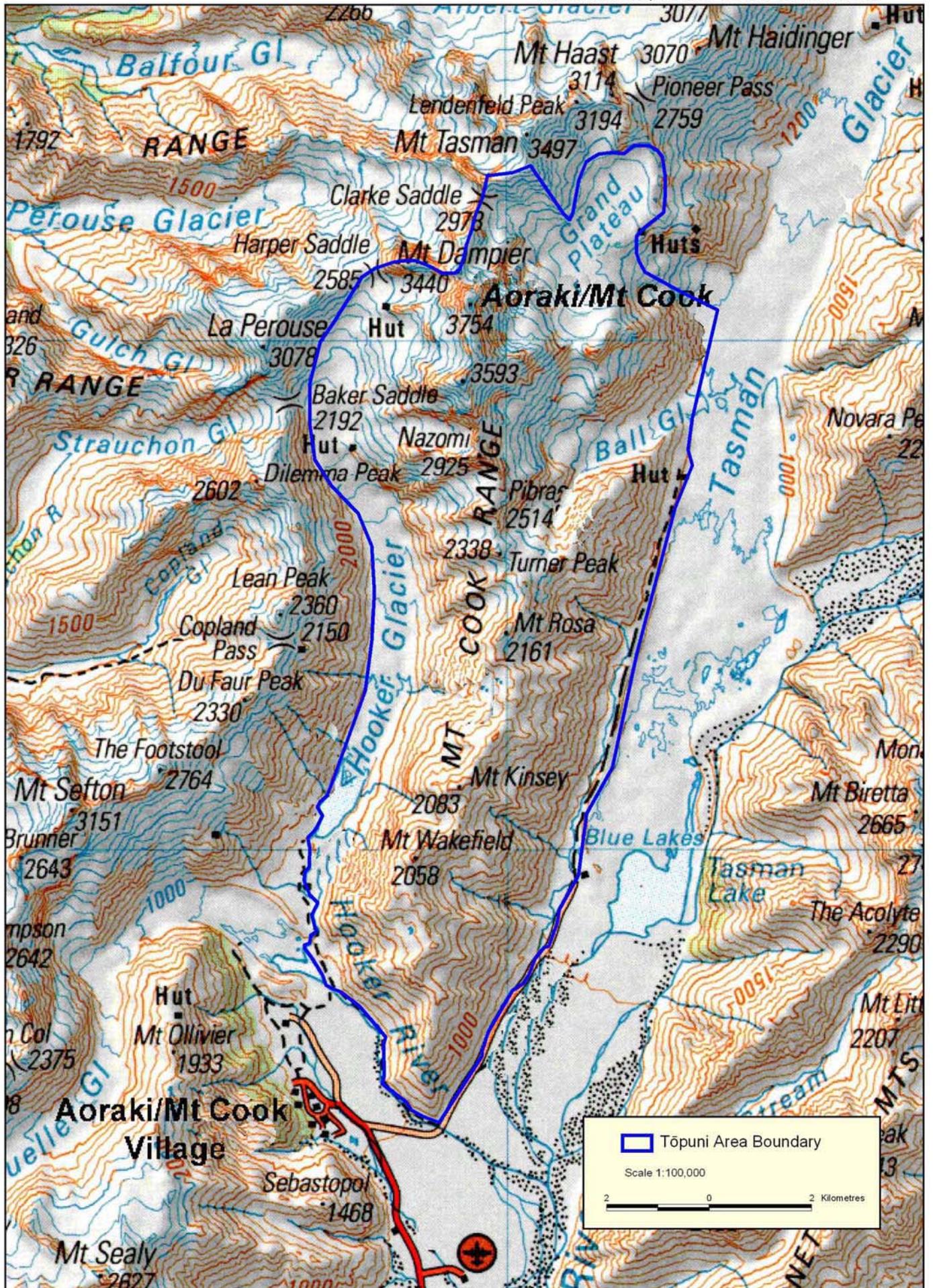
1.2.6.5 Name Changes

Another aspect of the *Deed of Settlement* of particular relevance to the National Park, is the official place name amendments. These are now Aoraki/Mount Cook - the mountain, Park and Village, and Southern Alps/Ka Tiritiri o te Moana.

1.2.7 Non-Statutory Planning

The Department produces plans, strategies and reviews of particular issues both on a local and national basis. Important documents include the national *Visitor*

FIG 2: AORAKI/MOUNT COOK TŌPUNI AREA



Strategy (1996), *Historic Heritage Strategy* (1997) and *Kaupapa Atawhai Strategy* (1997), recovery plans for threatened native species, and local animal/plant pest control plans. This plan is a further means of guidance for the implementation of these documents and strategies.

1.2.8 Other Statutory Bodies with Administrative Responsibilities

Environment Canterbury and Mackenzie District Council are responsible for regional and district planning respectively through district and regional plans, and for civil defence, water and soil conservation and air pollution control, and building consents.

The New Zealand Police are responsible for law and order, some compliance and law enforcement measures (in conjunction with Department's officers), together with search and rescue.

Canterbury District Health Board, or its successors, are responsible for public health.

The New Zealand Fire Service is responsible for determining standards of fire prevention, safety and control.

The Ministry of Transport (Civil Aviation Authority) is responsible for aviation safety and regulation.

