Invercargill
CITY COUNCIL

DONOVAN PARK
MASTERPLAN

APRIL 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ENHANCING A VALUED PLACE

The community has identified Donovan Park as a place of unique significance as a local north Invercargill destination, within the context of the wider Southland region. This is namely due to its:

- Urban/rural character
- Vast open space
- Offering a multitude of passive and active activity opportunities
- High degree of water, nature, recreation and open space connectivity

Following a review of the park's current state, the guiding masterplan document has been developed for informing long-term and cohesive improvements.

A range of issues and opportunities have been identified associated with the existing state of the park and these, along with the requirement to update the management plan, have further heightened the need to identify how and where they could be addressed. The issues are mainly associated with barriers to accessibility, incomplete recreational and ecological networks, lack of activities, financial pressures across Council, leading to alleviation incentives via revocation and sale of reserve land, development over time without a comprehensive development plan.

Analysis has considered this range of issues and opportunities and also sought to engage key stakeholders alongside the general public in consultation to further understand what direction the park's development should take over time.

Feedback has been received and several common threads have been identified which establish clear guidelines that inform the masterplan's development. In general terms people wish to see the existing character of the park retained, whilst allowing for concentrated development and renewals in certain areas.

Services and functions stakeholders seek to retain include the Southland Agricultural and Pastoral (A&P) show and equestrian events, with 41% reporting through engagement to keep it as it is or improve (59%). Suggested Improvements include new recreational activities, food resilience and education, access and nature.

Feedback from the analysis and consultation phases has resulted in a series of guidelines and recommendations which have been folded into a high-level master plan for the park. This strategic masterplan sets in process a series of steps that may be taken to achieve the outcomes as required to protect the unique character of the park and create great experiences for all users into the future.



INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Donovan Park (the park) is an important open space forming a link across Invercargill. At 79 hectares, it is the fourth largest park in the city. As a regionally and locally valued expanse of land Donovan Park fills the transition from the organised urban city scape to the remote rural zone which helps soften the adjoining suburban area.

Visitors to the park experience its unique rural characteristics, large open spaces, passive and active recreational opportunities while appreciating its wide-open vistas. Donovan Park is used for numerous sporting and large-scale events throughout the year. Other focus areas of the park include the stormwater pond, arboretum, restaurant and nursery. People choose to spend time at the park enjoying the peace, tranquility and recreation opportunities they seek, such as dog walking, walking, running, cycling and casual sport and recreation.Pressure points include major events and vehicle use.

The Masterplan responds to:

- Rationalisation of land use development
- Opportunities for connections and access (natural and people)
- Improved amenities and facilities, including 3 waters infrastructure
- Food resilience to support community growth

PURPOSE

The Donovan Park Masterplan has been developed by the Invercargill City Council Parks and Recreation Team, with guidance and support from Boffa Miskell landscape and urban design team.

It proposes a medium-long-term vision for the park centered around the local community. It will respond to different aspects of the park, its functionality and how issues and challenges will be addressed through opportunities and solutions, ensuring the best possible outcomes for visitors to use and enjoy.

It is designed to produce an evidence-based, future-focused (3/10/30-year) strategy that outlines an agreed vision and direction, considering social, cultural, environmental and economic dimensions.

The Masterplan has an important role in guiding and informing future Reserve Management Plans for Donovan Park and planning for funding through Long Term and Annual Plan processes, all of which are statutory processes which will also provide a platform to seek external funding.

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The Donovan Park Masterplan is guided by a suite of central and local government strategies, policies and guidelines. Any future development needs to recognise the implications of reserve land provision for the existing community as well as providing for growth.

The diagram provides a simple illustration of how the Masterplan relates to the Reserve Management Plan, Long Term and Annual Plan processes and the pathway to delivering the Masterplan vision and projects at Donovan Park. The Activity Management Plan that enables Council's strategies for parks and open spaces sits between the Reserve Management Plan and Long Term Plan (LTP) functions so it can inform the LTP.

Key themes resulted from a combination of extensive research through regional and Council strategies and policies, community engagement, and what is mapped via Council's GIS database. They are:

a. Making connections and opening access

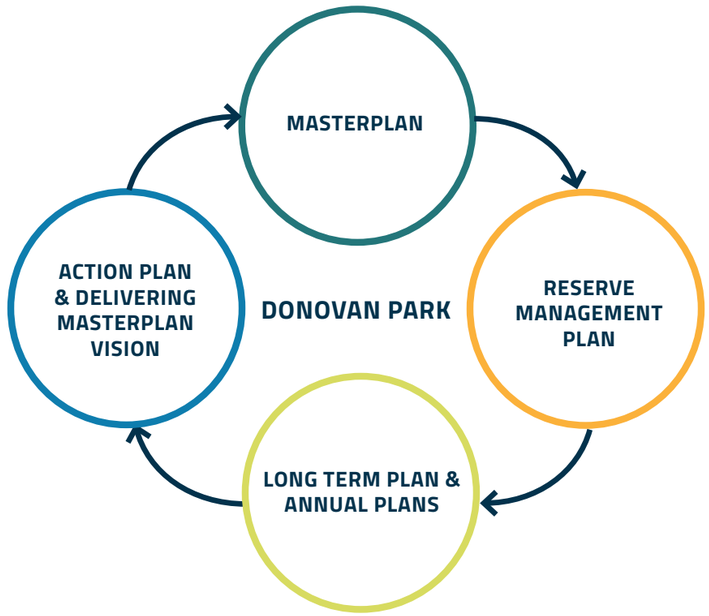
b. Experiencing nature and water

c. Continuing to build an important local place

d. Providing recreation and things to do

The masterplan was informed and responds to a number of research and planning considerations. This section provides a summary of the key planning and contextual factors which were assessed as important and considered during the preparation of a new masterplan.

The following table outlines the themes formed above through the strategic analysis and what was heard and notes how these themes relate to how they inform the delivery of the masterplan.



STRATEGIC ANALYSIS	COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS	HOW ANALYSIS HAS INFORMED THE MASTERPLAN
Active Transport Connections	Connections and Access	Supported strongly through both strategic and community engagement analysis. Led to the theme: **Making Connections and Opening Access**
Ecology	Natural Spaces – Water Quality/ Interaction	Supported strongly through both strategic and community engagement analysis. Led to the theme: **Experiencing Nature and Water**
Tourism, Destination and Visitor Experience	Whānau Centric / Family	Tourism, destination and visitor experience is outlined within many strategies and it concurs with feedback on connections, amenities and facilities and natural spaces. Led to the theme: **Continuing to Build an Important Local Place**
Recreation	Improved Amenities and Facilities	Recreation addresses topics like play, sports, multi-purpose, and encompasses feedback around family, connections and access and improved amenities and facilities to support. Led to the theme: **Providing Recreation and Things To Do**
Alternative Land Use	Love it / Leave It as It Is	While this is not a theme, the concept is embedded across all themes as a means of the opportunities for what could be incorporated within the Park. There is limited support indicating any need for housing development and the feedback to leave as it is or love the park as it is. The implementation plan will cover due diligence to address future alternative land use.
Arts, Heritage and Culture		While strategies support and encourage development of arts, heritage and culture, only some suggestions are coming through (e.g. events, education) via community engagement. This concept is embedded across all themes and noted specifically within "continuing to build an important place"

