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Point Dorset Reserve Management Plan  
Parks and Gardens  
Wellington City Council  
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By email: [Fiona.Johnson@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:Fiona.Johnson@wcc.govt.nz)

Attention: Mike Oates – Manager Open Space and Recreational Planning

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**Submission of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga to Wellington City Council's Draft Point Dorset: Reserve Management Plan**

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Thank you for the opportunity for NZ Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga (NZHPT) to provide comments on the Wellington City Council's draft Point Dorset: Reserve Management Plan.

**NZHPT is supportive of the Management Plan with amendments.**

NZHPT gave detailed feedback to the draft discussion document in February of this year. This feedback is appended; the material contained within that document will not be repeated here. The feedback provides an introduction to NZHPT, a short background and history of Fort Dorset, a discussion of historic heritage in New Zealand and the Tangata Whenua values of the site.

In regards to the feedback provided in February, Wellington City Council has acknowledged that the historic heritage values present at Point Dorset are significant and need to be given equal weighting, to other values present. This is reflected in the prominent position of the heritage section of the Draft Management Plan. This also reflects the high interest of the community to protect the heritage and cultural values of the site. NZHPT is also supportive of the proposed interpretation around the site that will help inform reserve uses of the special values of the site.

### **Draft Point Dorset: Reserve Management Plan**

NZHPT understands that the draft discussion document will provide a framework for Wellington City Council and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust to make decisions and manage the reserve for the next 10 years. A landscape plan has been developed, combined with improvements to the tracks and interpretation. NZHPT acknowledges the work that has gone into the development of this plan and is supportive of the intention to provide a detailed framework for the management of this important place.

Overall, NZHPT is generally supportive of the objectives and policies for the reserve as proposed in the draft management plan.

NZHPT is supportive of the continued use of the reserve by the public as a recreational reserve. However, as suggested in this submission the heritage values present at Point Dorset are significant and need to be given equal weighting, attention and respect to those values associated with the reserves current recreational use.

### **Archaeology**

Fort Dorset has a number of significant archaeological sites and a rich Maori history. Any works at Fort Dorset should be informed by an up to date archaeological assessment, iwi consultation and may require an Archaeological Authority.

As discussed in NZHPT's February feedback to the draft management plan, NZHPT is supportive of the intention to undertaking an archaeological survey to confirm the extent of the pa and any artifacts needing protection. NZHPT would like to see an archaeological assessment and survey undertaken of the whole area including the pa site, associated sites and the coastal defense battery site.

### **Landscaping and Planting**

While NZHPT is supportive of landscape planting, care needs to be taken to select appropriate plants to install around archaeological sites. Sites need to be managed carefully so that vegetation does not damage the sensitive archaeological deposits. Sensitive landscape planting can be done in such a way as to protect heritage features. If planting is required, NZHPT recommends natives with short root bases and grass in and around archaeological sites. Regular maintenance and monitoring of the sites needs to occur to ensure no weed species or trees take root. Planting can benefit archaeological sites as they can restrict public access to sites and prevent unintentional damage by people.

Particular care needs to be taken if trees are removed, as proposed in the draft management plan (Pohutakawa, Pine). Removal of the trees' deep root systems can

disturb archaeological deposits. In some cases an archaeological authority is required to remove a tree.

In addition, given the sites' historic use as a defensive position for both Maori and World War I and II defences, NZHPT is supportive of the area maintaining its sweeping ocean views to and from the surrounding landscape. Any works including the proposed landscape planting and track building should ensure that important views to and from the site are maintained.

### **WWI and II Military Installation Sites**

Although the WWI and II military installation sites are not protected under the Historic Places Act, their significance and values are high. NZHPT has an interest in their retention and management. NZHPT is supportive of Council's intention to repair and make safe these structures. Council should also implement a monitoring plan for the site to ensure their on going survival.

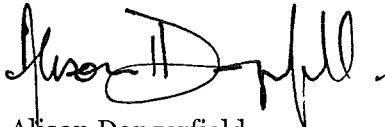
NZHPT notes that, under Policy 2.4.1, vegetation currently around the remaining structures will be maintained to protect the historic feature. While NZHPT is mostly supportive of this policy, this needs to be considered on a case-by case basis and the best outcome for the protection of the structure can some times be the removal of vegetation. As mentioned before, large trees in particular can pose a threat to archaeological sites. This is also true of the military installations. Some vegetation can damage the structures and needs to be monitored and managed appropriately.

### **In summary, NZHPT seeks the following actions;**

- the heritage values present at Point Dorset are significant and need to be given equal weighting, attention and respect to those values associated with the reserves current recreational use.
- an archaeological assessment and survey undertaken of the whole area including the pa site, associated sites and the coastal defence battery site, to inform the landscaping, interpretation and track upgrades.
- landscape planting is done, in such a way as to protect heritage features, and a monitoring program instigated.
- historically important vantage points and important views to and from the site and the ocean and surrounding landscape are maintained.
- Policy 2.4.1 is revised to ensure the retention of vegetation around historic features is considered on a case by case basis.

NZHPT looks forward to working with Council and Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust towards the Point Dorset Reserve Management Plan providing greater protection for this area and the historic heritage present within the reserve.

Yours faithfully,



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