

QUEEN MARY HOSPITAL HISTORIC RESERVE - LANDSCAPE REVIEW AND STRATEGY



*Prepared for*

**Hurunui District Council**

*by*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Queen Mary Hospital Historic Reserve site is a very important heritage landscape with a long history as a place of healing. Part of the former Queen Mary Hospital site has been vested in the Hurunui District Council as a historic reserve. It is recognised as having great potential to be revitalised and appreciated as the highly significant landscape it is.

The Hurunui District Council commissioned Peter Rough Landscape Architects Limited in 2010 to provide a report to inform the appropriate management goals and policies for the Queen Mary Hospital Historic Reserve along with heritage assessment reports for the purpose of Conservation Plans. The HDC has now commissioned Rough and Milne Landscape Architects Limited (2017) to prepare a report to review and evaluate the reserve with reference to earlier recommendations for the short and long term maintenance and ongoing development of the heritage site.

This review has taken into consideration the current condition of the reserve, and the landscape works achieved to date and proposes a long term landscape development building on recommendations set out by Peter Rough Landscape Architects Limited. The review also acknowledges the resource inventory of the landscape and the key landscape features and characteristics that have been identified over the years by other landscape assessments and reports<sup>1</sup>.

Two A3 colour plans form part of the evaluation and provide a reference to the Two Year (2010) and Long Term Maintenance Programmes. Each A3 plan identifies the site features, the maintenance items and our response as proposed maintenance items. An additional A3 Plan outlines the recommended Long Term Landscape Development and is accompanied by colour illustrations of the Site Furniture and Plant palettes envisioned for the site.

The Reserves Act 1977 and the Queen Mary Hospital Historic Reserve Management Plan 2011 provides an overarching framework for the ongoing maintenance and development of the reserve. This landscape review and recommendations provide a greater level of detail on specific landscape works required to maintain the reserve, improve public access and appreciation in accordance with the objectives and policies of the Management Plan.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE AND THE RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

A comprehensive description of the Queen Mary Hospital site is contained within the Landscape Assessments prepared by Lucas Associates Limited and Peter Rough Landscape Architects Limited. The following is a brief synopsis of the current reserve, which is now only part of the Queen Mary Hospital site. The reserve area is 5.168 ha and lies adjacent to the Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools & Spa along its north-east boundary. The remainder of the former Queen Mary Hospital site is located to the south and is under Ngai Tahu ownership. The Hanmer Golf Course borders the reserve to the west. Jacks Pass Road surrounds the reserve along the northern boundary.

The reserve (referred to as the site) includes a number of buildings within a park like setting and includes a stream along its western boundary. Pages 13 and 16 identify the reserve boundaries, buildings and relationship of the reserve to the immediate surroundings.

The reserve, recognised as a Category 1 registered Historic Place, includes three key historic buildings – The Chisholm Ward, the Soldiers' Block and the Nurses' Hostel and their environs. Two of these buildings are scheduled in the HDP as heritage features (Soldiers' Block (1916) and the Chisholm Ward (1926). The reserve has two registrations in the Register of Historic Places, historic

areas, Wahi Tapu and Wahi Tapu Areas being Historic Area (Record #7583) and a separate Category 1 Historic Place registration (Record # 7162).

The Hurunui District Plan identifies some trees and planting areas within the historic reserve as being 'notable' trees, (Hurunui District Plan Appendix A7.2 Schedule of notable trees) and there are specific rules in the District Plan which relate to the maintenance of these plantings.

An assessment of the other non-scheduled heritage buildings has been undertaken. The Blacksmith's Building (c1917), is considered to be of moderate heritage value in the Heritage Assessment report prepared by Opus in 2004. The Blacksmiths building / cottage remains in-situ and has now been renovated. It is currently not utilised for any purpose.

A small shed (c1900) located within the thermal pools complex, sandwiched between two macrocarpa trees is thought to have been used at different times as both a tool shed and a laundry in the early 20th century. This shed was unable to be clearly identified on the recent site visit undertaken on 25 January 2017.

