
3.0 Management Issues

3.1 Landscape Work

The Adventure Playground has been developed on a highly modified site. This land was used until the late 1950's as part of Gisborne's refuse disposal tip. During the 1960's the land was largely reclaimed.

Gisborne Jaycees started developing the site for the purposes of a playground in the mid-seventies. By the time of the opening of the Adventure Playground in December 1976 the Adventure Playground lake had been man-made. The excavated soil from this man-made lake was used to form contoured areas over the whole of the site. These contours were designed to provide an interesting landscape for children to play, and also the dips would provide shelter in the afternoons from prevailing winds and sea breeze which can be strong in this coastal location.

The local Jaycees initiated a development and planting programme on the Adventure Playground site before opening the Adventure Playground in December 1976. The planting was envisaged to beautify the landscape and provide shelter from the wind and harsh summer sun for reserve users. Many of these trees are still standing. The Norfolk Pines provide most of the much needed shade.

The Adventure Playground lake is kept free of unsightly algae since the installation of the Bio-clear system. The Bio-Clear system improves the ecological balance of the lake through reducing the BOD, nitrogen, and phosphates in the water, at the same time neutralising the pH. The system eliminates nutritional food for moss, algae and undesirable plant growth. The elimination of weeds is important in providing a safe play area for children. Then at least if children do enter or fall into the water they can be seen. The perimeter of the lake is to be ploughed and planted within a 4 metre strip surrounding the lake. This will act as a barrier, keeping children out of the water.

An adequate amount of seating and picnic tables are provided. Most of these have been placed near to play equipment or on the top of contoured areas offering views of the whole park. This is important for caregivers supervising children. These seats may be strategically placed for viewing, but none of the seats or tables are placed in a position where they will receive shading. This is an important landscape issue. As the summers are getting hotter and the intensity of the sun's rays increase adequate provision of shade is becoming a required facility in reserve design, development and management. Seating must have some form of shade coverage. Seating needs to be placed under trees, or shading cloth needs to be provided.

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The cost of shading cloth means that trees are the preferred option. More trees need to be planted, or seating moved. If trees are planted they need to be fairly big trees, not young trees that will have to grow for another few years before they can provide adequate shade. The lack of shade at the Adventure Playground has been a constant grumble with reserve users.

3.2 Maintenance

Gisborne District reserves are maintained by contractors. A contract for reserve maintenance is signed between the contractor and Gisborne District Council on an annual basis. This contract specifies various levels of maintenance for individual reserves. Three times a year a major safety check on playground equipment is undertaken. This includes play equipment, play areas, signs and furniture. The contract also sets mowing standards for the appropriate length (25-50mm) of grass for the Adventure Playground, it stipulates appropriate pruning standards, weed spraying stipulations, and sets standards for the undersurfacing of play equipment.

3.3 Vehicle Restraints

Vehicle access to the Adventure Playground is limited to Council vehicles and those vehicles which have been given consent from the Reserves Planning department or the Reserves Supervisor to carry out servicing and maintenance of the reserve. The Adventure Playground Management Trust has Council permission for vehicle access to the reserve for running the train and the water bike facilities.

As previously mentioned a car park has been provided and the reserve is curbed minimising vehicle access to the reserve. The car park was built in 1997 along the Centennial Marine Drive frontage and provides parking spaces for up to 20 vehicles.

3.4 Tree Establishment

A planting strategy for the Adventure Playground began in the late 1970's. There are still a number of Norfolk Island Pine trees still standing from this initial planting scheme. Most of these trees have been battered by strong winds and other coastal temperates since they have been planted. A lot of these trees have broken branches and are looking unhealthy. These trees need to be replaced. The Adventure Playground needs new planting of native trees that will thrive in the coastal conditions with which they will live. Pohutakawa is an obvious choice. These trees thrive along the East Coast and provide good shade coverage. Fairly mature trees would need to be planted to provide adequate shade, and to be of any substitute to the mature Pines being replaced. Trees should be planted along the boundaries of the reserve creating a secluded feel to the reserve.

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This planting around the boundary of the reserve must not be dense planting as this can create unsafe areas. The cluster of Pine trees in the centre of the reserve should remain as they are still healthy and would provide a variance to the vegetation in the Adventure Playground.

3.5 *Use of Facilities*

The facilities provided at the Adventure Playground (apart from the ablution block) are managed by the Adventure Playground Management Trust. A small portion of the Wainui Lions Club members form the Adventure Playground Management Trust. Presently no leasing arrangements exist for the reserve. At present the Council provide a number of facilities on the Adventure Playground site. These are the toilets, play equipment, picnic tables, and rubbish bins. The train, tracks, train station, and the bumper boats are managed by the Adventure Playground Management Trust.

3.6 *Reserve Users*

The Adventure Playground is used for both passive and informal active recreation. The Adventure Playground reserve provides play space vital for the development of children. The reserve is used as a neighbourhood reserve by surrounding residents, and as a recreation reserve by the larger community. It is a popular recreation destination with local residents and the larger Gisborne Population and also with visitors to Gisborne.

The Gisborne District Council undertook an Urban Neighbourhood Reserves Survey in 1996. The survey was undertaken as a result of the increasing adverse effects on the residential amenity. The survey revealed that people perceive reserves as playing a very important role in neighbourhood recreation. 83% of respondents reported using neighbourhood reserves on a regular basis for a number of activities, including the following:

- Fitness for themselves
- As a playground
- Picnics
- Relaxation

Of the total population surveyed 99% either used neighbourhood reserves for passive and/or active recreation, or believed they were an important part of the neighbourhood landscape.

In this same survey the Adventure Playground was voted second most favoured park in Gisborne. The garden environment and play equipment were two of the important features which attracted respondents to recreate in the parks.

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The play equipment already provided at the Adventure playground is popular with children, and the train and boats are a great attraction to the reserve. Although the equipment provided does not cater for all children.

Toddlers have difficulty using the equipment provided as they have been designed for older children. Most of the equipment is unsuitable for young children. Disabled children are another sector of the Gisborne youth not catered for in this reserve. The reserves intended purpose is to provide a 'playland' for children. It is the only reserve in Gisborne with the intentions to provide openspace entirely for the play needs of children. This reserve therefore needs to cater for all children.

3.7 *Vandalism*

In early 1999 the Adventure Playground Management Trust had a security system installed following a major break in to the train station. A till was destroyed and food and beverages stolen. In November 1998 the metre box that was on the outside of the train station was vandalised. The vandals made serious damage and left the metre box in a precarious state where reserve users could easily have been electrocuted. This was expensive to repair, the metre box since then has been installed inside the train station. In February reserve users placed stones along the train track which later derailed the train. The toilets are periodically defaced with juvenile graffiti.

Vandalism (while minor compared to other prominent reserves in the district) is still an evident feature of the Adventure Playground. Council recognises that vandalism is an on going social problem which needs to be addressed at both a local and national level. It is also recognised that the problem is hard to combat within the confines of a Management Plan. Unfortunately the Adventure Playground is isolated from residential housing. Local residents of reserves usually play an active role in reporting and discouraging undesirable behaviour witnessed within Council reserves. Unfortunately the Adventure Playground does not have this luxury.

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PHOTO 1 : The Adventure Playground Train Station



PHOTO 2 : The Adventure Playground Lake

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PHOTO 3 : The Pole House



PHOTO 4 :and Fort



PHOTO 5 : The huge climbing frame made of tyres



PHOTO 6 : One of the many picnic spots at the Adventure Playground