

THE PLACES

Hagley Park and the Christchurch Botanic Gardens...

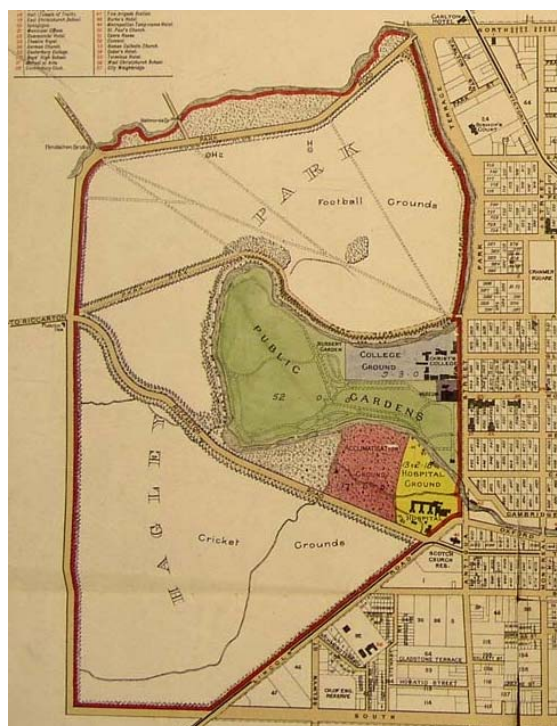
Hagley Park is Christchurch's premier metropolitan park and almost, with the exception of just one side, encloses the Christchurch Botanic Gardens. The Avon River runs between the two. Centrally located within the city, the Park is renowned for its extensive area (165 hectares), its wide open spaces and mature woodlands. It is a major sporting and cultural focal point and offers a diverse range of entertainment and recreational opportunities in close proximity to the city centre.

The present day Hagley Park is part of the original area set aside as public reserve at the establishment of Christchurch in the mid-nineteenth century. Although some of the original area has been reallocated to other uses, including for a public hospital, much of it remains today.

The character of the Park in the early days was essentially a rural one, featuring meadows, sheep and cattle, but gradually a landscape of open grassed areas defined by avenues and stands of Eurasian trees was formed. It may be a matter of debate what the actual intentions of the city founders were for the Park or what model, if any, was followed in its design. One suggestion is that the Park may have had a 'commons' origin, based on its apparent similarity to the English Common. Another is that the Park, along with the Botanic Gardens, reflects an intended 'garden city' style.

The generally accepted starting date for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens is 1863, when a large English oak tree near the Woodland Bridge, which crosses the Avon River near the Bandsmen's Memorial Rotunda, was planted to commemorate the marriage of Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales, to Princess Alexandra of Denmark. On 10th May 1864, a public meeting formally established the Canterbury Horticultural and

Acclimatisation Society and selected the locality as the most suitable place for a botanic garden. This was essentially the Government Domain, an area originally set aside over a decade earlier with such a purpose in mind, minus a portion allocated to Christ's College. All cattle on the site were subsequently removed and Mr Barker, the Government Gardener, commenced planting in the area now known as the Armstrong Lawn.



Part of an undated Lands and Survey Department Domains Board map showing Hagley Park – authority to publish has been given by Archives New Zealand's Christchurch office¹

Both Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens have significant heritage value in terms of the history of the early planning and development of the City.

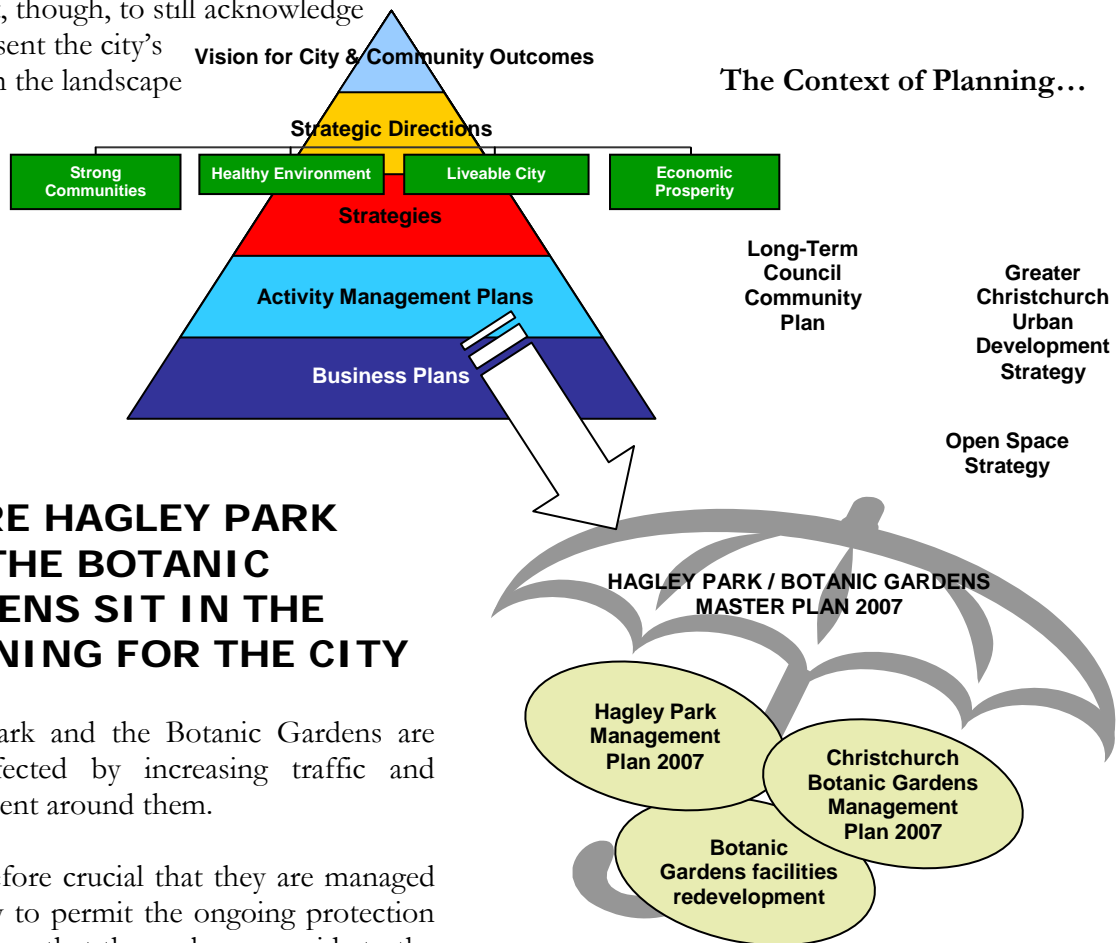
Today, a growing urban population, and expanding tourism and development of the inner city, puts increasing pressure on access to and use of Hagley Park, the Botanic Gardens and surrounding areas; all an