Transit New Zealand is responsible for management of State Highway 80 which, extends through the National Park from its boundary to the intersection of Lower Terrace Road and Bowen Drive at the Village edge.

The Central South Island Fish and Game Council is responsible for the issue of sports fish and game bird licences and for the setting of related restrictions for the sustainable management of sports fisheries.

Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu is responsible for its part in the ongoing relationships between Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu and the Department of Conservation, the Minister of Conservation, the New Zealand Conservation Authority and the Conservation Board. This is with respect to a series of statutory duties and functions pursuant to the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 and the *Deed of Settlement* 1997.

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust is responsible for providing the identification, protection, preservation and conservation of the historical and cultural heritage of New Zealand and, in particular, the protection of archaeological sites and the registration of historic places.

1.3 BACKGROUND

1.3.1 Introduction

The imposing nature of the Aoraki/Mount Cook region has captured the imagination of New Zealanders and the world at large. The core of the area was first given a protection status in 1885 (see 1.3.4.1) and, subsequently enlarged, it was declared a national park in 1953 following the passing of the National Parks Act 1952. Since then it has been managed under the twin aims of the New Zealand national park philosophy: preservation as far as possible in its natural state and freedom of entry and access for public enjoyment. Currently (in 2004) Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park has an area of 70,728 hectares, with headquarters at Aoraki/Mount Cook Village.

This Background section of the management plan provides information required to understand the development of the Plan's policies and methods. For a much wider breadth of information about the natural values and history of the Park, and in particular the values, history and culture of recreational use of the Park, readers are referred to *The Alpine World of Mount Cook National Park* (Dennis and Potton, 1984), commissioned in 1984 by the former Department of Lands and Survey.

1.3.2 Ngāi Tahu Values Relating to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park

The tākata whenua are Kati Hāwea, Rapuwai, Waitaha, Kati Mamoe and Ngāi Tahu¹. The hapu is Kati Huirapa. The rohe of Kati Huirapa extends over the area from the Rakaia River to the Waitaki River.

Ngāi Tahu, descendants of the above tribes, are the people who hold the rangatiratanga (chieftainship) and mana (authority) within the takiwā (area) of Ngāi Tahu whānui, which includes the Park. The Crown has formally acknowledged this rangatiratanga through the Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu Act 1996 and in the apology recorded in the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

Ngāi Tahu are governed by a "tribal council", Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, which is made up of 18 Papatipu Rūnanga holding the rights and responsibilities to defined areas of land and waters within the takiwā of Ngāi Tahu. These rights are founded on traditional occupations and whakapapa from ancient times to the present day. Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu, based in Christchurch, is the collective tribal voice, a function that in relation to most matters, is exercised through Papatipu Rūnanga.

The Papatipu Rūnanga with particular interest in day-to-day management of the Park are Te Rūnanga o Arowhenua and Te Rūnanga o Waihao, centred at Temuka and Waihao in Canterbury respectively, and Te Rūnanga o Moeraki centred at Moeraki in Otago. These organisations represent the tākata whenua for Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park.

¹ The preference of the tākata whenua is to use the iwi southern dialect "k" spelling rather than the northern "ng". This preference has been followed except where referring to Ngāi Tahu, where the spelling used in the legislation (see 1.2.6) has been followed.

Te Rūnaka o Kati Waewae and Te Rūnanga o Makaawhio, centred at Arahura and Bruce Bay respectively on the West Coast, are Papatipu Rūnanga that also have an interest in the Park and have been consulted in the preparation of this plan.

In addition the whole of Ngāi Tahu iwi have an interest in Aoraki.

1.3.2.1 Aoraki/Mount Cook Tōpuni

With respect to the Tōpuni and the other provisions within the Settlement (see *1.2.6 Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998 and Deed of Settlement... 1997*) Ngāi Tahu values are recorded as a statement of their cultural, spiritual, historic, and traditional associations. There are, however, varying versions of the Aoraki story and tākata whenua have requested the following one as an alternative to the first part of the Tōpuni statement (the full Tōpuni statement is included as Appendix B).

“Aoraki's whakapapa (genealogy)

In the beginning all was darkness (Te Pō). Out of the first glimmer of light (Te Ao), long-standing light (Te Aotūroa) emerged until it stood in all quarters. Encompassing everything was a womb of emptiness, an intangible void (Te Kore). This void was intense in its search for procreation. Finally it reached its ultimate boundaries and became a parentless void (Te Korematua) but with the potential for life. And so Te Mākū, moisture, emerged and coupled with Mahoranuiātea, a cloud that grew from the dawn. From this union came Raki, the heavens, who coupled with Pōhārūa Te Pō, the breath of life found in the womb of darkness. The first child in this chain of creation was Aoraki who stands as the supreme mountain of Ngāi Tahu.

The story of Aoraki

At this time there was no Te Wai Pounamu or Aotearoa. The waters of Kiwa rolled over the place now occupied by the South Island, the North Island and Stewart Island. No sign of land existed. Raki (the Sky Father) wedded Papa-tūa-nuku (the Earth Mother). After the marriage, some of the Sky Children came down to greet their father's new wife.