The morgue (c1902) has been identified as of high heritage significance as the oldest intact building of relevance to the site. The morgue has architectural values that link back to the Sanatorium building and its protection and restoration is highly recommended. The morgue is currently located outside of the reserve land (refer Photograph 41) and no longer on its original site. A new location is proposed within the site.

The fountain originally located on a site that is now part of the Thermal Pools Complex, has been resurrected and reinstalled as a modest display outside the Soldiers Block to commemorate Centenary Celebrations. The fountain surrounds have deteriorated since construction to the point of requiring reconstruction but the fountain retains some value as the original structure.

Although Hanmer Springs and the Queen Mary Hospital site in particular is considered a sacred place (he wahi tapu) and a treasured place (he wahi taoka) and part of the Ngati Kuri whakapapa, there is little evidence of this connection. Contemporary associations included a treatment centre Wharenui and Whareiti for mental and spiritual healing of Maori patients but these connections also currently lack presence on the site.

The buildings are located within an established park like setting. The layout of the setting is mostly attributed to the landscape designer Alfred William Buxton, particularly the sweeping driveway to the Chisholm Ward and directional views of buildings. Native planting is a significant component of the site particularly along the Hospital Stream. The site includes reference to a Spiritual Garden and is also a repository for rare genetic native plant material. Memorial trees and the planting of other specimen trees continue an established tradition of the site as an arboretum.

## Summary of Landscape Values

The Queen Mary Hospital Reserve site possesses a distinctive landscape character with a high level of amenity, and a peaceful atmosphere. The site is recognised for its historic and social significance, cultural and spiritual significance, its setting and landmark significance.

The site is valued for its therapeutic heritage by both Maori and early settlers and is a significant landmark in the township of Hanmer. The site has a history of being self sufficient and a remnant orchard still remains within the grounds. Today, the site is appreciated for its architectural features and the park like setting. There is little evidence of and / or acknowledgement of Maori healing

<sup>1</sup> Peter Rough Landscape Architects Ltd, 2010 and Lucas Associates Assessment 2004

practises. This could be achieved through interpretive narratives illustrating myths, beliefs and values. Changes in ownership, the thermal pools expansion and ongoing maintenance issues have resulted in large scale changes to the site, a reduction in legibility and an undermining of heritage values.

Today's challenge is to enable a continued and increased public use of the reserve while ensuring the heritage values are retained and enhanced. Of primary importance in achieving this is the maintenance of the historic buildings, maintenance and enhancement of the garden setting and the promotion of the buildings for an appropriate and economically viable use by lease holders.

#### **ASSESSMENT AGAINST 2010 SHORT TERM LANDSCAPE MAINTENANCE PROGRAMME AND LONGER TERM LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

In 2010, Peter Rough Landscape Architects Limited prepared a Short Term Landscape Maintenance and Long Term Landscape Development Programme for the site grounds, including identification of the priority of such works, and the estimated costs for each work stream. The site was divided into separate (character) areas for ease of identification and management. The maintenance tasks and long term development programme works were itemised for each area and costed on separate spread sheets. This review evaluates the maintenance work achieved to date against the task descriptions summarised in Tables 1 and 2, with reference to Character Areas 1 – 5 (see pages 13 and 16, Figures 1-4). The assessment of the short and long term maintenance is set out on separate spread sheets updated to reflect the assessment for ease of comparison. Each maintenance task is itemised and evaluated with comments provided alongside each task and additional recommendations provided for continued maintenance work to be undertaken. A colour plan accompanies each Table referencing the relevant maintenance task.

The Short Term Maintenance Programme (2010) focussed on the regular maintenance works that were ongoing within a period of two years. The majority of work was to be undertaken by an arborist. The review spreadsheets indicate that although some of the short term tasks have been achieved a number of tasks have been ignored resulting in parts of the site deteriorating to the point of neglect.

