



Rangitikei
UNspoilt...

2009

Wilson Park Management Plan



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Part Two: Legislative and Policy Framework specific to Wilson Park, Marton

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Introduction and background

Introduction

This is a management plan for Wilson Park, a large open-spaced park located in suburban Marton. Providing for both sports clubs and outdoor events, Wilson Park has the potential and the space to provide more opportunities for both formal and casual recreational purposes.

The two main objectives for Wilson Park are,

- to promote and encourage the use of Wilson Park for a range of recreation activities and
- to protect the open space character of Wilson Park and to enhance the recreational amenities.

This Management Plan outlines a vision for the future of Wilson Park and includes objectives and policies to guide the future management of the Park.

Wilson Park is not a listed reserve and Council is therefore not bound by the legislative requirements of the Reserves Act 1977 to have a Reserve Management Plan. However this management plan follows the same format of a reserve management plan and has loosely followed the process set out in the Reserves Act 1977.

History of Wilson Park

The land was originally owned by James Wilson (1849- 1929) from Bulls, a sheep farmer and local politician (councillor at Manawatu County Council). In 1955 the Marton Borough offered his daughters, Nancy and Jean Wilson, £1,300 for the purchase of the land, to create a park and to call it Sir James Wilson Park. The sisters instead gifted it to the Marton Borough and people of Marton and asked that the money be spent transforming the land into a park.

Subsequent land for the playground and car park was bought by the Marton Borough Council in 1955-56.

In 1996, the Rangitikei District Council gifted Te Hau E Wha Inc. 5,600m² of land in the north eastern corner of the Park to build an urban marae for all Māori; the marae has not yet been built.

The Park is currently used by individuals and groups including:

- Town residents who enjoy and use the park on a regular basis
- Tangata Whenua
- Sporting clubs based at or using the park
- Local schools
- Country music enthusiasts/motor homes during the annual country music festival

Legal Description

Wilson Park is located within the Rangitikei District Council and overall management and administration of the park is the responsibility of the Council.

Wilson Park comprises of approx 9.6 ha of land held on two titles. The park is not a classified reserve.

Legal Status of Wilson Park		
Legal Description	Area	Use
Pt Lot 1 DP 2483 & DP 2806	8.7ha	sports fields and recreation
LOT 6-14 DP 2150	8,853m ²	playground and car park

District Plan

Both titles of Wilson Park are zoned residential under the District Plan. There are no restrictions listed on what Council can do with the park but Folly Stream, which runs through the middle, has the potential for flooding. The park is flanked with rural zoning on its northern and eastern boundaries and residential on its southern and western boundaries.

In the north east corner of the park, 5,600m² has been partitioned off for a marae (Lot 1 DP 81699). This land was gifted to local Māori and no longer forms part of the Park. The land is non-rateable as it has been designated as a marae.

Existing leases /Licences

Council holds leases for the rental of the land with the following clubs:

- South Rangitikei Car Club
- Marton Rugby League
- Marton United Football Club
- Marton Wrestling Club

Council has similar lease arrangements with all the clubs. Each club is responsible for the maintenance of the buildings with Council given the power to evict the club and take control of the building if the club fails to maintain the building to a proper standard or to pay the rent. It does not seem that Council has ever used this power to prompt any of the clubs to a higher standard of maintenance –all of them have allowed the buildings to deteriorate and there might be health and safety concerns.

Camp ground provision

The Rangitikei District Council owned and contracted out the running of the Marton Camp ground until 2007 when the campground was closed because it was underutilised and was running at a loss. The camp ground at Dudding's Lake (off SH3) would seem sufficient to meet the needs of the camping public in the south of the Rangitikei. This leaves Marton without a camp ground in the township, but Dudding's Lake is only a 10 minute drive away.

Features and current use

Location of Wilson Park

Wilson Park is located on Marumaru Street, Marton. It stretches from the corner of Nga Tawa Road to Rira Street and has three entrances on Rira Street, Ngareta Street and through the car park off Marumaru Street.

Wilson Park is situated approximately 4 km from central Marton. It is surrounded by residential houses on the southern side, the old Marton hospital on the western side and rural land on the northern and eastern sides.