Among the celestial visitors were four sons of Raki who were named Ao-raki (Cloud in the Sky), Raki-ora (Long Raki), Raki-rua (Raki the Second), and Rāraki-roa (Long Unbroken Line). They came down in a canoe which was known as Te Waka O Aoraki. They cruised around Papa-tūa-nuku, who lay as one body in a huge continent known as Hawaiiiki. Then, keen to explore, the voyagers set out to sea, but no matter how far they travelled, they could not find land. They decided to return to their celestial home, but the karakia (incantation) which should have lifted the waka (canoe) back to the heavens failed and the canoe fell back into the sea and turned over onto its side, turning to stone and earth in the process. The waka listed and settled with the west side much higher out of the water than the east. Thus the whole waka formed the South Island, hence the name: Te Waka o Aoraki. Aoraki and his brothers clambered on to the high side and were turned to stone. They are still there today. Aoraki is the mountain known to Pākehā as Mount Cook, and his brothers are the next highest peaks near him - Rakiro (Mount Dampier), Rakirua (Mount Teichelmann), Rārakiroa (Mount Tasman). The form of the island as it is now is, owes much to the subsequent deeds of Tū Te Rakiwhānoa, who took on the job of shaping the land to make it fit for human habitation.” (Aoraki/Mount Cook – the ancestor of Ngāi Tahu, 1999)

The Tōpuni statement continues:

“For Ngāi Tahu, traditions such as this represent the links between the cosmological world of the gods and present generations, these histories reinforce tribal identity and continuity between generations, and document the events which shaped the environment of Te Waipounamu and Ngāi Tahu as an iwi.

The melt-waters that flow from Aoraki are sacred. On special occasions of cultural moment, the blessings of Aoraki are sought through taking of small amounts of its 'special' waters, back to other parts of the island for use in ceremonial occasions.

The mauri of Aoraki represents the essence that binds the physical and spiritual elements of all things together, generating and upholding all life. All elements of the natural environment possess a life force, and all forms of life are related. Mauri is a critical element of the spiritual relationship of Ngāi Tahu Whānui with the mountain.

The saying 'He kapua kei runga i Aoraki, whakarewa whakarewa' ('The cloud that floats aloft Aoraki, for ever fly, stay aloft') refers to the cloud that often surrounds Aoraki. Aoraki does not always 'come out' for visitors to see, just as that a great chief is not always giving audience, or on 'show'. It is for Aoraki to choose when to emerge from his cloak of mist, a power and influence that is beyond mortals, symbolising the mana of Aoraki.

To Ngāi Tahu, Aoraki represents the most sacred of ancestors, from whom Ngāi Tahu descend and who provides the iwi with its sense of communal identity, solidarity and purpose. It follows that the ancestor embodied in the mountain remains the physical manifestation of Aoraki, the link between the supernatural and the natural world. The tapu associated with Aoraki is a significant dimension of the tribal value, and is the source of the power over life and death, which the mountain possesses."

From these values for Aoraki flow the various interests that Ngāi Tahu have in the management of the Park's waters (in whatever form they may be), species (both the taonga species in 1.2.6.4 and others), recreational and tourist activity, information to the public and vistas of the mountain.

Alongside Ngāi Tahu there is a growing international movement by indigenous peoples to see more respectful management of their sacred mountains (e.g Uluru in Australia, Denali in Alaska, and Sagarmartha/Chomolunga in Nepal/Tibet).

1.3.3 The Park - Physical Character and Location

Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park is situated on the eastern flank of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana. Although at one of the narrower parts of this chain of mountains, the Park contains Aoraki/Mount Cook, New Zealand's highest mountain rising 3754 metres above sea level and includes most New Zealand peaks over 3000 metres high.

The Park extends along the main dividing ridge of the Alps for some 65 kilometres and shares a common boundary with Westland/Tai Poutini National Park for some 40 kilometres, but nowhere does it extend more than 15 kilometres from the Main Divide. It occupies the head of the Tasman and Godley Valleys, whose glaciers drain into the rivers and lakes of the vast inland basin of the Mackenzie Country.

The Park has a harsh environment. Over a third of the area consists of permanent snow and ice, while most of the remainder is steep actively eroding mountain lands. Only a small proportion of the park, in the Godley, Tasman and Hooker Valleys, is flat land.

1.3.3.1 Landforms, Geology, Soils and Climate

The geology is fairly uniform, consisting of greywacke (weakly metamorphosed sandstone and siltstone) and schist (more highly metamorphosed greywacke type material), which have been compressed and uplifted as a result of the Pacific plate coming into contact with the Indo-Australian plate along the Alpine Fault on the western edge of the mountains. Earthquakes generated by movement along this contact front are a recurring natural hazard of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana. The greywacke belt is considered to be relatively poor in mineral value and is not rated as a priority for exploration and prospecting.

The greywacke and schist are poorly consolidated and readily weathered and eroded, under the climatic extremes experienced in the region. Precipitation, much of it in the form of snow, is high. Prevailing westerly air currents crossing the Tasman Sea rise and release their moisture on coming into contact with the barrier of the Southern Alps/Kā Tiritiri o te Moana and then continue eastwards as the dry "nor'wester" or foehn winds. As a result the rainfall drops dramatically east of the Main Divide, from over 4000 mm at Aoraki/Mount Cook Village, to 2500 mm on the Park boundary at Birch Hill and 600 mm at the southern end of Lake Pukaki.

Winds in the mountains have been recorded gusting up to 235 km/hour at higher altitudes, though they are not so strong in the valleys. The climatic extremes experienced in the mountains require facilities, such as huts, to be specially designed to meet those conditions.