¹ Archives reference: Accession CH134. Registered files of Department of Lands and Survey, Christchurch. Item 8/3/35 - Reserves Hagley Park 1894-1928.

integral part of the city centre. The Park and Gardens landscape is also being modified, not entirely in an obvious way, as a result of environmental change in the central city, including, for example, local climate change, increasing pollution and ageing of the trees. Furthermore, there is a greater public awareness and acceptance of the need to restore and enhance local natural landscapes and indigenous environments.² It is important, though, to still acknowledge and represent the city's heritage in the landscape of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens.

also a statutory document reviewed under strict procedures laid down in the Reserves Act 1977.

The plans reflect and aim to meet the community outcomes identified in the Council's Long Term Council Community Plan and the goals and objectives of the Greater Christchurch Urban Development Strategy and Open Space Strategy.



WHERE HAGLEY PARK AND THE BOTANIC GARDENS SIT IN THE PLANNING FOR THE CITY

Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens are being affected by increasing traffic and development around them.

It is therefore crucial that they are managed effectively to permit the ongoing protection of the values that these places provide to the community. This master plan and the Management Plans for Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens are key tools to achieve such necessary protection.

The Master Plan provides strategic direction and vision. The management plans provide policy to guide the ongoing management of the areas. The latter also summarise basic historic, cultural and usage information.³ The Hagley Park Management Plan 2007 is

HOW THESE AREAS ARE ADMINISTERED

Hagley Park is made up of three parcels of land (Little Hagley Park, North Hagley Park and South Hagley Park) that are classified Recreation Reserves under the Reserves Act 1977. This Act is administered by the Department of Conservation.

The Botanic Gardens is classified as a Local Purpose (Botanic Gardens) Reserve under the Reserves Act.

² From submissions received from a public consultation in August 2004.

³ From a range of sources, including publications, libraries, exhibitions and the Internet.

The Christchurch City Council is the administering body with respect to both the Park and the Botanic Gardens. Currently, both areas and nearby Mona Vale are managed by the Council's City Environment Group through the Botanical Services Operations Team.

The Christchurch City (Reserves) Empowering Act 1971 has specific direction for the two areas. Firstly, it prevents the taking, without the consent of the Minister of Conservation, of any further part of Hagley Park for parking places for vehicles (Section 5 subsection (2) of the Act) and states that no part of the Park may be taken or set apart for any public work (Section 5 subsection (4)), with the exception of any public work described and covered under the Reserves Act 1977.

Secondly, the Empowering Act proclaims that the Botanic Gardens is vested in the Corporation⁴ for an estate in fee simple as a reserve for a botanic garden (Section 4 subsection (1) of this Act).

THE PURPOSE OF HAGLEY PARK

The original purpose of the area of land that was set aside as Hagley Park (identified on a map of the proposed city of Christchurch prepared by Edward Jollie, surveyor, in 1850) was stated in The Canterbury Association Reserves Ordinance of 1855. This declared that:

*“the land commonly known as Hagley Park...” “...shall be reserved forever as a public park, and shall be open for the recreation and enjoyment of the public.”*⁵

⁴ Means the mayor, councillors and citizens of the city of Christchurch.

⁵ Part of Section 4 of this ordinance.

Today, the classification and purpose of the Park as a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977 is that such reserves are:

*“for the purpose of providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.”*⁶

The Christchurch City Council, as the administrator of the Park, is required to manage it according to this purpose and must ensure that it effectively balances the need to cater for the public use of the Park with good management of the effects of this use on the Park environment. The consequence of this is that certain desired uses of the Park may be deemed inappropriate or need to be restricted.

The Council's focus for its management of Hagley Park is to achieve the optimum community outcomes for the benefit of all members of the public using it and to protect the Park's environment and character for future generations to come.

THE PURPOSE OF THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS

People may have a general idea of what is meant by 'botanic garden' but the concept defies precise definition. As a result, some gardens are called botanic gardens while others are simply labeled as gardens. This is especially the case in New Zealand where historical development of public gardens and botanic gardens has been somewhat different from that in many other parts of the world.

⁶ Part of Section 17 subsection (1) of this Act.

The Christchurch Botanic Gardens were not originally set up through a specific ordinance as was the case of Hagley Park. Instead, an area called the Government Domain was mapped for the purpose of a botanic garden at the time of planning for the establishment of Christchurch. However, it was not until the planting of a tree in the Government Domain in 1863 that it is generally accepted that the development of the Botanic Gardens began.

In light of the apparent absence of documented planning objectives for the formation of a botanic gardens in the fledging city of Christchurch, the purpose for this has to be determined in relation to the characteristics generally accepted internationally for botanic gardens.

A brief definition that is widely accepted is that:

Botanic gardens are institutions holding documented collections of living plants for the purposes of scientific research, conservation, display and education.

Generally accepted characteristics of botanic gardens, and the diversity of roles that they can provide, are:

- An underlying scientific basis for collections of documented and labeled plants that are monitored.
- A long term commitment to, and responsibility for, maintenance of plant collections.
- A research programme and associated facilities, such as a herbarium and laboratory.
- Open to the public.

- Promotion of conservation through extension and environmental education activities, along with interpretation of plant displays.
- Communication with other institutions, including information transfer, and exchange of plants within the limits of legislative constraints.

An important point to note is that botanic gardens are 'botanic' and 'gardens' combined. They are not, on the one hand, purely scientific collections of plants, nor are they just attractive public parks where the plants are labeled.