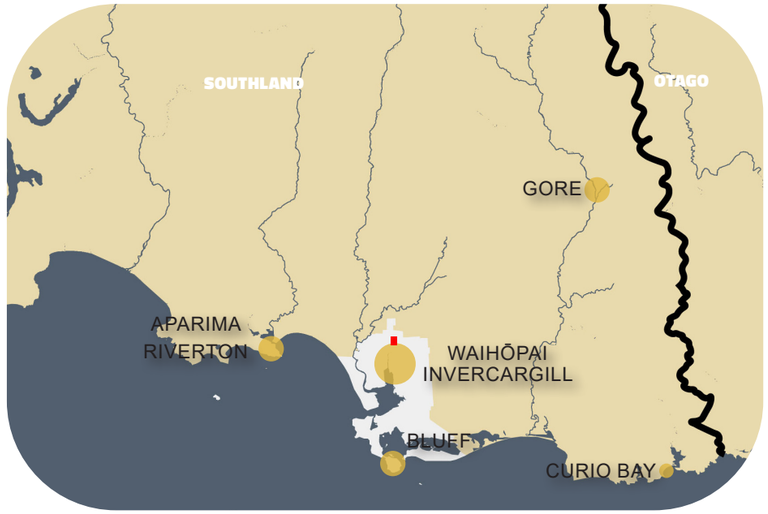
SITE LOCATION

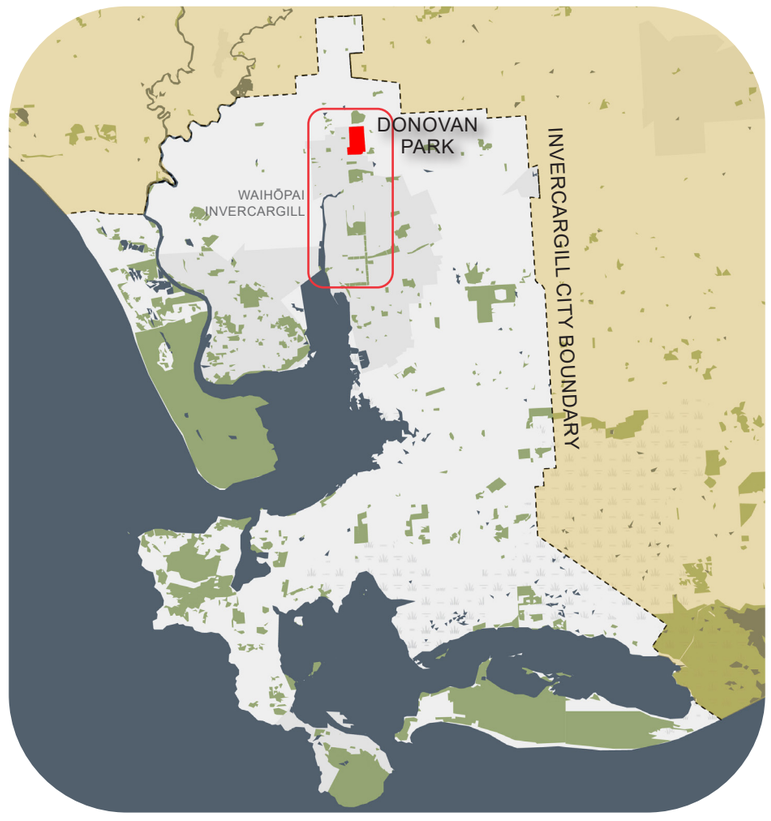
REGIONAL, CITY AND LOCAL CONTEXT

Donovan Park (including the McIvor Road Municipal Nursery) is situated in North Invercargill. It extends from Bainfield Road to McIvor Road and lies between North Road (to the west) and Retreat Road (to the east). Donovan Park is in a predominantly semi-rural area as illustrated through the Operative Invercargill City Council District Plan 2019.

Land surrounding the park is used for farming and lifestyle blocks. Residential housing borders to the south and southwest of the park and recently constructed lifestyle block type housing to the north and east.

The park forms part of the north-south pattern of open greenspace that was originally determined by John Turnbull Thomson when he first laid out the City, providing a link to Anderson Park to the north and continues the open space network south via Myers Reserve, Thomsons Bush, Queens Park and the Town Belt, all of which are managed and maintained by Council.







Reserves

Urban Areas

Site Boundary

ORIGINS OF DONOVAN PARK

MĀORI HISTORY

Prior to settlement, Donovan Park would have been like the rest of Invercargill, made up of a vast indigenous podocarp/swamp forest. The area closest to McIvor Road appears to be more open, which may indicate that tussock / shrubland species existed in this area.

1879 ONWARDS

The first record of title for the area currently known as Donovan Park (Part Sections 15 and 16, Block IV) was issued to William John Moffett in 1879 (Southland Times, 1911a) who, after purchasing the sections, advertised for tenders for ‘tussocking and ploughing’ 200 acres of land on site, indicating the land was previously largely uncultivated (Southland Times, 1879a, 1882a).

In 1890 Moffett surrendered the lands to his mortgagor the Scottish and New Zealand Investment Company and in 1905, David Burgess and his sons became tenants in common. In 1920, William Donovan (LINZ, 1879a) bought the land, and the Donovan family lived there for many decades.

In 1964 Invercargill City Council purchased the land for reserve purposes and commemorated the Donovan Family name by calling the reserve Donovan Park. The County Council assented that no more than a maximum of 12.5 hectares would immediately be developed as parkland and the balance be retained in farming until at least 1980.

Donovan Park was gazetted in 1971 as a Recreation Reserve (New Zealand Gazette, 1971).

In 1983 Donovan Park was re-gazetted as Sections 68 and 69 - Section 68 being classified as a Local Purpose Reserve (Municipal Nursery), and Section 69 as a Public Reserve for Recreation Purposes in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977. A Reserve Management Plan for the park was adopted in 2001.

TODAY

Although there have been many proposed landscape developments and modifications, some of which were partially adopted, most were rejected at the proposal stage to preserve the open parkland environment.

In 1968, part of the land fronting Bainfield Road was developed for sports fields and the balance of the area was leased for farming. Shelterbelt trees were planted along the western boundary in the same year.

The proposal to develop a propagating department and nursery within Donovan Park emerged in 1978, and in 1981 an area of 6.4669 hectares was surveyed off in the north-east corner of the reserve for the development of a nursery, which is still operational.

The building and grounds that were once the Donovan family residence were restored and modified in the early 1980s and since then have been leased by Council to an operator for use as a restaurant.

Many groups and events are housed at Donovan Park including the Southland A&P Association, rural heritage days, sports leases and an area of land within Donovan Park is used for farming operations including grazing sheep, and the housing of rare breed livestock.



1950’S AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Site Boundary

Contemporary Cadastre

0 150m

1:5,000 @ A3






















McIvor Road
COMMUNITY GARDENS
NURSERY
Donovan Park Road
PADDOCKS
BAINFIELD ORGANIC GARDENS
ICC SERVICE AREA
PARKLANDS
ARBORETUM
Richfield Drive
STORMWATER POND
PADDOCKS
ICC SERVICE AREA
SPORTS FIELDS
RESTAURANT
Bainfield Road

1. SITE ANALYSIS

SITE ZONING

TOPOGRAPHIC AND ZONING

Donovan Park is zoned Rural under the Operative Invercargill City Council District Plan 2019, with Recreation and Local Purpose (Municipal Nursery) Reserve status under the Reserves Act 1977 overlaid and a Water Reticulation partial overlay. It is also identified as High Value Soils via the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 (Waikiwi).

The site appears subject to possible amplification (soft soils), high liquefaction susceptibility, as well as high value soils as per the Operative Invercargill City District Plan 2019. There has been no record found regarding any sites of cultural and spiritual significance to Māori. Provision for reserve activities as permitted activities is specified in the Rural Zone if those activities are identified in the management plan.

Although not currently noted in the Operative Invercargill City District Plan 2019, the park also contains a New Zealand Archaeological Association (NZAA) site. This is recorded on the Archaeological Site Recording scheme as NZAA ID E46/158 agricultural/pastoral site – site of 19th Century Historic Homestead. The implications of this from a planning perspective will require further discussion with Heritage New Zealand Properties Trust and NZAA. It may require an archaeological assessment to be undertaken, although it is unclear where the specific location is since it is no longer visible.

NPS FOR HIGHLY PRODUCTIVE LAND 2022

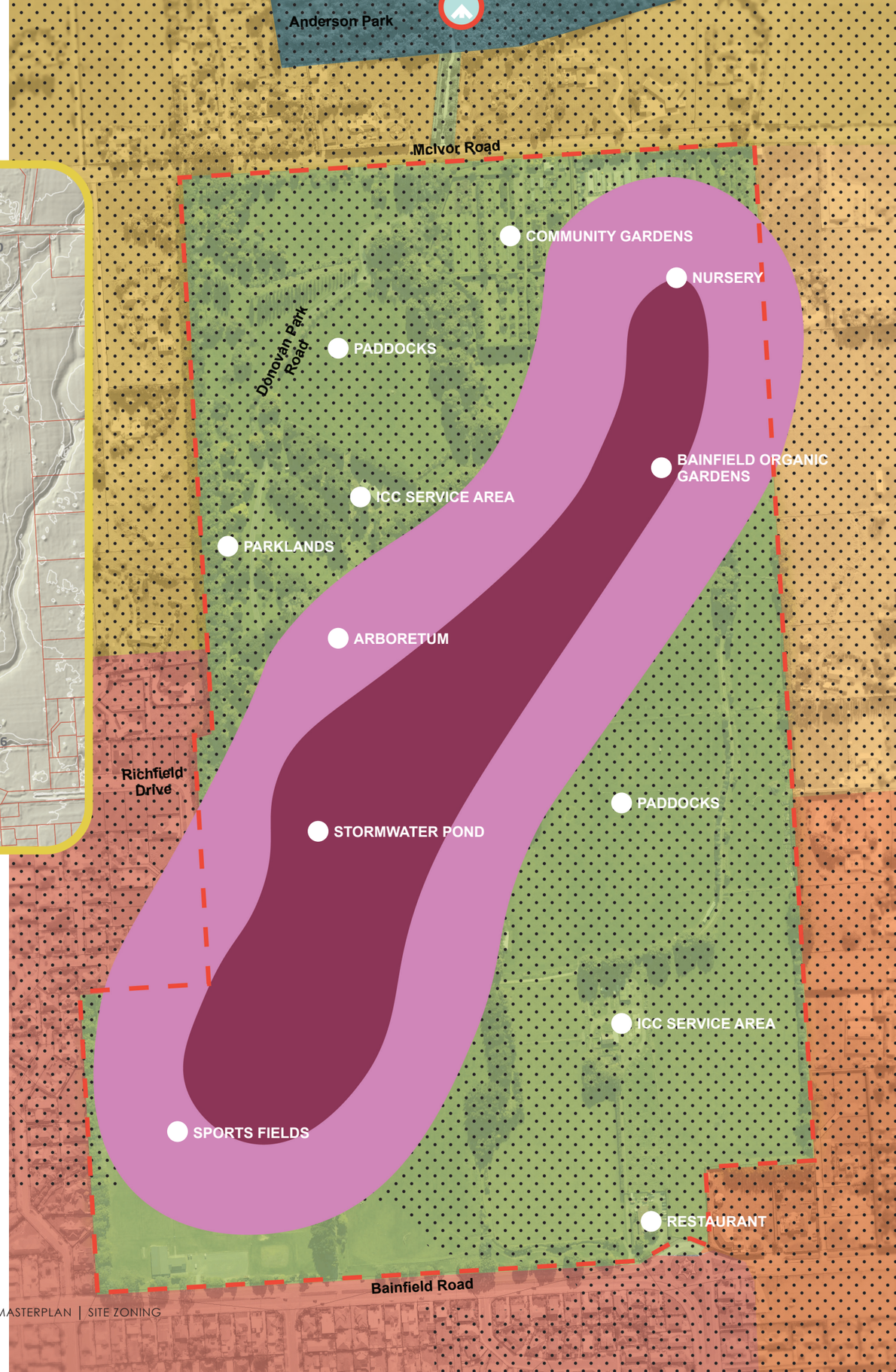
The park is subject to the National Policy Statement for Highly Productive Land 2022 (NPS-HPL) which, under Policy 3.6 - Restricting urban rezoning of highly productive land, prevents non-productive use of land by requiring local authorities to 'avoid' loss of productive soils to unproductive development. At present the park is identified as a Class 2 productive soil site which means that the NPS-HPL requirement to avoid the loss of highly productive soils applies unless there is a particular exclusion under the NPS-HPL.