Rain and snow falling in the mountains are an essential part of the erosion process. Moisture in rocks is subject to alternate freezing and thawing, which eventually leads to fragments breaking away. In addition snowfall replenishes the snow and ice fields feeding glaciers, which have carved out the great valleys of the Park. However, during the period of European occupation the glaciers have receded, as the rate of recharge has been less than the rate of melting. Consequently the glacier moraine walls, consisting of rock fragment material deposited on the valley sides, have slumped, as the reduced volume of glacier ice can no longer support them. This instability is causing major difficulties for park management, because moraines offer easy valley access and some usable hut sites. Inherent instability of the greywacke is also a hazard for climbers in the Park. In 1991 a rock fall removed the top 10 metres of Aoraki/Mount Cook and spilt 14 million cubic metres of rock buttress and flanking glacier material down onto the Grand Plateau and down and right across the Tasman Glacier. The falling material travelled 7.3 kilometres in total, at speeds of up to 600 km/hr.

As the glaciers have receded, "pro-glacial" lakes have formed and enlarged at the snouts of the Mueller, Hooker, Tasman, Murchison, Classen, Grey/Maud and Godley Glaciers.

Another erosion factor is avalanches. These are the result of a complex relationship among various factors, such as slope angle, aspect, precipitation, wind and variations in daily temperature, allowing the development of shear planes. Avalanches are a major hazard for users of the Park, especially in winter and early spring and can occur through until late December.

Soils are immature, skeletal and low in nutrients, because their continual slow rejuvenation is counteracted by severe natural erosion. Thus, when damaged by floods, avalanche, fire or earthworks, any vegetation regeneration is a slow process.

The vegetation that does exist is of critical value for ecological, landscape and water and soil conservation reasons.

1.3.3.2 Vegetation, Flora and Fauna

Many vegetation types are present, reflecting the differences in habitat created by the variations of altitude, temperature, rain and snow, and the influence of burning during early Maori times. The vegetation ranges from alpine herb-fields through tussock grasslands to scrub and occasional stands of forest. Many of these indigenous plant communities are fragile and some contain plants regarded as rare and endangered, that require special consideration and protection. Examples are *Olearia frimbriata*, *Epilobium purpuratum* (a willow herb), *Ranunculus godleyanus* (yellow mountain buttercup) and *Ranunculus grahamii* (an alpine buttercup). Some plant species are endemic to the Aoraki/Mount Cook region. By contrast, other parts of the Park, notably the accessible valley floors much influenced by man, contain introduced plants. Some of these are a threat to the indigenous flora and plant communities, while others have a minimal influence on the Park.

The fauna is varied, though some groups, especially the invertebrates, are not yet fully known. Thirty species of indigenous birds have been recorded as breeding or visiting, ranging from the larger free-flying mountain species with a broad range (e.g. kea), to smaller birds of forest and scrub (e.g. rifleman/titipounamu) and birds of the broad open riverbeds (e.g. paradise duck/pütakitaki). A further 15 species of introduced birds are resident in the Park. Over 700 species of insect have been recorded; some of them, especially those found at higher altitudes, are endemic to the Park. Introduced animals have an influence on the Park. Some, such as thar, hares, possums and chamois have had a serious detrimental effect on the vegetation, especially in the alpine and sub-alpine zones, while others, such as cats, stoats, hedgehogs and ferrets, are serious predators of birds and invertebrates. Land in the Tasman Valley near the Park boundary is occasionally grazed by straying cattle and sheep, due to the difficulty of fencing the current Park boundary along the Tasman Riverbed.

1.3.4 Park Heritage

Ngäi Tahu and earlier Māori activity in the area is believed to have been primarily for ceremonial and spiritual reasons, along with seasonal food gathering, particularly for birds and kiore. There is some evidence for Godley Glacier-Sealy Pass alpine crossings for pounamu (Andersen, 1916). No sites of permanent or temporary occupation have been found in the Park, although artefacts have been found and some burning of vegetation occurred. Māori traditions are strongly associated with the area (see 1.3.2.1); many geographical features are named, and Māori had a good understanding of ice and snow. As set out in 1.3.2, Aoraki the mountain, holds a special significance for Ngäi Tahu.

European interest in the Aoraki/Mount Cook region has occurred since the 1850s. During that time several sites have been occupied by homesteads, hotels and climbing huts (see list under 3.2.6 Historic Resources). Few old buildings however, have survived the ravages of fire, wind, flood and ground instability. Only a plaque, a number of larch, fir and pine trees and foundations and a fireplace now mark the original accommodation site at White Horse Hill, the first Hermitage. All that

remains of Ball Hut, the starting point for many climbing explorations, are the shattered foundations. Early farming homestead sites remain on the Birch Hill Flats. Sefton Bivouac is maintained as an historic hut; the historic Hooker Hut remains, but is under a site-stability threat; the original Empress Hut is in storage for possible museum display and some early buildings near The Hermitage are owned and maintained by the hotel owners.

Also remaining is the heritage of climbing, with and without guides, that has seen the Aoraki/Mount Cook region become and remain, the premier climbing locality in New Zealand. This climbing heritage is best understood through publications, such as Denis & Potton (1984) and Palman (2001) and the references within them.

