



Media Release

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Consultation opens on open space strategy

Selwyn residents are being invited to be part of deciding how open spaces in Selwyn could develop in the future.

Consultation is now open on a new draft Open Spaces Strategy, which is designed to provide a framework for maintaining and developing Council-owned open spaces in Selwyn over the next 30 years.

The strategy covers 1,131 hectares of open space owned by the Council, which includes parks, reserves, sportsgrounds, walking and cycling corridors and other recreation areas.

Mark Rykers, Selwyn District Council's Open Space and Property Manager, says open spaces are important to the community and help make Selwyn an attractive place to live. "Open spaces provide a place for people to use for relaxing, walking and cycling and to enjoy the outdoors."

The strategy contains a number of goals setting out how spaces could be maintained and developed in the future. The goals include ensuring that people have access to green corridors and open spaces as Selwyn's population increases, and designing spaces so that they are able to be used for different activities and can suit a changing population.

Preserving natural landscapes and expressing local heritage and identity through open spaces are also goals included in the strategy, along with continuing to involve the community in caring for open spaces.

"Selwyn's rapid growth means that our open space network will need to expand in the future," says Mr Rykers.

"As part of the open space strategy there are a number of exciting ideas being considered to expand and improve open spaces in Selwyn. We would like to hear whether the community support these concepts and the goals set out in the draft strategy."

The development of Foster Recreation Park in Rolleston as Selwyn's largest sport and recreation park is already underway. Consultation on developing McHugh's Forest Park near Darfield as an outdoor nature destination park has also recently been undertaken. The creation of recreation hubs at Prebbleton Reserve and Lincoln are included as future actions in the strategy, along with the continued development of Darfield Domain as a sports hub for Malvern.

The Council also plans to investigate areas for off road cycling and equestrian activities, and work with other agencies such as Environment Canterbury to look at developing wilderness recreation areas. Cemetery Pit near Southbridge is a site that could become a recreation area if it is found to be suitable for development. Yarr's Lagoon (near Lake Ellesmere) has been identified as another site which could be enhanced as a biodiversity and wilderness area.

Developing civic open spaces, such as town squares, in Rolleston, Lincoln and Prebbleton is another idea included in the strategy. The document also identifies the need for additional open spaces to be developed in areas where there is a shortage of green space for the size of the town – such as in Southbridge, Leeston, Dunsandel and Kirwee.

Consultation on the draft Open Spaces Strategy is open until **19 November 2014**. The strategy and a submission form is available online at www.selwyn.govt.nz/haveyoursay. These documents are also available from Council libraries and services centres.

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