CONTOURING

On first impression Donovan Park appears flat, but in actuality it is pleasantly contoured, undulating country. Of all the parks within Invercargill, Donovan Park's rolling character still offers the greatest scope for landscaping. Redeveloping the landscape will be considered to meet the needs and satisfy the preferences of the community.

LANDFORM AND 1M CONTOURS





*Reserve

*Reserve and Area of Significant Indigenous Biodiversity

*High Value Soils

*Residential 1

*Residential 3

*Rural Residential

*Rural

*Registered Heritage Area

*High Liquefaction Susceptibility

*Uncertainty Buffer Zone

Site Boundary

0 150m

1:5,000 @ A3

*FROM INVERCARGILL CITY DISTRICT PLAN 2019

VEGETATION

PASTURE AND PARKLAND

Much of Invercargill was originally part of Seaward Forest which covered 80 square kilometers from the Ōtepuni Stream towards Rimu and Kapuka. Thomson's Bush is a reminder of another big forest – Taurakitewaru – which covered the land north of the Ōtepuni. These relatively accessible lowland forests were the first to be milled, leaving little behind except for place names ending in 'Bush'.

A large section of Donovan Park has been farmed for many years and consequently there is no visible trace at the surface of the pre-colonisation landscape and vegetation. The area occupied by the park has been cultivated and sown with pasture plants and these, together with the typical flora of local farmlands, comprise the dominant vegetative cover.

Today, shelterbelts and other plantings give the landscape a mature, rural quality. Within its plantings and undulations, various parkland settings can be enjoyed.

In addition, landscape planting has been carried out within the parkland for the purpose of efficient maintenance and to extend habitat and support indigenous biodiversity within the park, and to encourage more abundant indigenous biodiversity.

Group plantings of trees also enhance the parkland environment.

The Oak Quercus/Arboretum was established in 2011. Named after a Southland forester, Daniel Corkery, the fenced section is home to a variety of Oak tree species, spaced amongst existing groups of exotics (Eucalyptus and poplar) and a group of native beech trees.

Fruit and nut trees sit outside the south side of the arboretum fence line and line the road at the north end of the park towards McIvor Road.

It is important to note that Anderson Park and Thomsons Bush connect the open space network with Donovan Park and contain very significant pockets of native vegetation. One of the principles through the Activity Management Plan for Parks and Reserves is to enable and encourage connection with open space. This concept of "connection" also applies to flora and fauna connecting to their ecosystems, including habitat and wildlife corridors. There is an opportunity to incorporate more ecological plantings to support that principle and the continuation of the ecological network between other reserves.







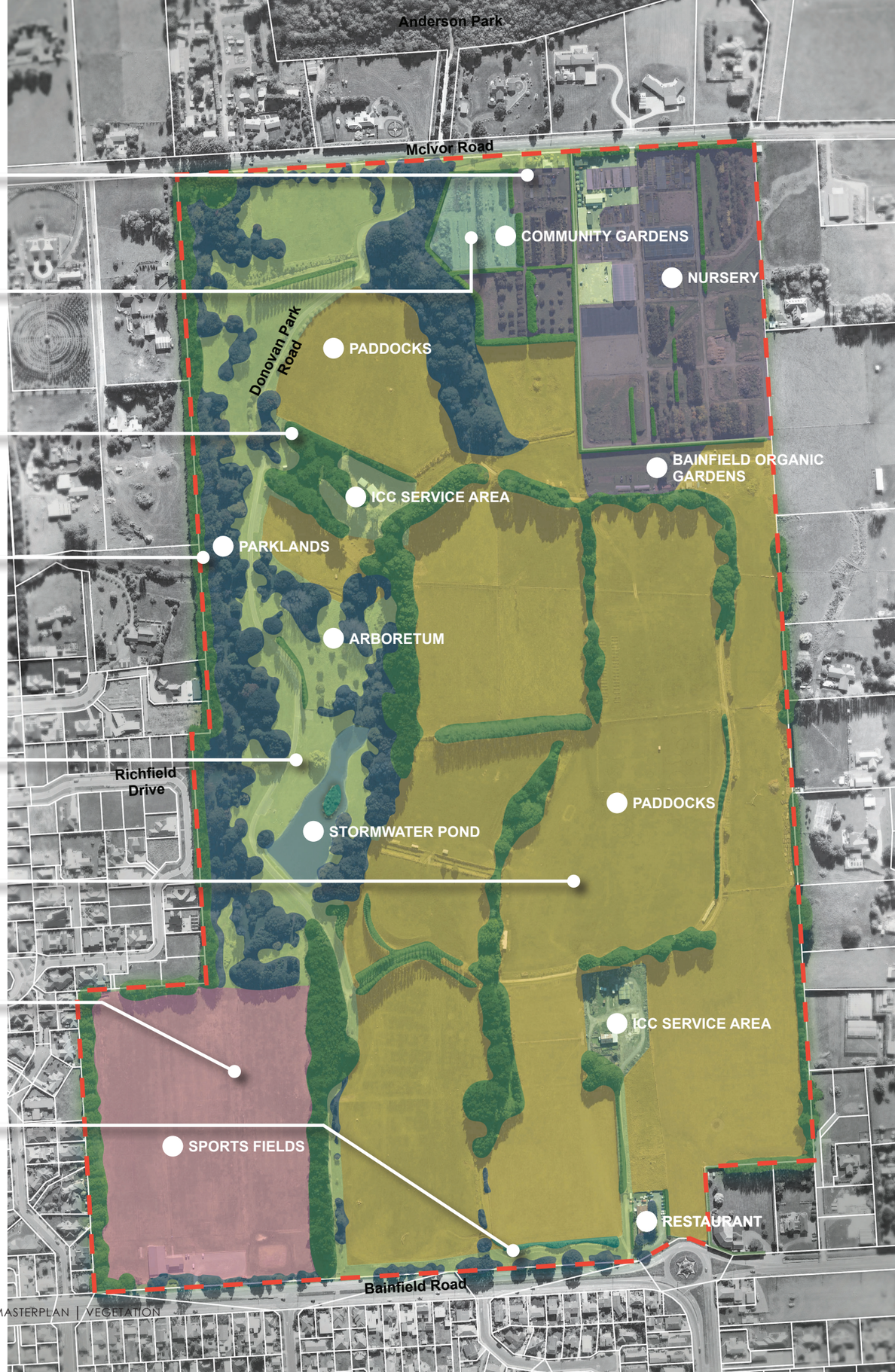












THREE WATERS INFRASTRUCTURE

SEWER, STORM AND WATER PIPE NETWORKS

The park is structured around the stormwater retention pond. Vegetation surrounds the perimeter and the small island within the pond, providing an attractive gathering space for people to enjoy while feeding the ducks, having picnics or going for a walk or cycle nearby. The control structures of the stormwater pond are community resources. The outlet from the duck pond controls the flows to the west via Glenroy Park Drive network. When the flow is greater than this structure can handle the stormwater discharges east to Queens Drive.

There are three main Branxholme Pipes running through the park: The first easement is centrally through the park and will be decommissioned when the new line is commissioned mid-2024. The second easement follows the western boundary from McIvor Road.

The recent installation of the new Branxholme Pipe in 2023 will ensure our community continues to enjoy clean, safe drinking water in the years to come. This is a critical piece of infrastructure for Invercargill and Bluff, and the new pipeline is designed to last over a century.

The image from the 1950s illustrates the natural water flow lines which reveals why the land is naturally wet, pushing the water south and continuing through to the Waihōpai River. Flooding has been an ongoing challenge for residents surrounding the south perimeter of the reserve. Water Infrastructure has since been designed to assist with control, management and containing stormwater within and south of the park, while helping to alleviate flooding occurrences due to high rain levels.