The proposed way forward for the Christchurch Botanic Gardens is to expand its range of roles to reflect internationally accepted characteristics of a botanic gardens, as described above. In the process of doing so, it is important that the features that make the Gardens unique (in terms of collections, landscape and heritage) are not lost. This balance can be achieved through good planning.



THE VISION FOR HAGLEY PARK

For Hagley Park to remain an iconic inner-city open space for the City of Christchurch - a place for present and future residents and visitors for recreation and enjoyment.

Key contributing elements of this vision are:

- The Park retains a landscape character that reflects the central city's open space heritage but which is also in harmony with the contemporary urban environment.
- The general form of the Park, with its long vistas and margins and avenues of trees, is continued into the future.
- The present physical extent of the Park is fully and permanently conserved.
- The Park is a space that is managed effectively for a variety of public outdoor recreational use, with access and facilities provided to a level that does not hurt the Park's environment.
- The Park is primarily managed for outdoor recreational purposes and the maintenance of the Park.
- The Park is secondarily managed to enhance wildlife values and provide habitat for biodiversity.
- The Park is understood and valued for its cultural heritage value and managed accordingly.

MANAGEMENT GOALS FOR HAGLEY PARK

A

To protect and enhance Hagley Park's existing and historical environmental values, its landscape qualities and its botanical features.

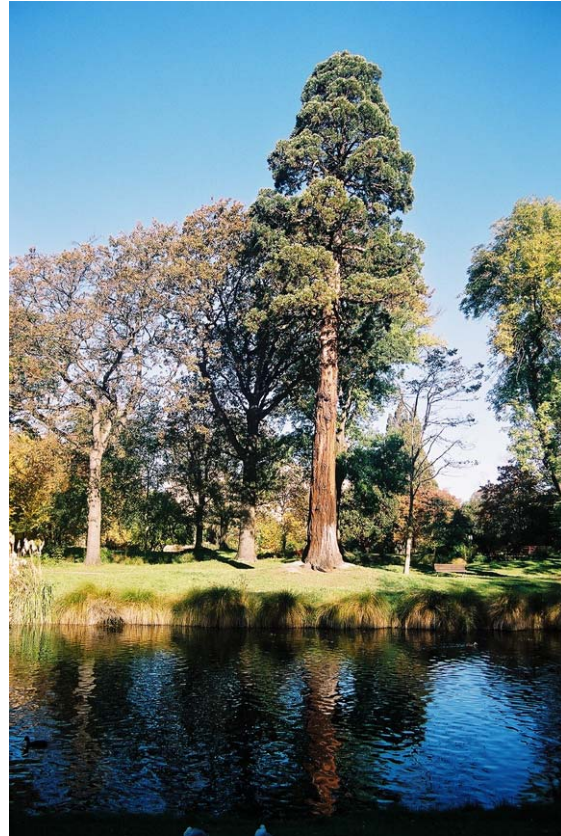
B

To provide areas for recreational and sporting activities for the benefit of the public that are compatible with Hagley Park's environmental and open space qualities.

Key performance indicators that these management goals are being achieved include:

- **Recreation and events** – Hagley Park is accessible to all people for passive and active outdoor recreation. Events and exhibitions appropriate to the Park are allowed.
- **Layout, landscape and circulation** – A high standard of landscape design, access, path delineation and circulation that is consistent with the purpose of Hagley Park is achieved.
- **Conservation** – Hagley Park contributes to the conservation of global and regional biodiversity through enhanced plantings and by achieving a high level of biosecurity; energy and waste conservation; wildlife habitat maintenance and environmental health.
- **Heritage** – The key heritage and cultural values of the Park are understood, recognised, conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced and celebrated through interpretation and public events.

- **Networking/Communications** – There is effective networking and communications regarding Hagley Park, with a particular focus on local user groups, formal occupiers of the Park and the general public.
- **Research** – Support is given to the use of Hagley Park for research that is compatible with and contributes to (1) the purpose, vision, goals and objectives of this master plan and (2) the goals, objectives and actions of the Hagley Park Management Plan. The research must also match with Council priorities.
- **Marketing and income generation** – Hagley Park is marketed effectively to known and potential users. A diversity of revenue sources is achieved.



- **Infrastructure** – Facilities in Hagley Park, including buildings and communication systems, are developed and maintained where these are necessary to achieve the goals and objectives for the Park.
- **Business culture** – The development and maintenance of infrastructure, governance and professional standards for Hagley Park that are excellent, equitable, innovative and serve the primary needs of the users of the Park.
- **Monitoring and risk aversion** – Monitoring is done of the activities undertaken in Hagley Park, with regular evaluation of both operations and user activity, to ensure that these are serving the community and meeting the vision for the Park.

THE VISION FOR THE CHRISTCHURCH BOTANIC GARDENS

The Christchurch Botanic Gardens is foremost in celebrating and presenting plant diversity through collections and programmes, including promoting the relationships that people have with plants.

Key contributing elements of this vision for the Botanic Gardens are:

- The Botanic Gardens leads in the areas of horticulture, display, interpretation, education, research, networking, cultural and heritage relevance and community appreciation.
- Emphasis is placed on New Zealand indigenous (native) plant diversity but the Botanic Gardens also has an important role representing global plant diversity and showing specimens and techniques from the international horticultural and botanical arena.
- Heritage and cultural values will be protected, where appropriate.



MANAGEMENT GOALS FOR THE BOTANIC GARDENS

A

To protect and enhance the Botanic Gardens existing and historical environmental values, its landscape qualities and its botanical features.

B

To provide areas for visitor experience/activities and programmes expected of a botanic gardens of international standard that are compatible with the Botanic Gardens inherent environmental and open space qualities.

Key performance indicators that these management goals are being achieved include:

- **Living Collections** – Plant collections are maintained, displayed and interpreted to the highest standards and are purpose driven, prioritised, systematically documented and enhanced as needs and opportunities arise.
- **Recreation and events** – The Botanic Gardens is accessible to all people as a place for passive recreation. Encouragement is given, and facilitation provided where required, for appropriate events and exhibitions, including the performing arts, where these do not compromise use of the Gardens by others.
- **Layout, landscape and circulation** – A high level of landscape design and access, path delineation and circulation, which is compatible with other purposes of the Botanic Gardens, is achieved.