Topography

The park is mostly flat with the only slightly elevated contour being around the cycle velodrome. The fields are marked for sports: three football fields and one rugby league. The surface of the fields is in fair condition but drainage is an ongoing issue with frequent surface flooding. Folly Stream runs through the park, separating the playground and football field on the eastern side from the rest of the park.

Recreation Amenities

Wilson Park contains the following recreation amenities:

- Three football fields
- One rugby league field.
- Football/rugby league clubrooms
- Wrestling clubrooms – currently used by Taekwondo club
- Car clubrooms
- Unused athletics clubrooms –
- Outdoor velodrome
- Children’s playground
- Scouts’ climbing wall
- Car park
- Rose garden
- Land designated for Marae
- Folly Stream

The location of these features is shown in Figure 1.

Formal Sporting Fields

Wilson Park contains four sports fields set up for soccer and rugby league.

The Outdoor Cycling Velodrome

The outdoor velodrome is in very poor condition and would require extensive redevelopment before it would be fit for use. There is not considered to be any current community demand for cycling facilities.

Clubrooms

Wilson Park contains four clubrooms:

- The Athletics clubroom is owned by Council. Its toilet facilities are often used for events.
- Rugby league and soccer share the top storey of a two storey building. The sports users are responsible for the interior and the cleaning of the bathroom facilities located on the bottom storey. Council owns and maintains the bottom storey. The exterior of the building is overdue for renovation.
- The South Rangitikei Car Club's building is fully owned and maintained by the club.
- The Wrestling clubroom, which is used by the Taekwondo and Karate clubs, is owned by the Wrestling club. The exterior is covered in graffiti and is looking rundown. Security has been an issue for all clubs.

Informal recreation

The park also caters for informal leisure pursuits such as dog walking and a playground.

Parking

A car park is available off Marumaru Street. It is considered big enough to cater for the current demand. During the country music festival, five temporary power points are connected along the car park fence to enable connection to motor homes.

Playground

The playground is located on the eastern side of Wilson Park over Folly Stream. A row of trees separates it from the sports fields. It contains the following original play equipment from the 1970s: two slides, a set of swings, two swirly seesaws, an old rocking horse, and a large green concrete submarine. A climbing frame has more recently been installed. All play equipment has a bark safety surface (last renewed in 2007).

Scouts' Climbing Wall

The Scouts' climbing wall is in disrepair and should be checked as to whether it meets health and safety standards.