The Longer Term Landscape Development Programme (2010) provided recommendations on important landscape features within the site and included more extensive work to enhance the existing landscaping, as well as re-planting of certain areas. It is clear that some tasks such as the identification of site entrances have been improved through the addition of gates and signage and native planting along the stream has enhanced natural values albeit with mixed results. The review spreadsheets indicate that the maintenance tasks have not been carried out with any consistency and a number of areas have been let go, especially Area 1 along the stream, the garden areas in proximity to Chisholm Ward, Nurses Hostel and the internal courtyard of the Soldiers Block. Gardens appear to be suffering from lack of water and fertiliser, resulting in the loss of desirable and appropriate plant species (including the Peace Rose), an increase in bare areas and extensive weed infestation particularly of tree saplings and blackberry. The garden areas no longer reflect the planting trend of the heritage era, leading to an overall lack of visual cohesion and amenity. Similarly, the addition of poorly placed trees indicates that the treed setting is in danger of losing its structural integrity and sense of proportion.

Overall, the maintenance of the site to date demonstrates a lack an understanding of the heritage values and a commitment to the long term goals and development of the site.

#### **LANDSCAPE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

As part of the review Rough and Milne have provided a Proposed Landscape Development Plan (2017) to guide future development, refer to Figure 6, Sheet 17. This plan is consistent with the Guidelines set out the 2010 Landscape Development Report prepared for the HDC by Peter Rough Landscape Architects Limited and builds on the additional landscape elements recognised as being of benefit to increasing public understanding of the history of the site and an appreciation of the heritage landscape. It also satisfies the Queen Mary Hospital Historic Reserve Management Plan 2011 Policies, and seeks to enhance the historic character of the site, increase public understanding and enjoyment of the grounds.

The Proposed Landscape Development Plan (2017) comprises the following:

- A stronger identity of the site through boundary treatment (both internal and external) that maintains a visual permeability and encourages public entry
- Planting that preserves and enhances the treed character of the site (Refer to pages 18-21)
- An improved public access and site legibility through the establishment of a circulation layout and hierarchy which discourages vehicle movements through the site and increases connections to the wider landscape
- Recommends removal of neglected buildings and earthquake strengthening where required
- Promotes additional activity areas within the reserve
- Relocates the Morgue where it is consistent with the built scale but subservient to the landscape setting
- Relocation and increased prominence of Memorial Fountain (Refer to pages 25-27)
- Proposes a signage strategy consistent with the heritage setting and not as a distracting element (Refer to Furniture Palette, page 22)
- Promotes the wellness concept and sense of place by increasing the visual and spiritual prominence of the hot springs through utilising the overflow and proposing a natural waterfall and connection to the stream

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Further consultation with Rough and Milne Landscape Architects Limited is proposed to provide guidance to ongoing maintenance and development of the site. To avoid ad hoc development landscape plans should be prepared for each of the five character areas to detail new and renovated planting areas, tree siting, placement of site furniture, pathways and signage to ensure that the essential character of the heritage setting is maintained and enhanced. A Soft Landscape Palette (Refer to pages 18-21) and Furniture Palette (Refer to page 22) is included for inspiration. It is important that the heritage values of the site are maintained irrespective of accommodating future building leases and that this may require additional landscape design input to ensure compliance with the Queen Mary Hospital Historic Reserve Management Plan (2011) and any other relevant statutory provisions.

It is recommended that a suitably qualified horticulturalist be employed as the Reserve Manager on a full time basis with authority to ensure that ongoing maintenance is achieved to a satisfactory standard and that the long term development of the reserve is prioritised.

A list of preferred contractors should be compiled and agreed on by the Hurunui District Council to undertake specialist arborist work as required. All arborist work including pruning of Notable Trees Appendix A7.2 Trees must comply with Rule A7.2.3 (c). Note that there are restrictions on tree work under the Reserves Act 1977 and that resource consents may be required for arborist work on Notable Trees.

# Area 1 Photos



Photograph 1. Secondary pedestrian entrance off Jack's Pass Road



Photograph 2. Hospital Stream path tour group amongst heritage shelter



Photograph 3. Hospital Stream weedy riparian edge



Photograph 4. Hospital Stream boardwalk - newly planted flax too close to path



Photograph 5. Overhead services cross Hospital Stream boardwalk



Photograph 6. Hospital Stream footbridge



Photograph 7. Thermal discharge into Hospital Stream

# Area 2 Photos



Photograph 8. Primary entrance off Jack's Pass Road



Photograph 9. Existing entrance signage



Photograph 10. Primary Jack's Pass Road pedestrian entrance



Photograph 11. Confusing path layout south east corner of Chisholm Ward



Photograph 12. Chisholm Ward frontage looking east



Photograph 13. Chisholm Ward Historic Rose Garden

# Area 2 Photos



Photograph 14. Shrub garden at site entrance



Photograph 15. South Chisholm Ward overgrown and neglected



Photograph 16. Uneven surface along east side of Chisholm Ward



Photograph 15. Unsightly cigarette bin outside Chisholm Ward main entrance



Photograph 18. South Chisholm Ward overgrown and neglected



Photograph 19. Eastern side of Chisholm Ward with puddles, weeds and hazard tape across path