Water infrastructure ensures the community is supplied with water and stormwater services which are also fed into the stormwater retention pond. Open drains provide and maintain a system to convey stormwater in conjunction with pipe networks, with sufficient capacity and reliability to meet projected demand.

Increasing wetlands would provide an added relief for mitigating the naturally wet ground conditions, as well as future proofing to support potential residential development throughout North Invercargill, providing amenity values and a means to enhance the blue/green network, increasing biodiversity and providing a carbon sink as part of addressing climate change. Wetland environments would help to create more of the park's primary gathering spaces as interesting ecological features and enhance the natural character of the park.



- Open Stormwater Ditches
- Stormwater Pond (Including Control Structure)
- Culverted/Piped Stormwater
- Water Supply
- Reticulated Water Supply
- Farm Drainage Pipe
- Sewage Pipe
- Reticulated Sewage
- Reticulated Water and Sewage
- Site Boundary

0 150m

1:5,000 @ A3

ROADS AND PATHS

ACCESS, TRAILS AND ROADING NETWORK

Roads, paths and trails within the park are managed and maintained by Invercargill City Council.

The park is accessible during daylight hours by vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists via a sealed road primarily used as a thoroughfare and several secondary pedestrian entrances.

The main internal thoroughfare connects two primary vehicle entrances at Bainfield Road and McIvor Road and separates two large parcels of land which make up Donovan Park. The gates are locked at each end from dusk until dawn for security purposes.

In addition to vehicle access, this sealed road is used as a cycle network and people use it walking or running. A new internal road is proposed to turn the existing internal road over to pedestrian and cycle use, providing a replacement internal road in a more central location to provide better vehicle access and parking close to areas most needed to support the intended functions of the park.

Internal unsealed roads service secondary access points to and through the Municipal Nursery where Te Tapu o Tāne is located. Internal roads also pass through the Bainfield Organic Gardens, separating paddocks within the Southland A&P Show leased area and other paddocks accessed for farming or maintenance of the reserve. Parts of roads travel over ditches and this is represented by short bridges.

Approximately two-thirds of the reserve has previously had public access restrictions due to operational farming requirements with stock being held there. Access to the Municipal Nursery is off McIvor Road via State Highway 6 and being a work site requires authorisation to enter. The sports grounds can be accessed via the car park off Bainfield Road and there is additional pedestrian access from Northwood Avenue. Access to the restaurant is off Bainfield Road.

Visitors can follow informal grass and dirt trails through a combination of parkland and farmland. The two walking trails are well frequented by locals and visitors to the park. One is known as the Farm Trail which connects Bainfield Road to the pond via a mown corridor of grass that runs parallel to an open stormwater ditch. It is open most of the year except when large events require the use of it for access to other paddocks and then it is temporarily closed to members of the public. The other is a dirt track that connects access from Northwood Estate along the park's perimeter running north-south to McIvor Road within a tree lined avenue.



LAND USE

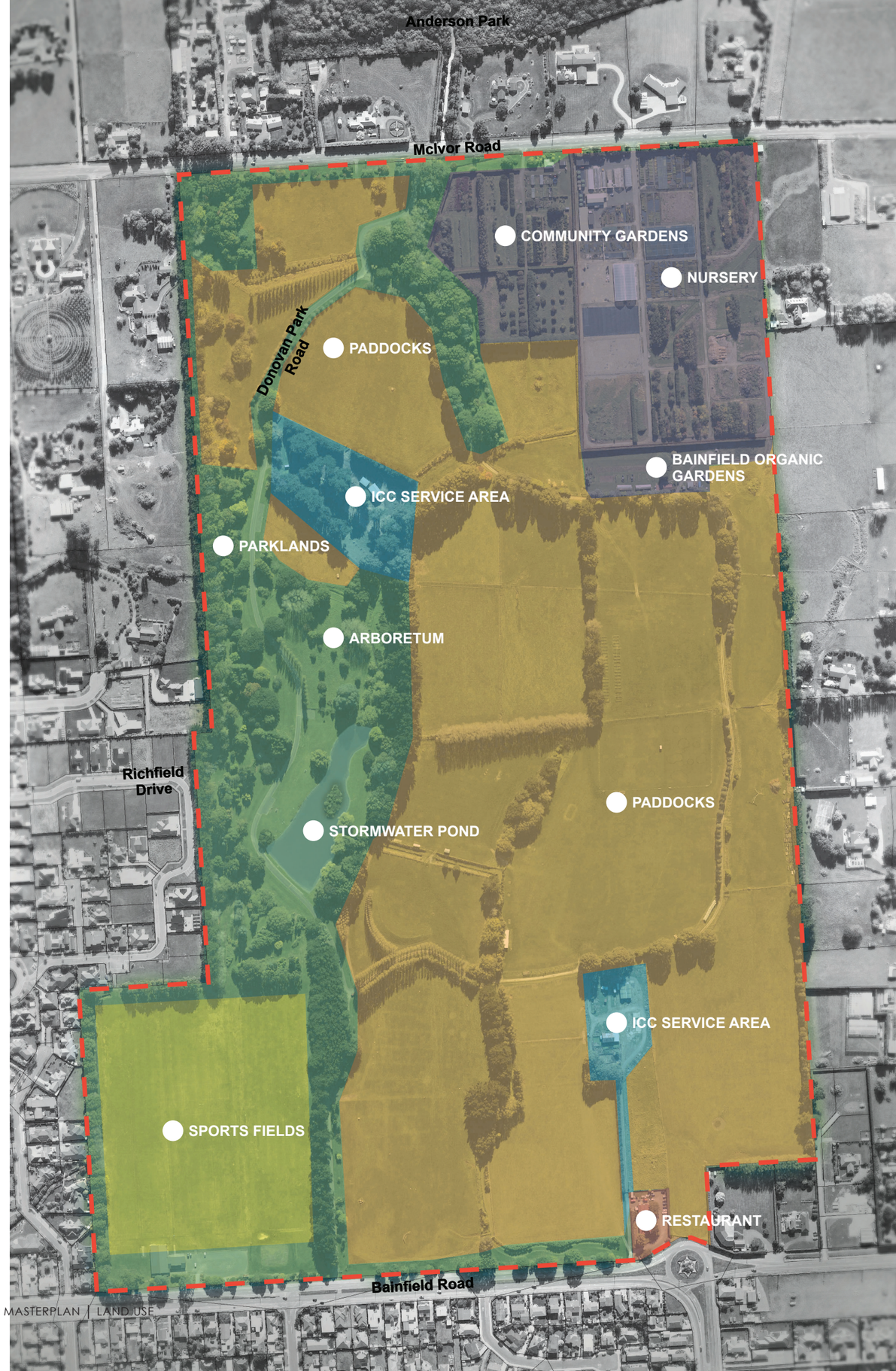
HOW THE LAND USE IS MANAGED

Donovan Park contains a range of spaces, facilities and services that support a range of functions and recreation opportunities.

The Municipal Nursery was set aside for propagating and growing-on plants for the enhancement of parks and reserves throughout Invercargill to be enjoyed by the public and for the preservation of parkland environs.

The park hosts several recreational user groups and large-scale events including equestrian events and the annual Southland A&P Show.

A significant area of land within Donovan Park has been used for farming operations including sheep and formerly deer, and the housing of rare breed livestock. That area is shared with the Southland A&P Show, horse Events and two areas within the park are also used for storage (shown on page 17). A change in direction to managing this space has created opportunities to open access for public use primarily as parkland for multipurpose activities, with community and large-scale events being booked as required. This will ensure high profile land with rural characteristics will be available for equestrian, agricultural activities, Southland A&P Show activities, young farmers and other opportunities as they arise.



- Restaurant
- Recreational Park Use
- Invercargill City Council Service Area
- Horticultural Production
- Paddock / Large Scale Event
- Sports Fields
- Site Boundary

0 150m

1:5,000 @ A3

BUILT INFRASTRUCTURE

STRUCTURES

Activities and structures in the park are managed through the Donovan Park Management Plan 2012 which is required to comply with the Reserves Act 1977. Structures relate to the activities undertaken through leases, other documented agreements, farming and maintenance for staff. These include the Waikiwi Rugby Football Club rooms, restaurant, sheds, tunnel houses and buildings for multipurpose uses that currently relate to cultivation or maintenance requirements.

Fencing surrounds the parameter of the park and divides the park from publicly accessible on the western side, to restricted access on mostly the eastern side of the road, exempting the pond and surrounding vegetation. The farm trail and open ditch form the corridor between surrounding paddocks from Bainfield Road to the pond. Individual paddocks are also divided by internal fencing.

Future development for retaining large scale events, wetlands and roading, along with associated infrastructure will require further investigation into what the community value and what the means to funding this will look like.