- **Conservation** – The Botanic Gardens is contributes to the conservation of global and regional plant diversity through collections, genetic banks, education, promotion of public awareness and practical conservation action. The Gardens also sets high standards in biosecurity, energy and waste conservation, wildlife habitat maintenance and environmental health.
- **Heritage** – Key heritage and cultural values are understood, recognised and conserved. Encouragement is given for appropriate recognition and interpretation of these values and for public events to enhance and celebrate them.
- **Education and awareness** – The Botanic Gardens provides effective and innovative interpretation and education programmes promoting the role of plants, wise use of natural resources and human relationships with nature. The Gardens also provides visitors with an understanding of key botanical, ecological and horticultural concepts.
- **Networking/Communications** – There is effective networking and communications for the Botanic Gardens. This will involve related institutions, professional organisations and relevant interest groups, the public and clients.
- **Research** – Support is given for horticultural and scientific research in the Botanic Gardens that is compatible with and contributes to (1) the purpose, vision, goals and objectives of this master plan and (2) the goals, objectives and actions of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens Management Plan 2007, and accords with Council priorities. Key partnerships are developed to facilitate such research.
- **Marketing and income generation** – The Botanic Gardens brand is widely disseminated and recognised. It will also be marketed effectively to users and related institutions. A diversity of revenue sources, including from leases and commercial provision of botanical and horticultural products, is achieved.
- **Infrastructure** – Facilities, including buildings and communication systems, for the Botanic Gardens are developed and maintained to a level necessary to achieve the goals for the Gardens.
- **Business culture** – The development and maintenance of a culture, an infrastructure and governance and professional standards that are excellent, equitable, innovative and serve the primary needs of the Botanic Gardens and its user groups.
- **Monitoring and risk aversion** – Monitoring is done of the activities of the Botanic Gardens, with regular evaluation of its operations and development, to ensure that there is efficient and effective service to its users, the vision for the Gardens is met and undue risk to the Gardens collections and activities is avoided.



PLANNING OBJECTIVES FOR HAGLEY PARK AND THE BOTANIC GARDENS

The following objectives are to achieve the best community outcomes for Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens, initially to 2013 for the Botanic Gardens (the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Gardens) and over a ten year period for both the Gardens and the Park from the date of this master plan. These objectives will help with meeting the respective visions for the Park and Botanic Gardens and ensure the implementation of the management goals, objectives and policies of the Hagley Park and Christchurch Botanic Gardens Management Plans:

- To follow the strategic pathway mapped by the master plan and, in the case of the Botanic Gardens, those embodied in global strategies for botanic gardens generally.
- To continuously manage and develop Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens according to the stated management goals, objectives and policies in the respective management plans.
- To keep the Management Plans under continual review.
- To ensure systems are in place so that the management plans and this master plan are kept up-to-date and relevant, are compatible with and reflect the direction of other Council planning documents, in particular, the Long-Term Council Community Plan, and are readily accessible by staff and the public at all times.
- To ensure that management complies with other policies and legislation, such as that concerned with culture, heritage and biosecurity issues, and to ensure that relevant international standards and charters are complied with.
- To undertake research, as part of the development of a conservation plan, to establish the tangible and intangible heritage values that are associated with Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens, and to provide for necessary protection of these values in the respective management plans, as well as through operational management.
- To ensure that the range of activities and infrastructure provided, and the quality of experience and delivery, is commensurate with public and corporate expectations for a major botanic garden and inner city park.
- To develop the expertise and infrastructure to achieve a high level of outcome for all management goals, including adoption of best practice and cost efficient, state-of-the-art facilities for the Botanic Gardens.
- To plan for and manage the Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park in conjunction with that for adjoining and nearby areas, including the Avon River, Millbrook Reserve, and Mona Vale.
- To investigate the potential provision in the City of Christchurch City Plan of a special conservation zone around Hagley Park to protect the integrity of the visual landscape character of the Park.
- To review occupations and leases for Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens as appropriate.
- To implement the Action Plan included in this master plan within the identified timeframes.
- To bid for budgets in the Long-Term Council Community Plan to implement the Action Plan.

- To ensure the ongoing stability of the intellectual and physical resources of the Park and the Gardens, by making sure there is continued financial support that allows a long term commitment to both the maintenance and development of plant collections and programmes.
- To monitor facilities, operational and management practices, and visitor experience to ensure that high standards are achieved and best practice is maintained.

PLANNING DRIVERS FOR HAGLEY PARK AND THE BOTANIC GARDENS

- **A need for effective and up-to-date planning documents**

Comment: There is a legislative requirement (Section 41 subsection 4 of the Reserves Act 1977) for the Hagley Park Management Plan to be kept under "... continuous review" and a desirability for a new Christchurch Botanic Gardens Management Plan to be prepared in terms of the Act. The Council cannot be confident that it can make the best response to applications for further use, or development, of facilities in Hagley Park in the absence of up-to-date guiding policy and a clear direction for the future. The Botanic Gardens requires a clear direction in order to implement needed change.

- **An obligation for the Council to implement stated management policies and actions in a reasonable space of time**
- **Effects of urban change**

Comment: Change is occurring in Christchurch irrespective of the management measures being, or not being, taken. This includes implementation of a vision to repopulate the central city area, providing for 30,000 more residents. Some changes are already having an impact on the values of the Hagley Park/Botanic Gardens area and may affect its overall character. The effects may be even more

significant in the future. Examples include (i) the rapid ageing of the tree stock, necessitating strategic new plantings to avoid undesired gaps, (ii) increasing traffic around and into the area and demand for parking, and (iii) the challenge to meet the desires and needs of a growing and increasingly more diverse community.

- **Implications of adjacent land use planning and development**

Comment: Separate processes, instigated by both the Council and other organisations, to plan for the development or improvement of areas and/or facilities within or adjacent to Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens stand to have a significant effect on values. They need to be assessed within the framework of integrated planning for the Park, Gardens and adjacent areas. They include: (i) the planning for the Gardens and its facilities, including the siting of new visitor/information and operational facilities in the Gardens and ongoing use of parts of the Park for botanic gardens purposes, (ii) the future use of the land under the ex-Nurses Home, (iii) addressing the issue of part of the Park being used for hospital parking, and (iv) road improvements, including the needed improvement of the Riccarton Road/Deans Avenue intersection.