Photograph 20. Smaller trees (magnolia, prunus and variegated conifer) lack cohesion and a scale consistent with the setting and built environment

# Area 3 Photos



Photograph 21. Nurses Hostel- looking east



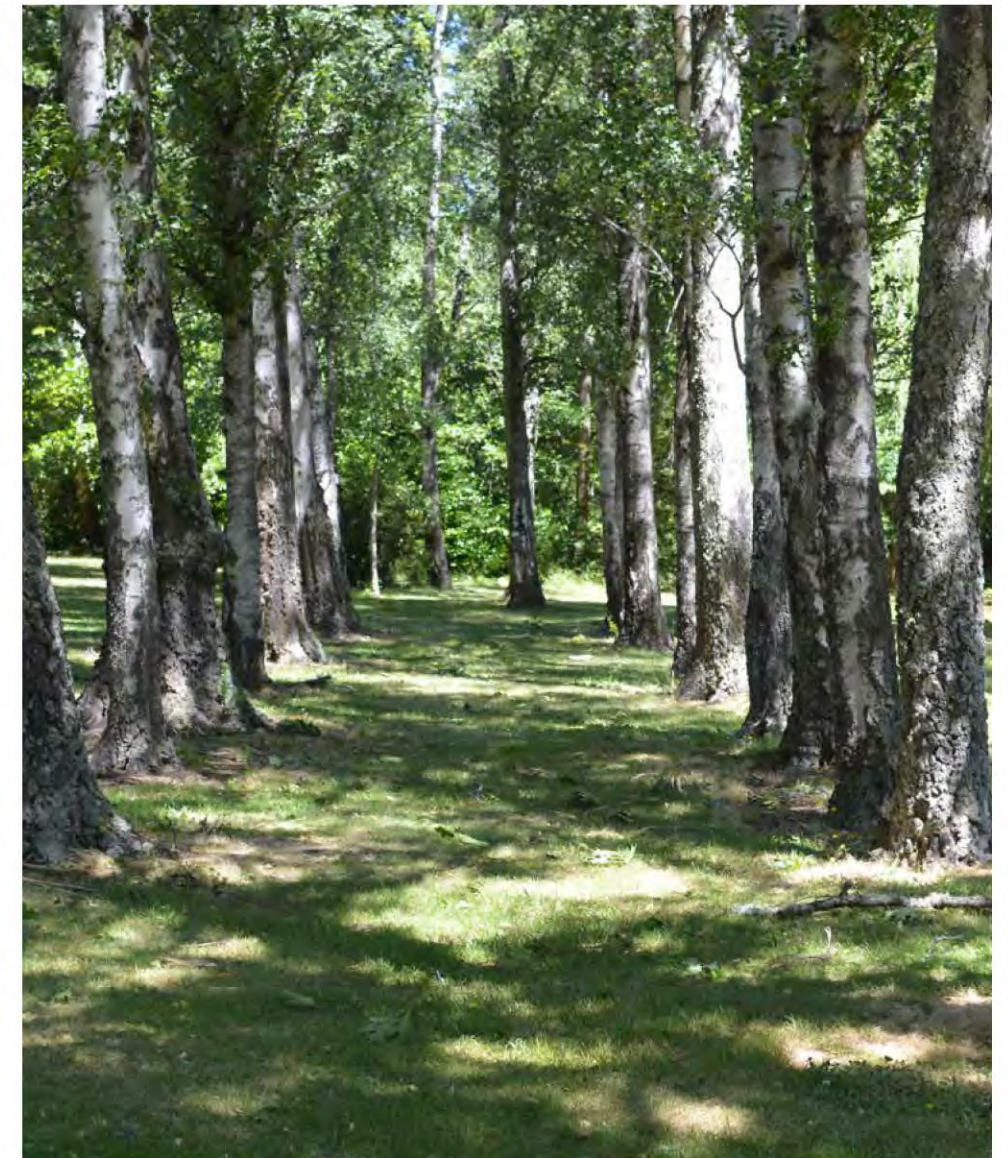
Photograph 22. Nurses Hostel weedy planter boxes