The names given to various geographical features of the Park commemorate world explorers, European aristocracy and the nineteenth century scientific community. Only a few names are associated directly with the exploration of the Aoraki/Mount Cook region. "Aoraki" was formally added to the mountain, Park and Village names in 1998.

1.3.4.1 Establishment of Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park

In 1862 the Canterbury Provincial Geologist, Julius Von Haast, gave the first detailed account of the scenic splendour of the area he had explored in what was to become the National Park. Advancing up the Tasman riverbed, he recalled:

"It was towards evening when this grand sight first burst upon us. The majestic forms of Mount Cook, Mount Haidinger, of the Moorhouse range, and many other wild craggy peaks covered with snow and ice, rose in indescribable grandeur before us, and whilst the summits were gilded by the last rays of the sun, the broad valley of the Tasman was already enveloped in deep purple shade. It was a moment of extreme delight, never to be forgotten." (Von Haast. 1948, pg.209)

Sir George Bowen, New Zealand's Governor (1868 to 1873), noted the area's tourist potential and was instrumental in saving the bush, now known as Governor's Bush. These and other accounts led to Government granting The Hermitage hotel's first lease in 1884 and appointing the owner/manager, Frank Huddleston, as a ranger.

Public and Government concern with over-grazing by sheep and repeated burning in the area prompted the 1885 establishment of the first part of the Park, the Mueller and Hooker Valleys, as a "recreational reserve". In 1887 the Tasman Valley was similarly reserved, followed by the Murchison Valley in 1917 and the upper Godley glaciers in 1927.

From the 1920s early members of the New Zealand Alpine Club and other mountain clubs lobbied for a national park system as a means of unified administration to protect natural areas and public recreation rights (see Thom, 1987).

Public debate led to the passing of the National Parks Act 1952 and subsequently the four reserves were united as Mount Cook National Park. In 1958 further large areas of the upper Godley Valley were added to the Park, with other minor additions and deletions until 1969. Today the Park is mainly defined by ridgeline boundaries (see Figure 1).

The Park name was amended on 1 October 1998 to Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park, in accordance with the Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998.

1.3.4.2 South West (Te Wāhipounamu³) World Heritage Area

Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park forms a key part of the South West New Zealand (Te Wāhipounamu) World Heritage Area. World heritage areas are designated under the World Heritage Convention for their “outstanding universal value” following an assessment of four criteria:

- sites nominated should be outstanding examples representing the major stages of the earth’s evolutionary history;
- sites nominated should be outstanding examples representing significant ongoing geological processes, biological evolution and man’s interaction with his natural environment, as distinct from periods of the earth’s development. This focuses on the ongoing processes in the development of communities of plants and animals, landforms and marine areas and freshwater bodies;
- sites nominated should contain superlative natural phenomena, formations or features, for instance, outstanding examples of the most important ecosystems, areas of exceptional beauty or exceptional combinations of natural and cultural elements;
- sites nominated should contain the most important and significant natural habitats where threatened species of animals or plants of outstanding universal value from the point of view of science or conservation still survive.

The exceptional natural values of the Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park alone meet at least the first three, if not all four criteria (*Nomination of South-West New Zealand (Te Wāhipounamu)...1989*). The Park’s Gondwana heritage, ice age imprints, tectonic origins and biological evolution make it an internationally outstanding area.

The Department is obligated to manage the World Heritage Area in such a way that its integrity is preserved. To do this, the Department informs visitors about the area’s heritage values and provides facilities to mitigate visitor impacts. The primary obligation, however, is to protect the area’s outstanding natural landscapes, biodiversity and ecological integrity. This obligation is entirely consistent with the primary objective for managing Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park.