- **Promotion and marketing**

Comment: To take the opportunity to explore options to promote and raise the profile of Hagley Park as the city's premier open space for Christchurch's residents and visitors and to develop a contemporary, long term, understandable strategic direction for the Park.

- **Bringing the Botanic Gardens into the 21st century**

Comment: 2013 is the 150th anniversary of the founding of the Botanic Gardens. There is an opportunity to redevelop the Gardens to be a showcase botanic gardens of international standard by this time, along with the full range of facilities and services that are expected of any internationally recognised botanic gardens.

- **Renewing outmoded Botanic Gardens facilities for staff and operations**

Comment: Many of the current facilities, including staff offices, meeting room, propagation houses for plants, conservatories, display areas, education areas and storage space, are reaching the end of their useful life or create significant inefficiencies and problems in their operation. There is inadequate public display space for valuable collections. The Botanic Gardens is unable to undertake a vigorous staff exchange programme because of lack of 'bench space' and facilities do not exist for seed storage or biosecurity isolation. Library, herbarium and laboratory limitations jeopardize the important training role of the Gardens.

- **Ensuring an acceptable public experience**

Comment: The Botanic Gardens is the most visited public facility in Christchurch with 1.2 million people visiting it annually. Allowing for repeats, this represents 75% of Christchurch residents and two thirds of all international tourists. It has been estimated that international tourism numbers will double for Christchurch over the eight years from the date of this master plan and, along with the expected population increase in the City, it is reasonable to suggest that within ten years there will be two million visitors annually. Hagley Park is a major recreation and sporting venue for the City. The range of built structures is very limited for both the Park and the Botanic Gardens. The lack of a suitable visitor's centre for the Botanic Gardens is especially evident. The seasonal nature of Christchurch exacerbates this problem. In addition, there is need to address increasing traffic and parking issues, the lack of clear circulation and signage, especially in the Botanic Gardens, and the pressures associated with increased demands for events and exhibitions.

- **Recognising the environmental and wildlife values of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens**

Comment: Few cities are fortunate enough to have an inner city green space so close to the city centre. Worldwide, there is increasing realization that large open spaces dominated by plants, especially trees, have formerly unrecognized environmental values.

These include human health values, such as the role that green areas can have in calming and fostering general well-being for people, as well as the varied capability of trees to reduce pollution and store carbon. They also include wildlife habitat values, with species of birds, fish and invertebrates, as well as plants and fungi, which are characteristic of the region being present. A BioBlitz (an exercise that inventories all life forms over a twenty four hour period) was undertaken in Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens early in 2005 and showed that the areas have a rich diversity, including some species that are now considered regionally threatened or rare. A specific example is provided by birds, with New Zealand scaup, kereru and paradise duck all breeding within the Botanic Gardens.

- **A need to recognise heritage values as a key component of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens**

Comment: The history of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens reflects many facets of the colonial history of Christchurch itself. The area has a number of sites of historic and cultural significance, from the pre-European period through to the present. These need to be understood, recognised, protected, conserved and promoted.

- **Best practice management**

Comment: The advocacy for improved energy efficiencies and wise and sustainable resource use throughout New Zealand needs to be heeded. There are areas of current practice and infrastructure in Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens that can be improved in terms of meeting best practice. These include some existing buildings, as well as irrigation, water and energy use, and waste disposal, practices. There are a number of industry standards such as Green Globe, Qualmark and Natural Step that can be achieved for Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens.

- **Increasing public use and perceived health benefits**

Comment: The Botanic Gardens receive more than a million visits each year, which probably represents about 600,000 individuals who pass through the gates. City surveys show that this includes 75% of all Christchurch residents annually. Hagley Park is

a major sporting and recreation facility used by many tens of thousands of Christchurch people and special events may attract over 70,000 people at any one time. This use is increasing as the city grows and as tourism increases. Within ten years there could be about two million visits to the Botanic Gardens annually. Although there has not yet been rigorous determination of the value of this use, the Gardens visits represent at least 30 million dollars if equated to income equivalence for the time spent in the Gardens. The public health values of this large green space have yet to be calculated but will be significant and may well be in the tens of millions of dollars.

- **Changing needs for partnerships and their formalisation**

Comment: The complex operation of the Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park, with a wide variety of partners and stakeholders, is demanding both a review of critical relationships with organisations and the wider community. As the role of the Botanic Gardens, in particular, grows into areas of activity that in the past have not been as significant as they are today there is an urgent need to develop and foster additional partnerships. Examples are exchange Memorandums of Understandings with other botanic gardens, research relationships with universities and science providers, education agreements, national and international conservation expectations and relationships with the growing international tourism sector. Legislative changes, especially in the area of public safety and liability, also drive the need to formalise many of these relationships.



USES OF HAGLEY PARK AND THE BOTANIC GARDENS

Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens are first and foremost open space areas for the enjoyment of the public, both Christchurch residents and visitors. Combined, they are a significant open space area by world standards.

Name	City	Hectares
The Mall	Washington, DC	2670
Fairmont Park	Philadelphia	1692
Chapultepec Park	Mexico City	850
Phoenix Park	Dublin	712
City Park	New Orleans	610
Golden Gate Park	San Francisco	406
Stanley Park	Vancouver	400
Kings Park & Botanic Gardens	Perth	400
Englischer Garten	Munich	400
Central Park	New York	341
Hyde Park	London, UK	255
Royal Park & Princes Park	Melbourne	227
Centennial Park	Sydney	222
Town Belt	Dunedin	205
Hagley Park & Botanic Gardens	Christchurch	192
Royal Park (only)	Melbourne	188
Piedmont Park & Botanic Garden	Atlanta	109
The Domain	Auckland	81

Many thousands of people use Hagley Park annually for cycling. Both the Park and Gardens are used for jogging, walking and as a route to and from the city centre.

Recent detailed seasonal surveys, coupled with City resident surveys, provide an accurate profile of the visitors to the Botanic Gardens:

- 65% of visitors are repeat visitors (have been to the Botanic Gardens before).
- 50% of visitors are from Christchurch, 20% are from the United Kingdom and 20% from Australia.