- 1 Spirit Army Facilities
- 2 Te Tapu o Tāne Facilities
- 3 Bainfield Gardens Facilities
- 4 Invercargill City Council Service Area Infrastructure
- 5 Amphitheatre
- 6 Southland A & P Shed
- 7 Farm Buildings and Sheds
- 8 Waikiwi Rugby Football Club House
- 9 Crafty's Restaurant Building
- Public Toilet

- Fenced Areas
- Fenced Areas with Use Subject to Lease/Agreement
- Invercargill City Council Buildings / Structures
- Privately Owned Buildings / Structures
- Walking Tracks
- Sealed Roads
- Unsealed Roads
- Fencing
- Dense Boundary Hedge
- Bridges

0 150m
1:5,000 @ A3



LEASES AND ACTIVITIES

FORMAL SITE USE

Lease conditions are compatible with the Reserves Act 1977 and the management plan.

Part of the Municipal Nursery is currently leased by Te Tapu o Tāne with the remainder in use by Council.

A portion of land within the Donovan Park farm area is used by the Christian Centre Charitable Trust for the purpose of growing vegetables as part of their client rehabilitation programme. The land area is just south of the nursery.

The Waikiwi Rugby Football Club owns the club rooms and leases the building footprint. The sports fields are managed through a booking system. The eastern field was formerly leased by the Southland Golf Club for use as a casual driving range.

The building and grounds that were once the Donovan family residence were restored and modified in the early 1980s and since then have been leased for use as a restaurant.

Southland Agricultural and Pastoral Association leases 19.5ha of ground for A&P event purposes. The lease also includes a shed for storing equipment.

Spirit Army Charitable Trust leases Council buildings for the purposes of storing equipment, using ablution amenities for volunteers and for socialisation of Spirit Army families. The Trust also has a documented agreement with Council for an area adjoining to the west of the nursery at Donovan Park which is used for horticulture and cultivation purposes to educate and support families in need.

INFORMAL SITE USE

Informal use of Donovan Park by visitors includes picnics, casual walking, dog walking, running and cycling. Schools and clubs occasionally use Donovan Park for cross-country, orienteering and harrier events. The summer months are popular for organised family and club activities, Christmas parties and work functions in the park.

Eventing Southland books around 20-25 hectares of land for national equestrian event activity twice a year for approximately a month each event to include setting up and packing up.

There are areas for flying unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) and exercising dogs off lead.

Harvesting of fruit and nut trees in publicly accessible areas is encouraged.

1. Spirit Army Building Lease
2. Te Tapu o Tāne [Nursery]
3. Invercargill Christian Centre at Bainfield Organic Gardens
4. Southland A & P Showgrounds
5. Waikiwi Rugby Football Clubhouse
6. Crafty's Restaurant

- Dog Off Lead Area
- Waterfowl
- Picnic Areas
- Fruit and Nut Harvesting
- Driving Range
- Walking and Running Routes
- Cycling
- Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Flying Area
- Public Toilet
- Dogs Prohibited
- Leased Areas
- Invercargill City Council Buildings / Structures
- Privately Owned Buildings / Structures
- Walking Tracks (Dogs Leashed)
- Sealed Roads
- Dense Boundary Hedges
- Unsealed Roads
- Site Boundary



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2. ENGAGEMENT AND EMERGING THEMES

ENGAGEMENT

PROCESS

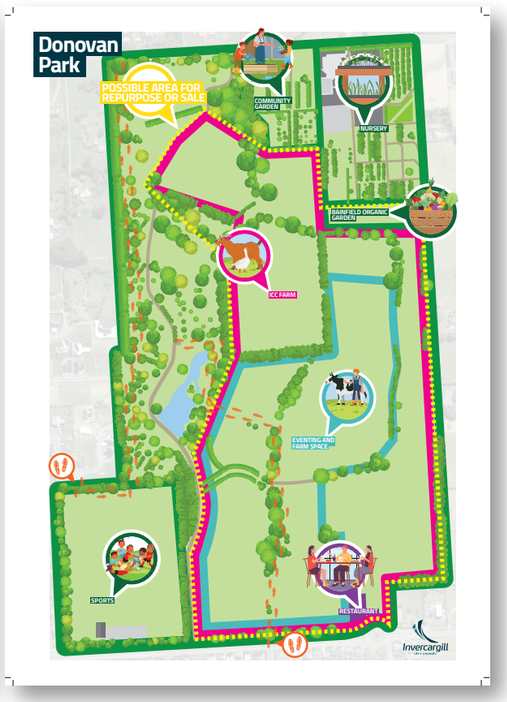
HOW WE ENGAGED:
Strategic, targeted engagement with partners and stakeholders was conducted in conjunction with a public online survey that could be linked to QR codes on signs, forms and letters acting as the broader sweeping generator of overall community insights.

Further engagement on the developing themes was held via Let's Talk and flyers alongside the Long Term Plan consultation 29 February – 2 April 2024.

THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:

- Early and ongoing consultation with Te Ao Mārama
- A suite of internal and external workshops with staff, partners and stakeholders
- Public Notices
- Working with internal Council staff to support a communications campaign, with social media posts, Let's Talk website and physical collateral (plans of Donovan Park) at various sites within the City
- A Council engagement hub digital engagement platform (Let's Talk) 30 September – 15 December 2023
- Initial workshop, followed by regular updates to Councillors
- Engaging with the school holiday programme at the Invercargill Public Library
- Workshopping with youth Council
- Letter drops at properties surrounding the perimeter of the park
- Consultation on developing themes alongside the Long Term Plan consultation (via Let's Talk and flyers) 29 February - 2 April 2024













FEEDBACK FROM ENGAGEMENT

WHAT WE HEARD FROM INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL PARTNERS , STAKEHOLDERS AND THE COMMUNITY:

Along with strategic and policy guidance, feedback via various methods of collection was collated and analysed, summarised and categorised into key themes, which were consulted on alongside the Long-Term Plan.

OUTCOMES

FEEDBACK VIA INFORMATION GATHERING PROCESS SUMMARY:

Engagement with Tangata whenua via Te Ao Mārama has been ongoing and conversations about the management plan has been acknowledged as occurring later. Cultural presence discussion will occur as part of the first implementation of management plan. When the masterplan is implemented and funding sought, process design discussion with Tangata whenua will continue.

The majority of those engaged with throughout the community engagement process value Donovan Park and either want it kept as is (41%) or improved (59%). 1% specifically mentioned that some of it should be sold as it was underutilised. It's important to note that some of those who wanted improvements, also believed a portion could be sold for housing development without damaging the recreational and reserve use of the park. 12% mentioned that they were very opposed to any sale for housing, wanting the asset retained as a reserve for the city.

Many of those who value Donovan Park value it as a local park for North Invercargill. They mention that it is local to them and that they visit for example to walk their dog there or visit with elderly or disabled relatives.

Others value it as a semi-rural green space close to the city and want its unique character retained. 12% wanted improvements specifically to benefit nature, such as native planting or improvements to the pond and trees to attract more birdlife. A number of respondents mentioned that improvements could be made to improve the cultural value of the area (1%).

Access issues were raised by 22% of respondents. This included improving the standard of walking tracks, improving access for people with disabilities, removing or keeping vehicle access, improving the standard of the toilets to enable more people to visit or improving safety. Some local people were concerned that more roads were needed to improve access to the area, and this should be considered more as part of urban development. Some neighbours specifically mentioned maintenance issues and the impact large trees were having on their property boundaries. Many believed that the perceived low level of maintenance/ investment put people off using the park. The ducks and geese while an attraction to some, were specifically mentioned as threatening by others.

Others believed that while the park was good as it was, more events needed to take place to activate the park and attract people to use it.

The majority of people valued the park for recreation reasons (58%). A significant number of respondents noted the important role it played for equestrian eventing.

Many believed that improvements needed to be made to make it more suitable for a range of activities. One of the most mentioned was a dog park for North Invercargill residents or a playground or other activities for children. Also mentioned were activities like mountain biking, disk golf, golf and other sports.

10% raised the value of the farm and believed this could be built on with improved community gardens, fruit trees and other developments with a focus on food resilience and education.

FEEDBACK THROUGH THE DEVELOPING THEMES CONSULTATION:

There was overall general support for the developing themes and connections and access (including active transport) was the theme most favoured. 13% did not envisage the park as a tourism destination.

20% of respondents mentioned that themes can still be achieved while excess land is still converted to residential land (support sale). 20% of respondents suggested funds received through the sale should go back into the development of the land. 33% of respondents were against the sale of land.

The outcomes from this plan, as discovered through the engagement and information gathering process, will set the foundation for the review of the 2012 Donovan Park Management Plan, including an implementation plan which will include actions prioritised by values.

In order to improve the language to best describe what was being communicated by partners and stakeholders to Council officers and to enable greater flexibility with future management, themes have been updated and helped to inform the Masterplan. They are represented on the following pages.

"Brings country to town."

"Not for sale."

"I would like to see Donovan Park utilised for more events such as the Southland A&P Show, and other festivals and fun."

"The community would love to be involved in preserving this awesome green reserve"

"Green infrastructure – including trees, open spaces and agricultural lands - helps to cool the air, filter out pollution and absorb rainfall."

"It is a venue desirable of more use and potentially more community events and deserves to be preserved as a park-like setting."

"The park is of sufficient size to cater for any type of outdoor event. It is close to town and easily accessible."

"Leave it as it is."