Major Event held at Wilson Park

The Country Music Festival

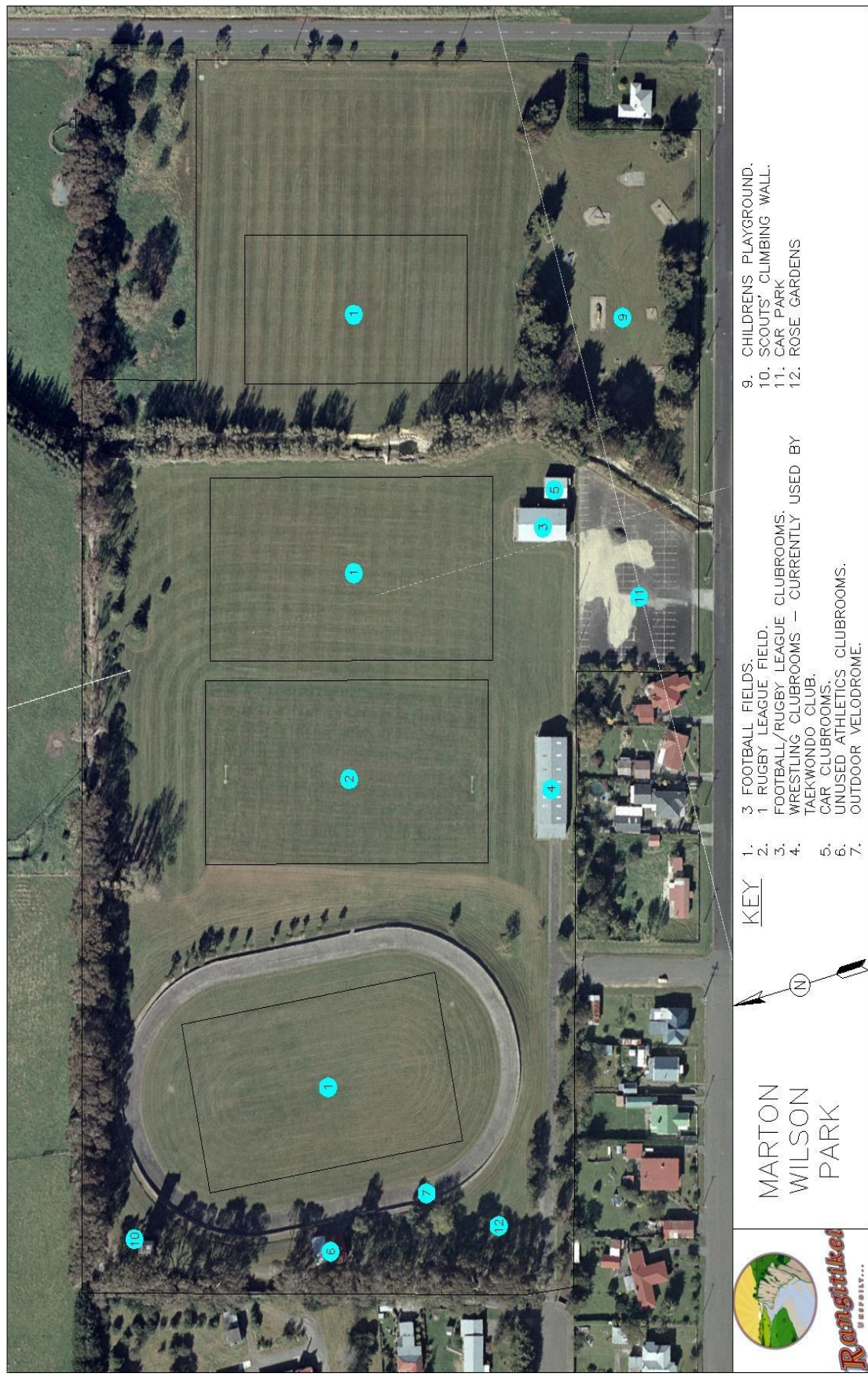
The country music festival is an annual event run over Wellington Anniversary weekend in January. During the festival, the sport fields at Wilson Park are turned into a temporary camping ground for motor homes whilst the cycling oval hosts the stage. As the festival has grown and attracted more motor homes, the organisers have requested that Council install a permanent power supply and make general improvement to the park's toilet facilities to cater for the festival patrons. At present Wilson Park is not set up to enable camping on an ongoing basis.

The actual economic benefits of the country music festival to the District's economy are not known. It does attract visitors from throughout New Zealand and overseas each year to Marton. It is one of only three country music festivals in New Zealand and the only one in the lower North Island. The organiser is very keen for it to remain at Wilson Park on the basis that there are no other parks in the District with enough flat ground to host the festival.

This festival is currently the only major non-sporting event held at Wilson Park. Council currently charges low fees for the use of Wilson Park to encourage usage.

A Council policy for events held at Council parks, might be warranted to clarify Council's position and deal with issues that arise from such events.

Figure 1. Features of Wilson Park, Marton



Specific Policies for Wilson Park

Along with the general policies mentioned in Part One, the following specific policies are applicable to Wilson Park.

Policy 1: To continue to allow events to be held at Wilson Park.

Explanation

Council should encourage as many people in the community to use the park as possible. At the moment there are no sports clubs or codes using the park in summer, so there is plenty of scope for other clubs and groups to hold events or be regular users of the park.

Council will not run events itself. Event organisers are responsible for providing event-specific requirements at Wilson Park to better accommodate their event.

While Wilson Park has enough open space for major events, it currently does not have the supporting infrastructure to hold overnight or large scale events.

Implementation

Council's toilet facilities at Wilson Park need to be upgraded to better accommodate events and general community use. This could be achieved by including them as part of the capital works programme next year. Priority should be given to the toilets in the Soccer/ Rugby League building given their more central location and higher use.

Council could also consider assisting event organisers by advising them on funding opportunities and assisting them with filling out funding applications.

Policy 2: To allow limited overnight camping at Wilson Park in support of key events.

To continue to allow Wilson Park to be temporarily transformed into a camp site for key events, as long as it does not disrupt other uses of the park. This policy recognises the value of such events in providing a unique experience to the community and also the economic benefits that accrue from events being held in the District.