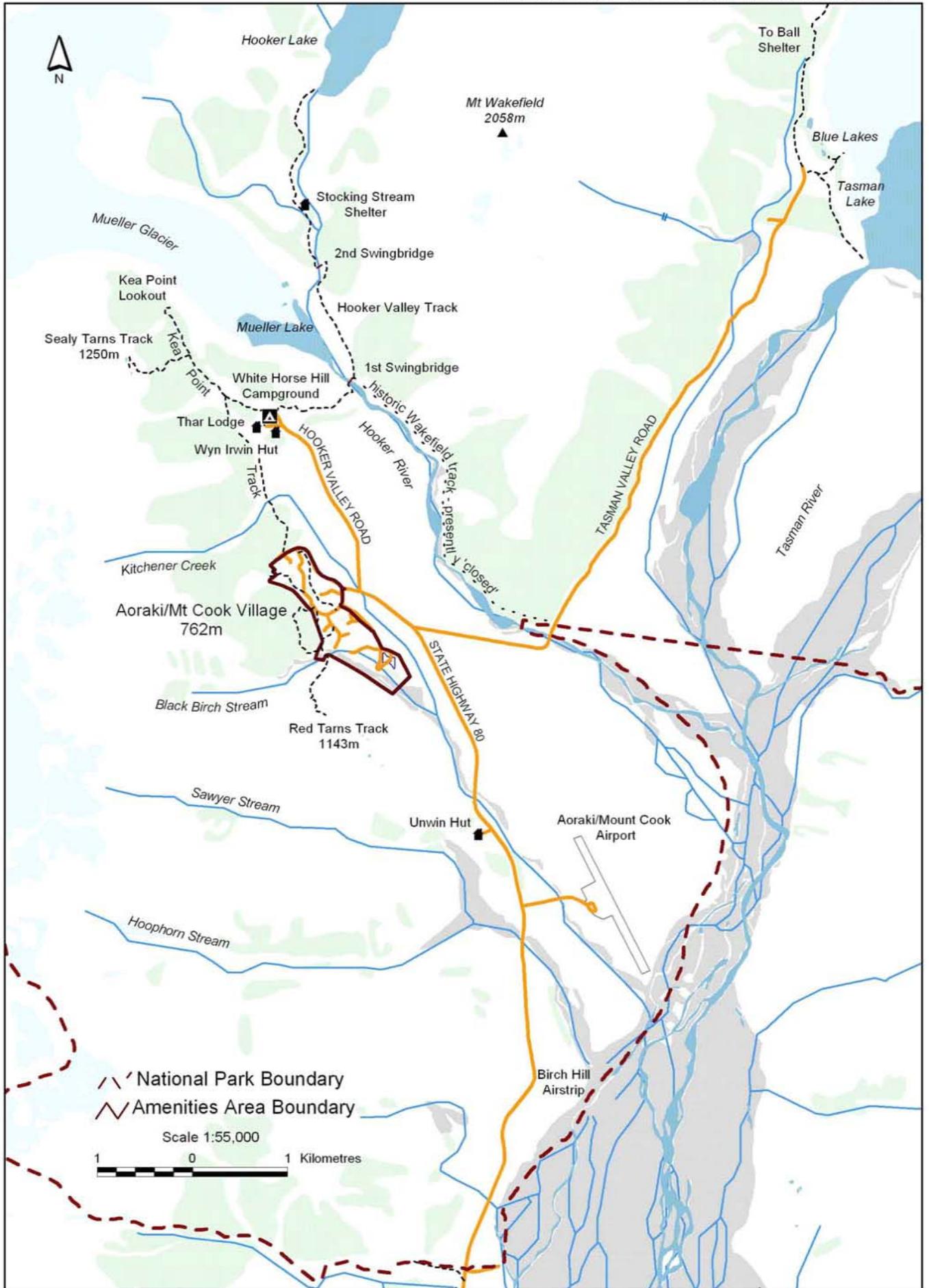
1.3.5 Recreational and Tourism Values

For much of the early European history of the Aoraki/Mount Cook region, it was only an intrepid few who managed to make their way to the mountains. Gradually visitor numbers increased over the years. The ongoing attraction has been the active and passive enjoyment of the scenic splendour of the Park, through climbing, skiing, walking, flying or just sitting, while appreciating the Park’s natural and cultural values. This attraction is well set out in *The Alpine World of Mount Cook National Park* (Dennis and Potton, 1984).

Factors leading to increased visitor use have been the The Hermitage hotel since 1884, a growing number of mountain bivouacs and huts since 1891 and later club

³ This is one of the traditional names for the South Island. The name Te Wai Pounamu is now more commonly used.

FIG 3: AORAKI/MOUNT COOK VILLAGE ENVIRONS



and public accommodation near or at the Aoraki/Mount Cook Village. Other factors have been the ski-plane flights from 1955, construction of the Mount Cook Airport in 1960, upgrading of State Highway 80 to its present high standard in 1975 and ongoing developments in the Village. Annual visits to the Village were estimated for 2001 to be in excess of 250,000. Approximately 30% of visits are by New Zealanders, while the remaining 70% are by overseas tourists, primarily from Japan, USA and Australia. Day visits comprise approximately 67% of total visits. The National Park is a significant stopping point on tours of the country by overseas tourists.

Most visitors restrict their visit to the Village environs (see Figure 3) and, to a lesser extent, aircraft flights. Visitors in the wider Park area are predominantly hut-based and total about 7000 bednights yearly (see Appendix I). This figure, while having yearly fluctuations, has been more or less constant over the past 20 years. This may reflect a move to shorter trips aided by aircraft access, changing recreation patterns, and, in part, a move by climbers to better climbing conditions in the Otago and Fiordland mountains. Taking the first factor into account, the 20 years' bednight figures may indicate an increase in the number of visits, if not an increase in visitors.

Vehicle access is limited to two routes into the Park. State Highway 80 is a sealed route to Aoraki/Mount Cook Village and runs along the western side of Lake Pukaki. Visitors arriving by the Highway travel either independently or on bus tours. The other route is a four-wheel drive vehicle track up the Godley Valley beyond Lilybank Station.

Aircraft access is a less regular means of arriving at the Park, but a major feature of public use in and over the Park. The majority of the visitors arriving by or using aircraft are overseas tourists. A fleet of ski-equipped aircraft based at Aoraki/Mount Cook Airport provides tourist flights over the Park and landings on the Tasman and other glaciers. These aircraft also fly climbers to designated landing sites in the Park. Helicopters operate mainly from sites outside the Park and fly in climbers, hunters, Tasman Glacier day-skiers and heliskiers, mainly when or where fixed-wing aircraft cannot be used. They also provide services to landing sites on the eastern and southern boundary of the Park.

Several companies based outside the Park offer fixed-wing and helicopter scenic flights over the Park but do not land within the Park. Glentanner Park, some 14 kilometres south of the Park boundary, also has a commercial airstrip.