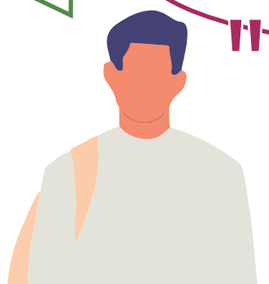
"It's a bit unsafe with the little kids on bikes on the main road."

"I often just drive through from one side to the other as it is such an attractive drive."

"Open up more areas to the public, plant more natives - less grass, trees sequester carbon, improve amenity values, reduce flooding risk, provide shade, support biodiversity. Expand fruit tree planting."

"It is a lovely park for casual family visits or to feed the ducks or take a walk with the dogs."









EMERGING MASTERPLAN THEMES



MAKING CONNECTIONS AND OPENING ACCESS

- Includes the need to improve accessibility for disabled users, pedestrians and cyclists.
- Recognising the importance of the water and green connectivity between Donovan Park and surrounding reserves across the city, specifically North/ South.
- Enhancing and creating entrances, road hierarchy, paths, trails, tracks and footpaths.
- Supporting the active transport network within the park and to & from the park to spaces and places.
- Consider opening spaces for public access by removing fencing and/or unlocking gates.



EXPERIENCING NATURE AND WATER

- The pond area is highly valued and provides for the visitor experience. Consider opportunities to enhance this area.
- Provide opportunities to increase wetland experience through additional enhancement within naturally occurring wet areas of the park.
- Include natural play areas for people to explore and provide things to do.
- Celebrate the park as a blue and green network through further provision and education around trees and vegetation as ecological connections and habitat providers for wildlife.
- Incorporate arts, heritage and culture.
- People like the natural feel of the open spaces and rural environment at the park.
- Explore education and advocacy opportunities with partners, stakeholders and education providers.
- The nursery and community cultivation are recognised as being important by the partners, stakeholders and the community and need to be retained. Utilise more spaces for food resilience/security.



CONTINUING TO BUILD AN IMPORTANT LOCAL PLACE

- Donovan Park is valued by the community. Keep it as a place for sport and recreation and as part of the blue/ green network.
- Seen as a north Invercargill destination.
- Include whānau centric/family values - this is a place for families.
- Improve amenities and facilities – Consider high quality facilities and amenities to enable longer stays.
- Incorporate arts, heritage and culture - mana whenua values.
- Provide a visitor experience including play and things to do.



PROVIDING RECREATION AND THINGS TO DO

- Include more play and informal recreation aspects.
- Address and collaborate with partners, stakeholders and wider community on future maintenance and management of sports fields and associated facilities.
- Recognise the park and its use for promoting multi-use (hub) activities: cycling, walking, outdoor adventure, trails and tracks, sports and recreation.
- Retain provision and maintenance of sports fields.
- Increased opportunities for large-scale events and concerts - more events needed to take place to activate the park and attract people to use it.
- The park is viewed as being underutilised - opportunities to remove access barriers to allow more use.

3. VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF DONOVAN PARK

VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF DONOVAN PARK

CELEBRATING UNIQUE NATURAL CHARACTER

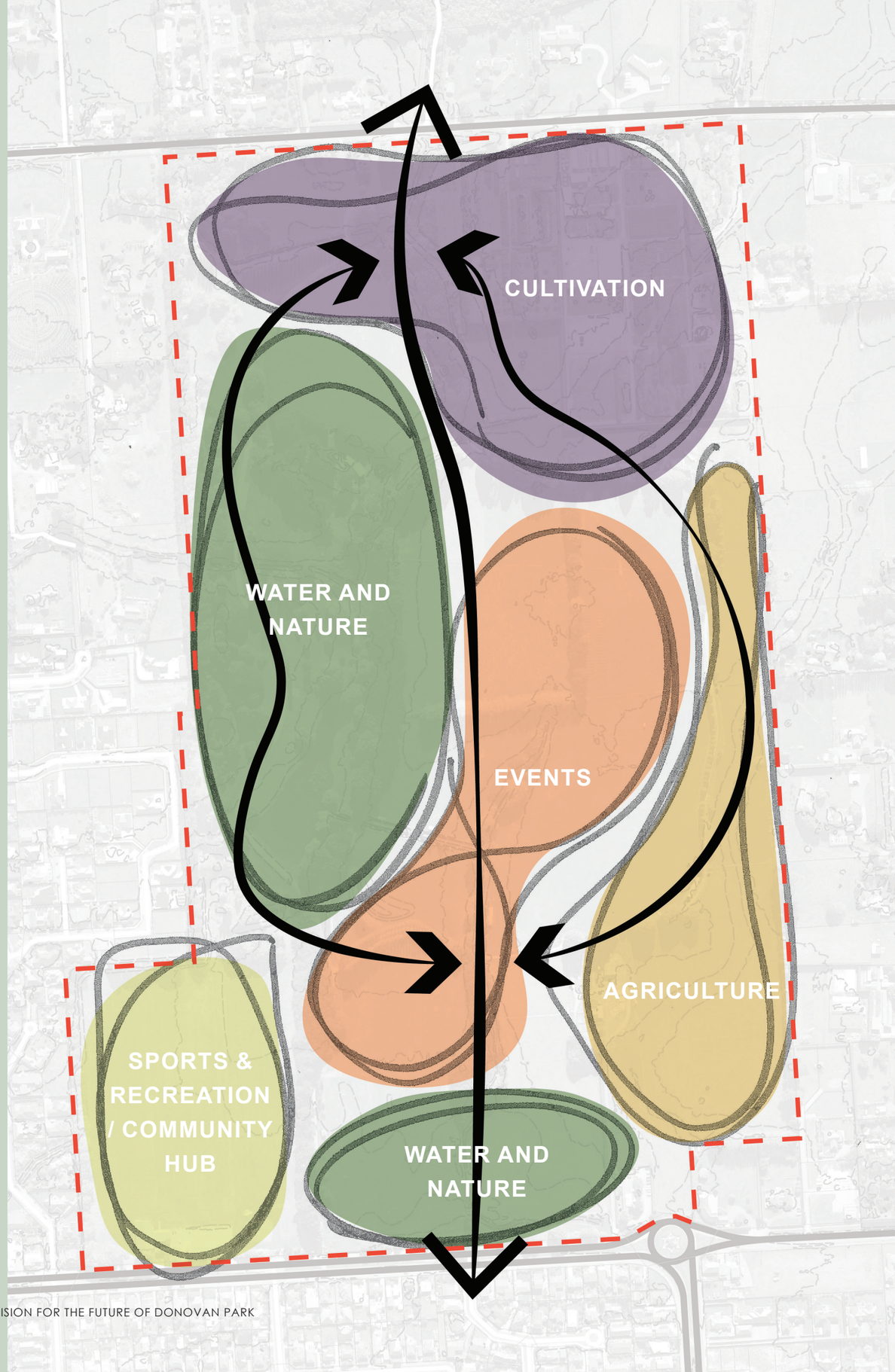
- Enhancing the landscape and continuing the rural feel
- Enhancing and improving water and nature features to add more amenity and better support biodiversity outcomes, while managing stormwater control
- Providing green streets/trees lining avenues within the park and on routes to and from the park to encourage active transport

PROMOTING OPEN SPACE NETWORK

- Removing barriers and fences to improve more access for all (gates and fences)
- Focus on enhancing spaces that can be accessible or where accessibility could be improved through the park
- Linking ecology and recreation corridors between Donovan Park and other spaces and places
- Enhancing connections to other spaces and places, residential/urban areas, neighbourhood connections
- Enhance amenities and facilities to support visitor use
- Active transport connections with the park and to/from the park

RATIONALISING LAND USE

- Ensuring the park has long term sustainable uses
- Activating efficient use of land
- Providing quality space for multi-use activities and events
- Continuing a family friendly/whānau centric place for visitors
- Retain the entire site for reserve purposes on the basis that the population is growing, the rural experience is enjoyed by locals (many unified voices and strong sense of collaboration around retaining space) and the site performs a stormwater management function