Explanation

Part of the country music festival's attraction is that people are able to remain on site for the entire event. As there are no campgrounds in Marton, this use should be allowed. The Council is supportive of the country music festival organisers seeking outside funding for any of the required infrastructure for the event but would not take responsibility for any of the on-going maintenance. However, the Council would need to be satisfied that the infrastructure was safe and compliant and make this a condition of approving the event.

Implementation

Continue to provide the dump station for the country music festival weekend

Policy 3: To encourage the restoration of Folly Stream.

A community project is suggested to restore the Folly Stream area of Wilson Park.

Explanation

This project would encourage local schools/ community groups to get involved with enhancing the ecological system of the Folly Stream area. Ideas about what to do should be generated from the community.

Possible funding could be available from Horizons Regional Council or other external sources.

Implementation

The Leisure Plan Implementation Group could facilitate the start of such a project, enquire about funding from Horizons, advertise the project and organise a meeting for interested groups

Policy 4: To install park signage, furniture and make a historical connection with Sir James Wilson.

This policy aims to improve the overall amenity of the park and to strengthen its identity with its past.

Explanation

There are a number of actions Council could do that would give the park greater identity and provide more recognition. Signage, the installation of additional park furniture around the children's playground and greater encouragement of community groups to look after their own assets are all ways the park could be improved at relatively low cost.

It would also be respectful to show a historical link with the park's namesake. Rangitikei historians could write up a short summary of Sir James Wilson's life, and his achievements. An interpretative sign could be added near the Wilson Park car park.

Implementation

Install signage and additional park furniture at Wilson Park.

Create a Council policy that encourages all Council parks in the district to have standard signage, furniture and for facilities at Parks to be painted certain colours – to create continuity of the Parks throughout the district.

This policy could apply to any new signage or furniture planned for parks to keep costs down (as implementing this policy retrospectively could be expensive).

Action Table for Wilson Park Management Plan

Document and Policy	Action to implement	By Whom	Cost
Part One: Policy 2 To maintain and develop recreational facilities at Council parks and reserves in close consultation with the local community to enhance the recreational values and opportunities.	Carry out a safety audit of all the sports facilities. Any maintenance issues should be directed to the clubs.	Assets	Staff time
	Review the leasing agreements with clubs.	Assets	Staff time
	Write a Council policy that encourages all Council parks in the district to have standard signage, furniture and for facilities at Parks to be painted certain colours – to create continuity of the Parks throughout the district.	Policy	Staff time
	Encourage the country music festival organisers to investigate alternative funding options to install power at Wilson Park.	Council	
Part One: Policy 3 To encourage maximum use of Council parks and reserves by a range of different groups.	Create a Council policy/guidelines for “Events held on Council grounds” so that Council has procedures in place for future events.	Policy	Staff time
	Liaise with Sport Wanganui’s Club Co-ordinator about how they can help clubs or codes to start, grow and develop their capacity and capability.	Policy	Staff time
	Hold a meeting between the two sports clubs and the festival organisers to see whether they are interested in sharing costs for the lighting/ power points.	Policy/Assets	Staff time
Part One: Policy 4 To ensure as far as practical, the safety of users at Council’s parks and reserves.	Provide a capital works programme to dismantle the cycling velodrome and install lighting around the car park and toilet blocks.	Assets	tbd
	Develop a concept plan to apply CPTED principles to Wilson Park	Assets	Staff time
	Carry out a play ground health and safety audit every year	Assets	tbd
Part Two: Policy 1 To continue to allow events to be held at Wilson Park.	Council to assist community groups with funding applications	Policy	Staff time
Part Two: Policy 2 To allow limited overnight camping at Wilson Park in support of key events.	Upgrade toilet facilities at Wilson Park	Assets	tbd
Part Two: Policy 3 To encourage the restoration of Folly Stream.	Facilitate the start of the Folly stream project, enquire about funding from Horizons, advertise the project and organise a meeting for interested groups.	Leisure Plan Implementation Group	
Part Two: Policy 4 To install park signage, furniture and make a historical connection with Sir James Wilson.	Install signage and additional park furniture at Wilson Park.	Assets	tbd
	Installation of an interpretative sign near the Wilson Park car park.	Marton historians	tbd