Within the Park, access is limited by the nature of the mountain environment. Apart from State Highway 80, the Village roads and the Godley 4WD track, there are only two park roads, both unsealed (see Figure 3). One runs to White Horse Hill where a campground is provided. The other is the Tasman Valley Road to the Blue Lakes / Tasman Glacier carpark, although a 4WD track continues another 4 km to Husky Flat.

Walking tracks are concentrated around the Aoraki/Mount Cook Village environs, providing access to points of local interest and viewpoints. Beyond this localised area, there are only three other formed tracks of significance. One is up the Hooker Valley to the Hooker Glacier and Lake (the valley currently attracts over 50,000 visits per year, approximately 20,000 of which are to the Lake). Another is the old road-line from the end of the Tasman Valley Road some 8 km up to the Ball Shelter. The third is the track from the carpark to Blue Lakes and the Tasman Glacier

lookout. Walking routes also extend to Red Tarns and to Mueller Hut which by 2002 attracted over 1500 bednights use per year (note that in 2003 the old 12-bunk hut was replaced with a 28-bunk one, with the expectation of increased visitor use).

Other attractions include skiing on the Tasman Glacier, heliskiing, boating on pro-glacial lakes, biking, guided treks, 4WD tours, night star observations, short walks, school visits and visits to the Park Visitor Centre in the Village. Some visitors to the Park come for a specific purpose, such as climbing or tramping, or in lesser numbers for hunting. For these park users, huts have been established, most publicly owned and administered by the Department, others owned by clubs but available for public use, and one concessionaire-owned and operated hut. Three club lodges, primarily available for club members, are sited near the Village. One mountain guiding service operates from the Village, while several others operate from bases outside the Park.

With the exception of the Park huts, the camping ground at White Horse Hill and the three club lodges, accommodation for Park visitors is located in Aoraki/Mount Cook Village. A range of commercial accommodation is provided, including The Hermitage hotel and Glencoe Wing, motel units, chalets and YHA & Hostelling International, all currently owned by a single company, with the exception of the Hostel. There are a total of about 600 beds available in the Village for visitors.

In recent decades visitor use opportunities have been significantly affected by glacial recession and the associated moraine wall slump processes, and the implications of greater knowledge about geological stability and avalanche dangers. Several mountain huts have been destroyed or had to be moved or removed, access to some huts has become difficult, some tracks and access routes have eroded away, major flood protection works have been required in the Village and ski-plane landing sites have become unusable especially from mid-summer. On the positive side the growing pro-glacial lakes are providing greater boating opportunities.

To service the Park and its visitors, the Village has a permanent population of approximately 150, augmented by temporary staff during the summer. Some concessionaire staff are resident outside the Park. The Department provides a wide range of local body services in the Village.

1.3.5.1 Visitor Management Settings

Visitor management settings can be arrived at by identifying the values of importance to visitors and the natural, historic and cultural values of the Park within different areas.

Providing for appropriate recreational ('visitor') use is one of the principal functions of the Department, where that use is not inconsistent with the preservation of the Park. In meeting the section 4(2)(a) National Parks Act principle of encouraging "...inspiration, enjoyment, recreation and other benefits..", the Department recognises that these are park values that can be positively or negatively affected through the management of visitor use.

The Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) is a recreation planning method that is used to help identify the visitor management settings (e.g. the upper Hooker Valley), which are managed to provide for particular Park values or visitor experiences in an area, such as physical challenge, natural quiet, self-reliance and

isolation. By providing a range of recreational opportunities within management settings, visitors are able to choose an area of the Park that most closely matches the experience they wish to have in the Park.

The settings strongly influence the nature and standard of visitor facilities (e.g. huts and tracks) provided throughout the Park. They can also be used to ensure that concession activities are managed so as not to detract from the desired experiences of visitors and to assist in the management of adverse effects (e.g. aircraft noise) or conflicts between visitor activities.

This ROS approach is set out in *The New Zealand Recreation Opportunity Spectrum Guidelines for Users* (1993), the *Recreation Strategy for Canterbury Conservancy* (1994) and the *Visitor Strategy* (1996).

Visitor management settings appropriate for the Park, based on those in the above references, have been used in this plan. The settings are:

1. Backcountry remote;
2. Backcountry walk in;
3. Backcountry accessible - motorized;
4. Front-country – short-stop;
5. Highways, roadside opportunities and visitor service sites.

The ROS visitor management settings description and criteria summary for each are set out in Appendix J, except for the fifth setting⁴. The areas of the Park to which they relate are shown on Figures 4 and 4A within 4.2.1 Access, which is the policy section that adopts the ROS system for this Park.

It is essential to understand that any national park is one part of a national system of public conservation and other recreational lands. Each park needs to be considered within the national ROS framework. The ROS areas for Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park should focus on any opportunities that are unique or nationally best represented within the Park. Where comparable experiences can be or are

⁴ The fifth setting, Highways, roadside opportunities and visitor service sites, is a specific one for the Park and is a sub-set of the urban and/or rural ROS settings. It has the following aspects.

From a long way outside the Park, State Highway 80 provides travellers with continuous vistas up the Tasman Valley of high country vegetation, snowy mountains and the braided Tasman Riverbed. Potential changes to the National Park boundary could see more of this setting coming into the Park (see 4.1.9 Boundaries and Land Additions).