- 75% of Christchurch residents visit the Botanic Gardens at least annually.
- Most visitors from outside Christchurch are on vacation.
- Female visitors outnumber males by more than 10%.
- 22% of visitors are 20-29 in age, 60% are 20-49 and 20% are in the 60+ age group.
- There are a greater number of retired visitors from within Christchurch.
- Nearly 75% of visitors come with family and friends and only 2% with a tour or tour group.
- Between 13-20% visit with children (this differs seasonally).
- The main reasons to visit are to walk (88%), relax (52%), to look at trees and plants (43%) or to pass through (37%).
- Most spend up to two hours in the Gardens, few more than three hours.

What are people's sources of information about the Botanic Gardens? Almost 90% of Christchurch based visitors say that they have "always known about it". Of visitors from outside Christchurch, 36% said they got information from a guide book. Most visitors have some awareness of attractions within the gardens (96% of Christchurch visitors and 43% of those from outside Christchurch). Visitor satisfactory ratings are approximately 95%.

OCCUPATIONS ON THE PARK

There are a number of organisations, including sports clubs (and one school), that physically occupy Hagley Park with buildings and have an exclusive or semi-exclusive use of Park space for organised sports. This

does not include the many sports clubs and schools that use the playing fields on the Park for sport on a regular basis. This latter group, along with a large number of other periodic and one-off Park users (such as use for summer events) is accommodated for under a booking system managed by the Council's Recreation and Sports Unit.

There is a requirement for any physical occupation of Hagley Park (that is, with established facilities) by a sporting organisation or club to be formalised with the issue of a lease under Section 54 of the Reserves Act 1977 and this is emphasised in policy in the Hagley Park Management Plan 2007 (Policy Sections 13 and 30). In addition, Policy Section 17 of the management plan sets out requirements for buildings and structures on Hagley Park. The principles that apply to the formalisation of all such occupations are that they be:

- for public recreation purposes only;
- considered a privilege and not a right;
- for a fixed term of up to thirty three years, broken into up to three 11 year terms with the lessee having the right to renew the lease after the first term for a further two 11 year terms, at the discretion of the Christchurch City Council, which is to take into account, in its decision, the following factors:
 - Is the lessee or licensee in a viable position and meeting all conditions of the lease?
 - Is the land under lease or licence required for any greater community recreational need, in the Council's opinion?
 - In the event of any intent to discontinue, or change the conditions of, the lease, has there been sufficient negotiation with the lessee or licensee?

At the time of the preparation of this master plan there were sixteen occupiers of the Park that had established facilities. Of these, only nine held a lease or licence to occupy land for a building and none had a lease to cover the land used for their sports activities.

Recreation Policy (3) of the 1991 edition of the Hagley Park Management Plan states that:

“Formal lease agreements shall be required where sports clubs occupy land and/or buildings in Hagley Park.”

It was further noted in the 1991 plan that:

“A number of long standing occupiers of Hagley Park do not have formal leases. It is Council’s intention to formalise lease agreements for all clubs and schools which occupy the Park. In addition, leases have often been renewed automatically without proper consideration as to whether renewal is in the best interests of the Park. A review procedure will ensure that leases are in the best interest of the Park.”⁷

The Events Production Team of the Council’s Marketing Unit also utilises buildings on the Park on an ongoing or occasional basis for storage of material and equipment used for events. This Team considers it would be an advantage to integrate this storage function to one site. For example, an obsolete and replaced building in the Gardens could be utilised for such a purpose.

A SNAPSHOT OF ISSUES – NOW AND INTO THE FUTURE

Previous reviews of the management plans (in 1990 for Hagley Park and 1993 for the Botanic Gardens) focused attention on a number of major issues. These included consideration of the future landscape

character of both areas, a review of the tree framework and the institutional view that there should be a greater emphasis on passive recreation in the Park and the Gardens. In addition, it was acknowledged that there was an increasing requirement for research, education and conservation, better control and use of buildings, and a need for review of pathway circulation systems, car parking and both staff and visitor facilities.

Since that time a number of planning initiatives have been undertaken, including a major review of tree health and longevity. However, how and when replacement of the tree framework will occur has not been tackled. Many of the trees are in poor condition and approaching the end of their lives.

Over the next five to twenty years the majority of Park perimeter trees will need to be replaced, along with many trees in the Botanic Gardens. This will be at considerable cost and raises major questions as to the form and pattern of replacement. Avenues, by their nature, require planting of all their trees at the same time for continuity of stature, form and pattern. In some cases, this would mean that whole avenues may need to be replaced at one time to facilitate new plantings. An alternative may be to change the Park perimeter tree planting pattern to a more informal woodland style, although such an option may not align with the integrity, character and historic values of the Park.

For the Botanic Gardens, there is the need to ensure that rare species and cultivars are preserved whilst ensuring that deserving new species are incorporated in the living collections. This requires the use of tree planting criteria that takes into account human, environmental and built structure health, as well as consideration and knowledge of the Gardens’ historical integrity.

Enhancement of the environmental quality of the drains flowing through Hagley Park is also a matter needing attention. The drains

⁷ Part of comment to Policy (3), 7.0 Recreation, Part II Policy Section, Hagley Park Management Plan 1991, p.67.

can be re-contoured to become a feature of the Park and used to enhance biodiversity and aesthetic interest. Allied to this is the opening up of closed drains in the Botanic Gardens to provide waterways that have habitat and aesthetic value. These moves need to be in the context of the general health of the Avon River and the integrity and heritage values of the Gardens.

Car parking provisions in the Park have been frozen at current levels. Additional parking may be available in the vicinity of the Blenheim Road deviation.

There is pressure for new plant collections to be developed in the Botanic Gardens and for there to be better settings and arrays of existing collections. This includes the likely replacement of much of the present conservatory complex, and expanded interpretation and state-of-the-art nursery and propagation facilities. The Botanic Gardens currently has very little space for development of new collections.

Extension of Botanic Gardens plantings into Hagley Park started around the late 1940s. The plant collections within Hagley Park need to be recognised and clearly defined in the Hagley Park Management Plan. There is considerable scope to increase the botanical value of greenspaces in Christchurch generally.