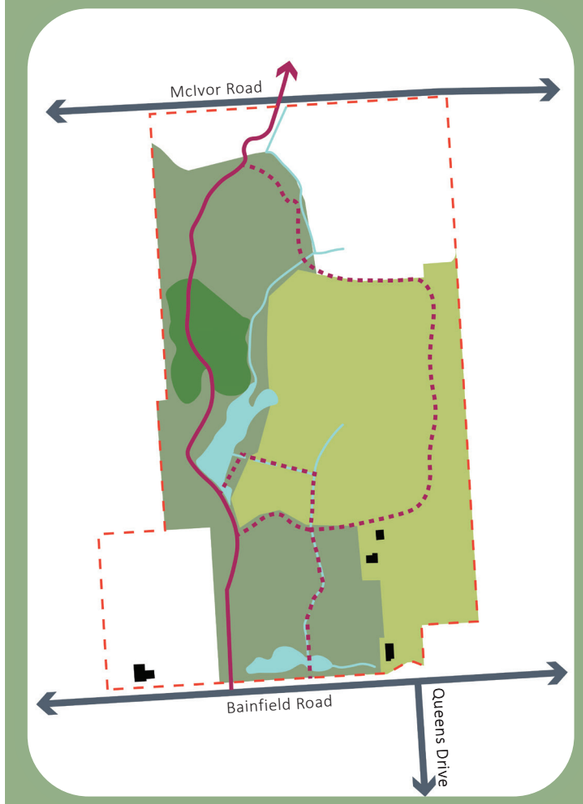


STAGED DELIVERY - CELEBRATING UNIQUE NATURAL CHARACTER



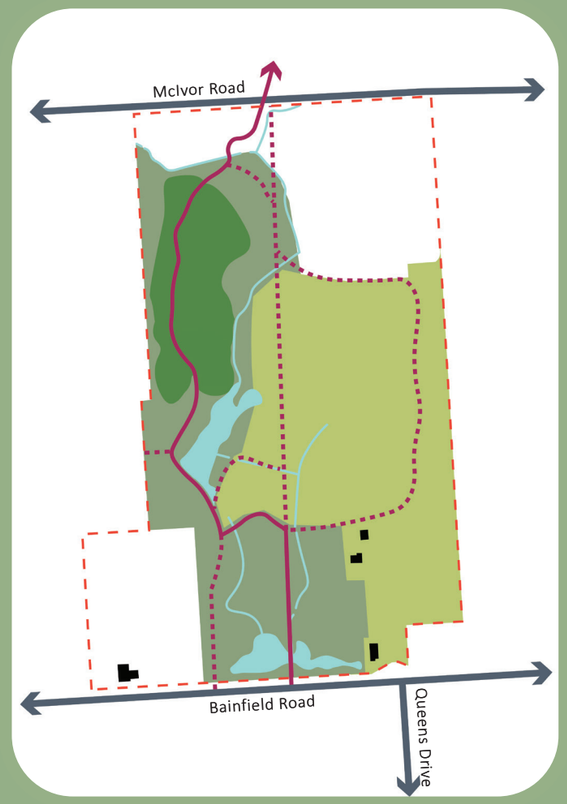
CURRENT CONDITIONS

- Grass and Paddock Area
- Parkland Area
- Donovan Park Arboretum
- Pond, Waterways, and Wetlands
- Cycle and Walking Trails
- Donovan Park Scenic Drive
- Existing Park Buildings
- Site Boundary



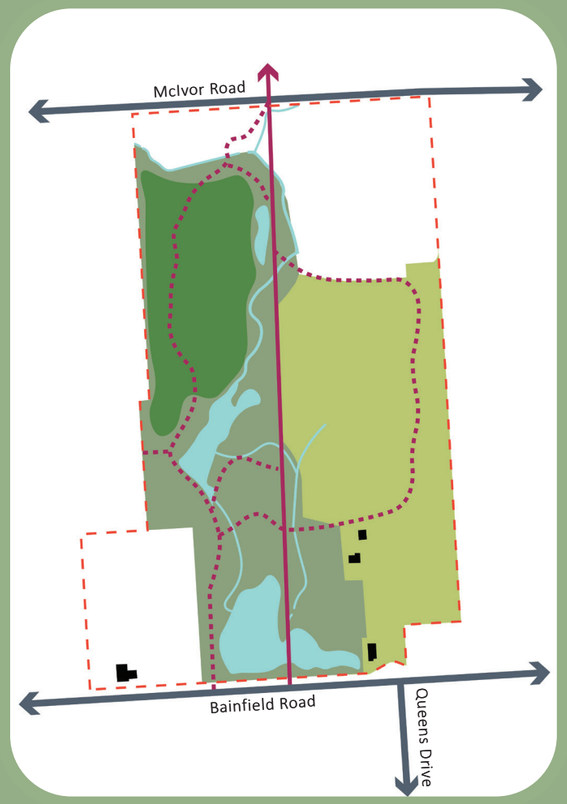
3 YEARS

- Arboretum expansion beginning to develop
- Expansion of existing pond edges and planting riparian vegetation
- Enhancing open ditches and waterways with plantings and pest plant management
- Creating increased visibility to allow permeability between spaces within the park for view shafts
- Planting natives along inside of shelter belts



10 YEARS

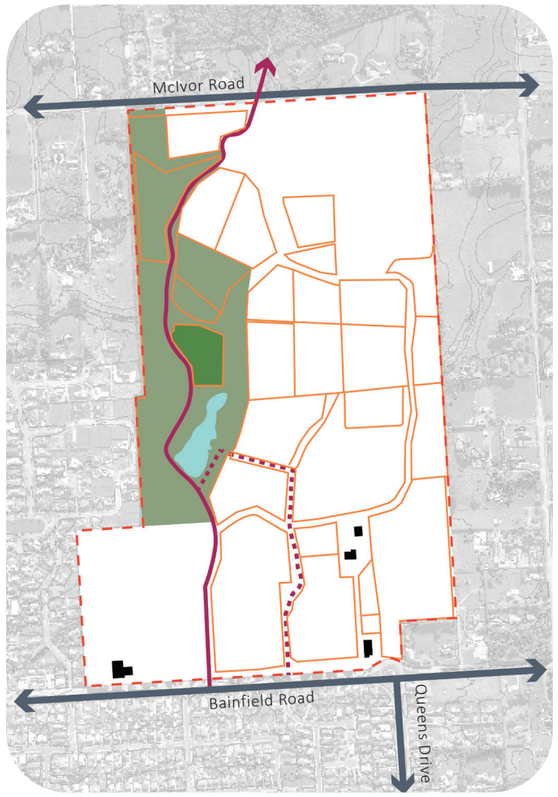
- Further expansion of arboretum and community cultivation
- Development of wetland at Bainfield Road front paddocks with boardwalk and riparian plantings as development progresses – as supported by implementation plan
- Continue to enhance open ditches and waterways
- Planting trees along avenues



30 YEARS

- Fully established wetland and open ditches
- Ampitheatre enhancements
- Fruit and nut trees established
- Well established, actively managed arboretum
- Establishing shelter belts, tree lined avenues

STAGED DELIVERY - PROMOTING OPEN SPACE NETWORK



CURRENT CONDITIONS

- Parkland Area
- Donovan Park Arboretum
- Pond, Waterways, and Wetlands
- Scenic Cycle and Walking Trails
- Donovan Park Scenic Drive
- Existing Fences
- Existing Park Buildings
- Site Boundary



3 YEARS

- Create trail connection to Richfield Drive on western edge of the park
- Opening access off main drive into Donovan Park for pedestrian use. Keep service areas, nursery and cultivation area at the park's northeastern corner fenced
- Allocate dedicated event and multi-use space
- Remove entrance gates to farm trail
- Developing wayfinding and signage
- Park furniture allocated



10 YEARS

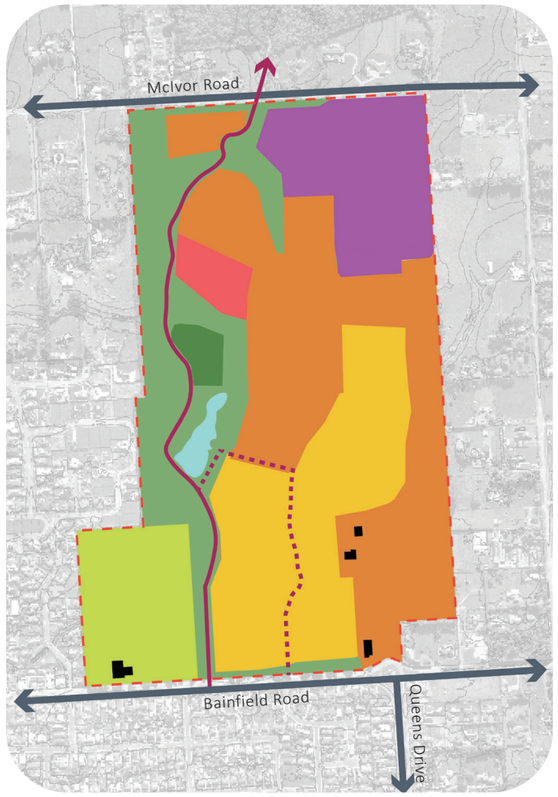
- Partial road and parking development at the south end of the park, connecting to the existing gravel road, retaining the sealed road for pedestrian / active transport and approved vehicles
- Internal fencing removed from most areas within the park
- Strengthen recreation and ecological connection between restaurant and park
- Signage / wayfinding and park furniture installed as areas of the park are developed
- High priority amenities and facilities installed (toilets and shelters)
- Walking structures (boardwalks and bridges) developed at wetland