Visitor facilities are limited to roadside lookouts, except within visitor service sites. These are where facilities for the travelling public extend beyond basic utilities, such as picnic areas, walking tracks and toilets, to include facilities such as cafes, shops, overnight accommodation and airstrips. One service site is near the Park at Glentanner and two are within the National Park at the Aoraki/Mount Cook Airport and the Village.

adequately provided for outside the Park, there will be a reduced need to provide for them inside the Park.

So, what are the Park's unique or national attributes? Typical features are high mountains, large glaciers and rugged snow-capped mountain scenery. It has international recognition as a mountain climbing area, is well known and serviced for its guiding, mountain and snow craft training and for cross country and glacial skiing and has iconic status as a premium national and international visitor destination, with the most extensive village accommodation complex of any South Island National Park.

These attributes have evolved over approximately 100 years, with services and accommodation well established to cater for high numbers of visitors to the Village environs.

The accessible valleys have a good range of short walks (1-4 hours), taking into account the constraints imposed by the surrounding steep topography. Some walks however, (e.g. Hooker Valley) have become popular to the extent that their use levels are sometimes adverse to both the visitor experience and the valley tracks.

With 13 alpine huts scattered throughout the Park, visitors are well serviced, compared with the majority of the surrounding high alpine areas. Aircraft use for recreation access, scenic flights and snow landings is a well established service.

Many visitors now come to parts of the Park expecting to encounter significant numbers of people seeking the same experience as themselves. For many though, their experience would be enhanced if they were better able to achieve a sense of solitude, exploration, contemplation or inspiration, compatible with the "remoteness" or "wildness" of their setting.

1.3.5.2 Visitor Groups

The Department's national *Visitor Strategy* (1996) identifies seven representative visitor groups. These groups are:

- short-stop travellers;
- day visitors;
- overnigheters;
- backcountry comfort-seekers;
- backcountry adventurers;
- remoteness seekers;
- thrill seekers.

The two frameworks of visitor management settings and visitor groups are cross-referenced within the Appendix J table. As previously stated for the ROS settings in 1.3.5.1 above, all national parks need to be considered within the national ROS framework. The provisions for different visitor groups within Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park should focus on any opportunities that are unique or nationally best represented within the Park.

Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park primarily provides for:

- short-stop travellers, day visitors, overnighers and backcountry comfort-seekers within the front-country and backcountry accessible settings; and
- backcountry adventurers and remoteness seekers within the backcountry walk-in and backcountry remote settings.

The Park is not seen as a primary area for backcountry comfort-seekers (other than those using the aircraft scenic landing services or to some extent those visiting Mueller Hut) or thrill seekers. Both of these groups are well provided for in areas outside the Park. Thrill seeker visitors participate in activities such as extreme downhill skiing or snowboarding, parapenting, bungy jumping and trail bike riding. Activities such as mountaineering often involve journeys through wild places and are classified as backcountry adventurers or remoteness seekers, even though they may have elements of thrill seeking.

1.3.6 The Park within the Region

From a number of different perspectives, the Park cannot be considered in isolation, but has to be regarded as part of a wider area. As a part of the Southern Alps/Ka Tiritiri o te Moana, the Aoraki/Mount Cook area contains some biological, landscape and recreational features, which are duplicated elsewhere, but it also contains other features which are unique. This latter category includes the physical beauty and climbing challenge of the array of high peaks, the sheer size of the glaciers, the endemic flora and fauna and the extent of opportunities for scenic ski-plane landings in a mountainous area.

The National Park is the source of much of the water flowing through the turbines of the Upper Waitaki and Waitaki River power stations and, as the head of the Waitaki catchment, has an important water and soil conservation role. It is a significant area of biological and scientific interest in the Mackenzie Basin and in South Canterbury generally. Compared with other parts of the Mackenzie Basin, there are a number of disadvantages from a tourist point of view, such as lower sunshine hours, lower mean daily temperatures and higher rainfall, but these are balanced by the opportunity to travel among the mountains. The Park is a popular destination on the tourist route from Christchurch to Milford Sound and provides employment opportunities and benefits to a number of district businesses and adjacent high country stations. One business, having a particularly direct relationship with the Park, is Glentanner Park, approximately 20 km south of the Park on State Highway 80. While still a pastoral lease, the lessees have in recent years diversified into other activities, including a motor camp, airfield, heliskiing and a restaurant. These activities complement those provided for in the National Park and increase the range of visitor attractions available in the region. Pastoral farming, as found at Glentanner Station, with retirement or surrender of erosion-prone and high conservation value country, is typical of land management adjoining the Canterbury side of the National Park.

On its western boundary Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park is closely linked with Westland/Tai Poutini National Park, sharing features including physical similarity, similar management objectives, and complementary visitor management settings,

hut locations, radio networks and aircraft movements. There are several transalpine tramping/climbing routes (e.g. Copland Pass).

Many national mountain safety and rescue skills developed in the Park as a consequence of it being a centre for New Zealand mountaineering.

Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park is a unique area in New Zealand. It has the country's highest peak (Aoraki/Mount Cook) and longest glacier (Tasman Glacier), amidst an expanse of other mountains and glaciers. It has high values for Ngai Tahu, and high recreational and tourism values.

1.3.7 Further Information

Background information on the Park contained in this section is a summary of the knowledge gained over the years. It concentrates on the matters relevant to Park management and to this Management Plan.

Other publications are available which provide additional information about the Aoraki/Mount Cook area. Some of these are now out of print and will require referencing through libraries.

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