The education value of the Botanic Gardens is an important issue, with the opportunity for the Gardens to be a shop front for environmental issues and awareness, especially those directly related to Christchurch and Canterbury. Alongside this is the issue of a defined science and conservation role, in line with the roles generally accepted as legitimate ones for modern botanic gardens.

Important aspects of planning are the role of the Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens and the inter-relationship of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens with key stakeholders and neighbours.

Other issues include:

- Planting on the golf course.
- The Nurses' Memorial Hospital Chapel land exchange proposal.
- Continuation of events being held in North Hagley Park.
- Opportunities for more walking, cycling and informal recreation activities.
- A need for marketing strategies and encouragement for a wider range of funding sources, especially for Botanic Gardens projects.

Efficiency of management is an important general issue, especially in areas such as the use of water and energy and application of environmental standards. The Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park ought to be showcases of good management practice. Widely recognised standards for environmental practice should be sought and maintained.

Overall, there is a need to recognise that the demography of the city is rapidly changing, along with visitor numbers and activities, and that there are growing demands on the use of inner city green spaces. Taking into account the uncertainties of energy availability and cost, it is difficult to predict both what level and type of use will be demanded 25 to 50 years into the future. It is therefore prudent to try and maintain a range of options for development, management and use of these increasingly valuable open space areas.

NURSES' HOME

This large building fronting Riccarton Avenue beside the new Women's Hospital and Day Surgery Unit is now wholly owned, along with the land it is sited on, by the Canterbury District Health Board. Its future use is subject to a Deed of Covenant signed

on 18 August 2005 by the Board and the Christchurch City Council. This provides for the site the building is on to revert to Hagley Park if it is no longer used for public health care services. The building is also a listed heritage item in the City of Christchurch City Plan.

More information on the history of the building and details of the Deed may be found in the Hagley Park Management Plan.



SPECIFIC ISSUES TO CONSIDER

- Hospital ground tennis courts – *although this is Park land it is used for hospital car parking. It has previously been proposed to exchange this for the land under the Nurses Memorial Hospital Chapel.*
- Impact of the new wing for the Christchurch Women's Hospital and Day Surgery Unit on the Park – *has there been any, such as increased car parking demand affecting Hagley Park car parks?*
- Effects of increasing traffic flows and greater parking demands for vehicles on and alongside the Park, particularly during large events and organised team sports – *for example, impacts on pedestrian/cyclist safety and tree damage.*
- Car park provision – *still a shortage, and congestion in existing car parks.*
- Shared pathways – *about managing user conflict and may require new access routes (including bridges), especially for vehicles.*
- Park buildings – *look at removal of unused or un-needed buildings, such as the Ex-North Hagley Bowls Club building and the excruciator's house on Riccarton Avenue, after obtaining heritage advice to determine if the buildings are of any heritage value and assessing if there is any valid new use of these.*
- Assist shift of sporting clubs and organisations from the Park – *for example, netball wish to relocate to a new venue away from the Park.*
- Proposed new visitor/information centre and staff building to replace the now inadequate Botanic Gardens Information Centre and present staff facilities– *what is the optimum position, what are the options, and can it be located in the Park (at least in part).*
- Better collection, propagation and nursery facilities including conservatory replacement – *what is needed and what are the state-of-the-art possibilities?*
- Conservation of indigenous biota and conservation practices – *need to investigate opportunities to enhance the ecological footprint of the Park - wildlife habitat, conservation value in plantings, waste management, good energy practices and ensuring trees are beneficial to environmental and human health.*
- Developments have sometimes occurred without an overall understanding of design intent – *need design specifications for the Park and Gardens.*
- Developments have also sometimes occurred in the absence of an understanding of heritage values – *a conservation plan should be prepared for the Park and Gardens to define these values.*

- The tree stock of the Park and the Botanic Gardens is ageing and many trees will need to be replaced over the next ten years – *requires the development of a comprehensive Tree Replacement Programme, including selection criteria.*
- Landscaping has been largely on the basis of status quo – *there is a need to develop landscaping concepts that definitively recognise what is appropriate, given both the historic character and present use of the area.*
- Waterways in the Park have largely been treated as utilities to date – *the development and management approach should be about enhancing the natural environment and aesthetic landscape values of these assets.*
- The Park is still separate and isolated from surrounding city landscape – *ways to improve linkage and create flow between the Park and adjoining landscapes need to be explored further.*
- Rationalisation and prioritisation of old and new collections, supported by a comprehensive database – *the Botanic Gardens has probably the largest and most comprehensive collections in New Zealand.*
- Heritage values and cultural sensitivity – *these are best understood, recognised, protected, conserved, interpreted and developed through a conservation plan.*
- Visitor and user satisfaction, and branding – *important to maintain at a high level and to ensure brand is recognised.*

DIRECTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- **Plan the Park and Gardens to reflect a wide range of Christchurch's unique values**

Comment: Encourage the development of the Park's and Gardens' roles as contemporary public open

spaces that meet the needs of the present day diversity of Christchurch's people and reflect the special environmental values of Christchurch and Canterbury, while still understanding, acknowledging, protecting and celebrating the heritage of these places.

- **Develop an engaging and promotional planning process for the Park and Gardens**

Comment: Apply an approach to the planning for the Park and Gardens that helps to promote them to the public, market and brand them well and make them places that all members of the public can take pride in and feel ownership of. Planning documents must be attractive, user-friendly and accessible (including being on the Internet).

- **A master planning approach**

Comment: This area's future needs to be planned strategically and for the long term. An outcome of this is that the Park can become for Christchurch what, for example, Central Park is to Manhattan or Hyde Park to London. It can have an identity that is both international and local.

- **More conceptual planning for the Park and Gardens**

Comment: Planning should include development/management concepts for the future – something to promote, to be discussed and debated; more than just prescriptive rules/policy and "must nots!"