30 YEARS

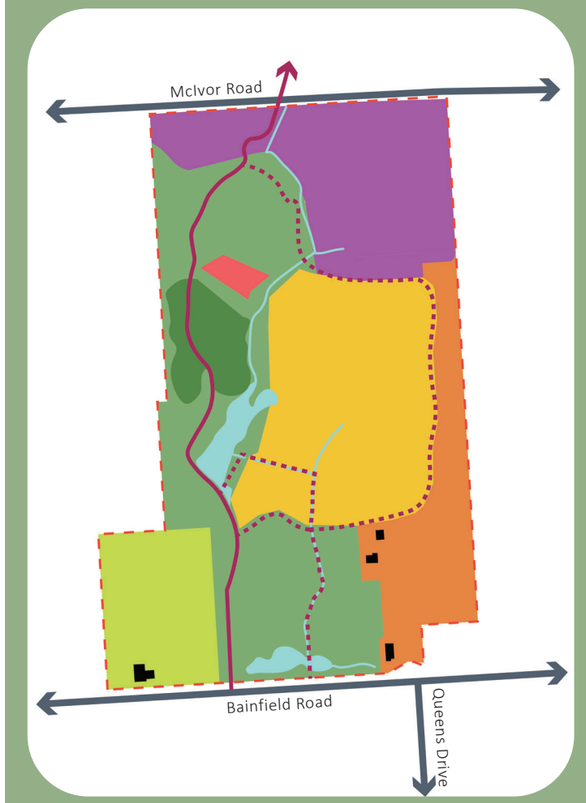
- Allocation of road and parking to support more large-scale events and better utilisation of the park
- Strengthen ecological and recreational connections so nearby reserves and places are thriving
- Wayfinding and signage installed – acknowledging areas within, nearby and around the park
- Amenities and facilities fully established

STAGED DELIVERY - RATIONALISING LAND USE



CURRENT CONDITIONS

- Parkland Area
- Cultivation Area
- Event Area
- Paddock / Agriculture Area
- Invercargill City Council Service Area
- Sports and Recreation Area
- Nature Play Area
- Donovan Park Arboretum
- Pond, Waterways, and Wetlands
- Cycle and Walking Trails
- Donovan Park Scenic Drive
- Existing Park Buildings
- Site Boundary



3 YEARS

- Providing access to paddock at McIvor Road end for community cultivation
- Ensure the park contains a mix of activities
- Opening certain internal gates to allow cycling and walking along internal roads
- Allocation of nature play at pond area and adding trails around the pond
- Agricultural area is rationalised to the eastern edge



10 YEARS

- Incorporating more nature play nodes throughout other areas of the park
- Creating a community hub at Waikiwi Rugby Club
- Transition from service area north of arboretum to outdoor classroom/nature play space, with additional play areas allocated near constructed wetland and pond
- Understanding need for driving range
- Review of agricultural area in line with Long Term Plan, land provision requirements and community needs



30 YEARS

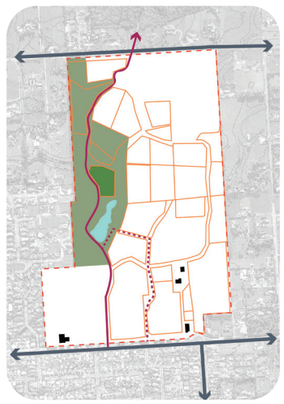
- Alternative land use acknowledged
- Nature play nodes fully developed
- Community hub thriving with multi use activities and incoming funding avenues

STAGED DELIVERY - A 3, 10, AND 30 YEAR APPROACH

CURRENT → 3 YEARS → 10 YEARS → 30 YEAR VISION



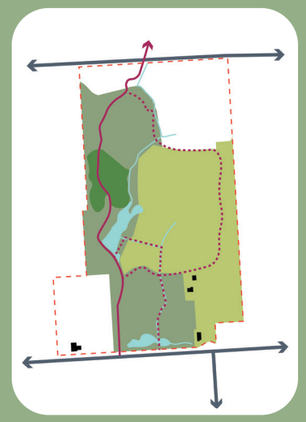
CELEBRATING UNIQUE NATURAL CHARACTER



PROMOTING OPEN SPACE NETWORK

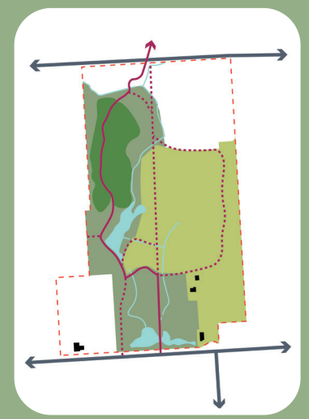


RATIONALISING LAND USE



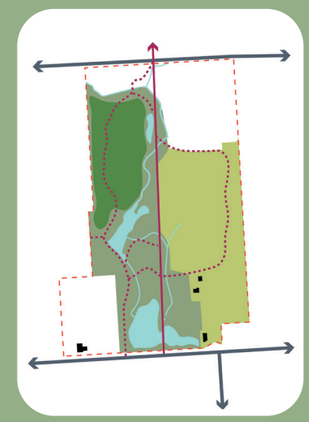


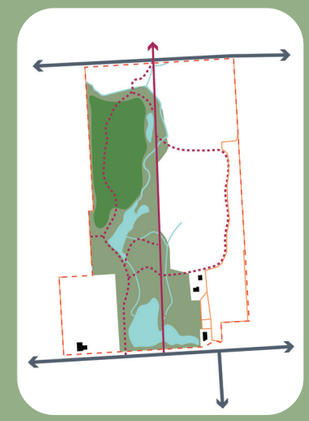


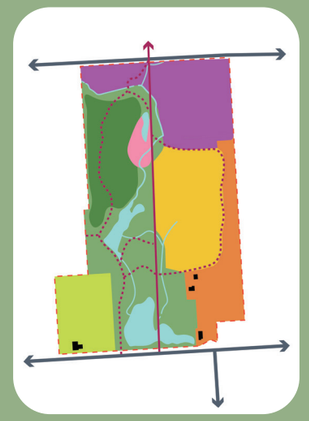












NETWORK

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY WITHIN THE BLUE GREEN NETWORK

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

When most of us think of infrastructure, we think of the built environment: roads, bridges, airports, power plants, cell phone towers, storm drains. Green infrastructure refers to the use of the natural landscape instead of engineered structures.

Green infrastructure is the network of green spaces, natural systems and semi-natural systems that support sustainable communities. It includes waterways, bushland, tree canopy and green ground cover, parks and open spaces that are strategically planned, designed, and managed to support a decent quality of life in an urban environment.[1]

Applied to stormwater management, green infrastructure can be defined as "solutions that manage stormwater onsite through installation of permeable pavement, green roofs, parks, wetland, roadside plantings, rain barrels, and other mechanisms that enhance natural hydrologic functions, such as infiltration into soil and evaporation into the air."

We live in a time of constrained resources, both financial and environmental. This is a time of fantastic opportunity to use the resources we have more wisely to create vibrant communities. The wheels of innovation have begun to spin in stormwater management. It is time to scale this promising solution.

CONNECTIVITY WITHIN THE BLUE GREEN NETWORK

Blue Green Networks are connected or grouped natural areas that deliver a variety of educational, recreational, ecological, cultural, landscape and health benefits. They help to maintain a resilient sustainable quality open space network that benefit both people and nature.

Donovan Park is a key green space and water connector between other open spaces and places. This is typically known as the Blue (i.e., rivers and wetlands) Green (i.e., parks, bush, and trees) Network.

An objective in the Activity Management Plan 2024 is to continue to improve connections between open spaces through active transport and ecological linkages. The concept can be practiced through innovating sustainable practices to ensure water and nature are preserved and in turn support the Blue Green Network.

Future growth development in north Invercargill could put increased pressure on people seeking open space and rural character, as a major urban park for the surrounding catchment.

Its distinct rural character, natural bush areas and range of play and recreational activities will be highly sought by future residents.

The aim for the future of the blue and green network within the park is to restore elements of the riparian system, protecting water quality and ensuring habitat preservation.

1 NSW Government Architect, Draft Greener Places Design Guide, governmentarchitect.nsw.gov.au/guidance/greener-places-guide, 2020

WETLANDS

- The pond area is highly valued and provides for the visitor experience. There are potential opportunities to increase wetland experience through additional enhancement of wetland within naturally occurring wet areas of the park.

TREES (NATIVE AND EXOTIC)

- Better management and access to different varieties of native and exotic trees (arboretum).
- Education and advocacy opportunities.
- Connections to surrounding native trees from original vegetation pre-settlement located at Anderson Park and Thomsons Bush is important to ensure ecological corridors thrive

CULTIVATION

- The nursery and cultivation opportunities are important and need to be retained both for private and public use.
- This space can be better used by maintaining highly productive land for primary production/ food resilience to ensure the community is provided for now and in the future.

PLAY

- Play is something the community feels strongly about. Anderson Park already contains a destination play space just north of Donovan Park, meaning there is opportunity to build on the rural environmental elements that Donovan Park provides, as an outdoor classroom, or in an arboretum setting.
- Feedback suggests that because there are already play spaces with provision for traditional play equipment, there is more appetite to provide natural play as another type of play, where children engage in unstructured play outdoors using the natural elements that exist there e.g. logs, trees, leaves, sticks and stones, rather than man-made resources.
- With so much space at Donovan Park, there is scope to provide scale play experience. Playful experiences can be incorporated across the site, not just the nature play area (i.e. nature play nodes)




ANDERSON PARK
DONOVAN PARK
THOMSONS BUSH
WAIHŌPAI RIVER
QUEENS PARK
TOWN BELT
ŌTEPUNI CREEK

INSPIRATION



















10 YEAR MASTERPLAN



INSPIRATION



















30 YEAR MASTERPLAN



30 YEAR MASTERPLAN BOFFA MISKELL LTD

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