Photograph 23. Nurses Hostel - looking south at Rose Garden, silk tree and heritage magnolia



Photograph 24. Heritage Apple Orchard



Photograph 25. Lovers Lane - Silver Birch Avenue



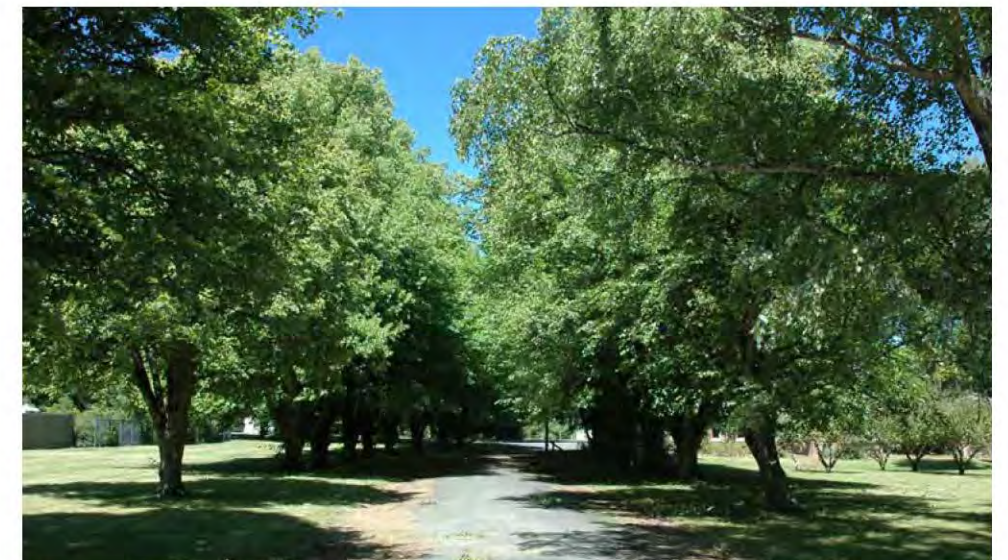
# Area 4 Photos



Photograph 26. Nurses Hostel frontage - looking west



Photograph 27. View from Southern Boundary looking north west - confusing boundary identification



Photograph 28. Lime tree avenue looking south to the Nurses Hostel



Photograph 29. Focal point at end of Lime Tree Avenue - rear end of Chisholm Ward



Photograph 30. View to east to Thermal Pools and Hydro-slide

# Area 5 Photos



Photograph 31. Primary entrance off Amuri Avenue



Photograph 32. View to Soldiers Block and Thermal Pools entrance driveway from Amuri Avenue



Photograph 33. Western wing of Soldiers Block



Photograph 34. Centenary fountain and plaque outside Soldiers Block



Photograph 35. View to Blacksmiths Cottage and derelict Buildings with the Nurses Hostel in the background  
(Note: Access is available into buildings and rubbish at back)



Photograph 36. Soldiers Block plaque on the North side of building

# Other + Offsite Photos



Photograph 37. Historic Rose Garden behind the Soldiers Block



Photograph 38. Internal garden space at the back of the Soldiers Block



Photograph 41. The Morgue (1902) Currently situated off-site



Photograph 39. Derelict buildings and rubbish adjacent to the Blacksmiths Cottage with access to Public Cottage



Photograph 40. Derelict footbridge to southwest of boundary



Photograph 42. Derelict buildings to come down just inside southern boundary of site



Photograph 43. Laundry/Tool Shed? (c 1900) Currently situated to the eastern boundary of site in Thermal Pools utility block



Photograph 44. Rutherford Block to the south of site boundary