- **Expanding the range of values and uses**

Comment: Explore options to plan for the Park and Gardens to contribute more widely to the public benefit. This can include, for example:

- * *The Park acting as an arboretum for significant indigenous and exotic tree species alongside the traditional mainly exotic trees currently growing there.*
- * *Having more fruit and nut trees that people can informally harvest.*

- * *Appropriate events in the Botanic Gardens – such as music, theatre and exhibitions.*
- * *Developing further interpretation, education and guiding programmes for the Botanic Gardens.*
- **Integrate with adjacent and nearby land uses**

Comment: Need to emphasize more the linkages in the urban landscape, including with different adjoining and nearby land uses, for example, with the:

- * *City core and the central business district.*
- * *Cultural landscape at the Rolleston Avenue entrances (museum, school).*
- * *Utility of Christchurch Public Hospital at the Riccarton/Hagley Avenue corner.*
- * *Other nearby public open space, such as Mona Vale.*

Also need to explicitly refer to the linkage to the:

- * *Different zones of land use around the Park.*
- * *Access corridors, such as the Avon River flowing into the city centre and Worcester Boulevard.*

PARTNERSHIPS – AN IMPERATIVE

- **Visitor services**

Comment: There is a growing expectation that large urban green spaces will provide a range of visitor services, including interpretation, retailing, food outlets and answering public enquiries. There is an ongoing expectation for continued availability of Hagley Park as a major sports venue but this has the potential to conflict with other community views that there is increasing value in Hagley Park being a place for passive recreation. The fulfillment of the full array of expected functions for the Botanic Gardens

means development of programmes in such areas as education, conservation, heritage and research. Development of technology means there are new services that may be in the public interest, for instance, provision of wireless facilities for internet communication. There is also a need to place before visitors the driving philosophy behind the development and operation of both Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens. This array of service expectations cannot be developed without a wide range of partnerships with industries, the tourism and hospitality sector, educationalists, recreation and heritage specialists, as well as between units within the Christchurch City Council.

- **Botanic Gardens functions**

Comment: The expectations for a botanical gardens of international standard are increasingly complex and broad. Areas such as education programmes, research capacity, recognition and protection of heritage, and creation of wildlife habitat require liaison with a wide range of specialists from many institutions and organisations. Making best use of expertise and development of facilities creates many opportunities for innovative partnerships and joint programmes. This can range from short term secondments and student projects to long term contractual arrangements and exchanges with botanic gardens overseas. There is much to be learnt from the experience of other institutions, and acquisition of knowledge and technology can range from informal opinion to adoption of national or international guidelines. Development of policy in areas such as biosecurity and conservation (both activity areas that most botanic gardens are concerned with) requires collaboration with the appropriate agencies, that is, the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries Biosecurity and the Department of Conservation, respectively.

- **Users and concessions**

Comment: Organisations with formalised occupation and use of the Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park through licenses and leases are a special group of stakeholders. Where there is a commercial or contractual relationship, there is a need to foster partnerships and for the expectations of each party to be met.

- **Neighbours and stakeholders**

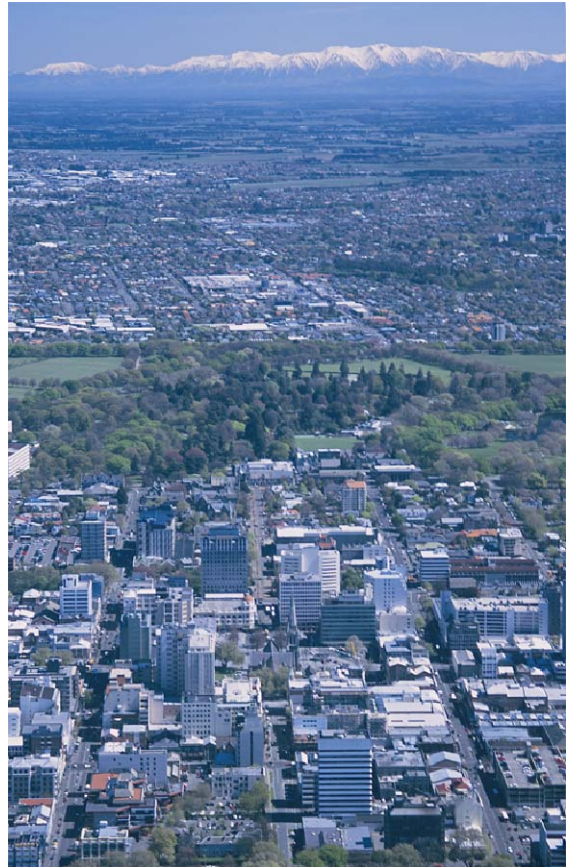
Comment: Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens both have neighbours, often with interests that do not precisely coincide with those of the Park and the Gardens. Immediate neighbours include the Christchurch Public Hospital, Canterbury Museum and Christ's College. Close by are the Arts Centre, Hagley Community College, language schools and several hotels. Therefore, formal links with partners in the Cultural Precinct, extending from Cathedral Square to the Museum and the Botanic Gardens. Other significant partners include community and civic citizen groups, Friends of the Christchurch Botanic Gardens, Canterbury Horticultural Society, Hillary Trust, organisations with legislative interests in Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens (for example, the Historic Places Trust, Department of Conservation and Ngai Tabu). Contact needs to be maintained with this diverse array of interest groups and stakeholders, views listened to and considered, and issues worked through.

- **The wider community**

Comment: The wider community, in the first instance, is the ratepayers. These are the people who are primarily funding the Botanic Gardens and Hagley Park. Under the Local Government Act 2002, the Christchurch City Council is required to consider and respect this community's expectations and to make decisions that take these into account. As well, there is a wider community, of botanic gardens, the horticultural industry and recreation organisations, that extends far beyond the shores of New Zealand. This wider community has its own expectations of Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens. Much of the desirable liaison with this wider community can be obtained through formal organisational links; for example, with ratepayer organisations, professional bodies, discussion and standards networks such as the Parks Forum, Botanic Gardens Conservation International, Botanic Gardens Australia New Zealand, Recreation New Zealand and Christchurch and Canterbury Marketing.

- **Funding**

Comment: The primary funding organisation for Hagley Park and the Botanic Gardens is the Christchurch City Council. However, it is unlikely that Council can fund all facilities and activities. There is need to pursue additional funding and to make it attractive for private, corporate, and trusts donors to give funds, especially for the Botanic Gardens.



Daffodil

A photograph of a tree with green and yellowing leaves against a clear blue sky. The word "PROJECTS" is overlaid in orange text.

PROJECTS