

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 THE PURPOSE OF THIS PLAN**

This management plan has been prepared for the coastal foreshore reserves running along the length of Wainui Beach, Gisborne. The management plan has been prepared to assist in the day-to-day management of the reserves, whilst meeting long term management objectives.

All parks administered under the Reserves Act (1977) require a management plan under section 41 of the Act. The purpose of this management plan is to provide a strategic framework for the management of Wainui Beach's coastal foreshore reserves under the provisions of the Act. It sets out a framework to provide for passive recreational use and access to Wainui Beach, while enhancing the fragile foredune landscape.

### **1.2 INTRODUCTION TO THE RESERVES**

Thirty-five land parcels make up the two Reserves included in this management plan. The land parcels south of Hamanatua Stream are referred to as Wainui Beach Reserve and those land parcels north of Hamanatua Stream are referred to as W.D Lysnar Reserve. Makorori Headland has been included also. The Reserves run the length of the Wainui Beach foreshore and for ease of reference and cohesive management they have been included in this single management plan.

Wainui Beach is located 6 kilometres east of Gisborne City. The Reserves are located on the seaward side of the East Coast's main highway, State Highway 35. The Reserves are bordered by the settlements of Wainui and Okitu on the west and the Pacific Ocean on the east.

#### **W.D. Lysnar Reserve**

The northern portion of the Reserves, or W.D. Lysnar Reserve, was originally titled (Native Land Court) to Ngati Konohi and Ngati Rakai. Post-colonisation, it was sub-divided and the Lysnar family purchased portions of the area. On the 5 December 1921, Winifred Lysnar gifted the area from Wainui Surf Club to just south of 'the Chalet' to the Gisborne Borough. This area falls under a Deed of Trust which outlined the terms of the gifting. The Reserve was also named after Winifred's father, as outlined in the Deed of Trust.

The area of Makorori Headland which formed part of the Lysnar Estate (portion currently owned by Council), was sold to the McGuinness family who were English school teachers. One of the terms of the sale was that the area would be retained for horses. This area was later purchased by Cook County in the 1970's and added to the Reserve. The Ferris family originally owned the northern tip of the

Headland. W.D. Lysnar and Ferris petitioned the Makorori Headland land in Court in 1917.

The northern tip of the Headland has never been part of the Reserve. Today, a private party owns the northern tip.

W.D. Lysnar Reserve is comprised of a series of land parcels through a variety of foreshore landscapes. This reserve starts north of the Hamanatua Stream and runs north to encompass three-quarters of the Makorori Headland. When making management decisions it is important to remember that the intention of the Lysnar family was for the gifted portion of the reserve to remain “in a natural state”. Council has since extended this principle to cover the dunes which run from the base of Makorori Headland to Wainui Surf Club.

### **Wainui Beach Reserve**

Wainui Beach Reserve, or the southern portion of the Reserves, was part of Kaiti Block which was titled (Native Land Court) to the Ngati Rakai (Rakaiatane) hapu of Te Aitanga A Hauiti and Te Whanau A Iwi hapu, of Te Aitanga A Mahaki. While Kaiti Block has since been subdivided and many sections sold to private interests and Council, the descendants of these iwi still live in the area and provide stewardship over the area. Unlike the W.D Lysnar Reserve, the Wainui Beach Reserve is a series of small separate land parcels, in between or in front of residential housing. This section of the Reserve runs south of Hamanatua Stream to the Tuahine Crescent. The southern point, or Maungaroa hills, is not owned by Council. Basic public facilities are provided at some of the sites with the main feature of these sites being to provide access to Wainui Beach.

Reserve land in the Gisborne District covers 1500ha of which 225 are dedicated and maintained for recreational activities. The Reserves included in this management plan fall within this 225 and are considered a ‘Primary Reserve’. Primary Reserves deliver recreation, landscape, cultural, ecological and heritage values to both residents and visitors to the District<sup>1</sup> and are considered the most high profile recreation and scenic resources within the reserve portfolio. Several factors make these ‘Primary Reserves’ particularly significant landscapes, and subsequently, these factors must be key considerations in management planning. The key factors are:

- ◆ These Reserves fringe the foreshore of Wainui Beach and provide critical foreshore protection. The dune system protects the coastline and developments against erosion.
- ◆ Wainui Beach is known for its natural beauty, stunning vistas, nationally renowned surfing conditions and easy accessibility. The Reserves provide access to the beach and other facilities.
- ◆ Wainui Beach is a popular recreation node for local residents, the people of Gisborne and visitors. Visitor numbers increase each year as the local population and tourism to the region grows.

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<sup>1</sup> LTCCP 2004-2014 Volume II Part III Reserves and Public Conveniences, s. 3.0.

- ◆ Wainui Beach is one of the fastest growing residential areas in the Gisborne/Tairāwhiti region. These reserves provide access to Wainui Beach, but they also provide neighbourhood park amenities, including play equipment, picnic tables and open space relief.

Therefore, while providing critical foreshore protection, Wainui Beach Reserve and W.D. Lysnar Reserve have significant amenity values and are important recreation and tourism assets for Gisborne and the East Cape region. Increasing use must be carefully planned for and managed to minimise damage to the dunes and their vegetation.

The first part of this management plan establishes long-term strategic guidelines to provide for recreational use of the reserves and access to Wainui Beach, while enhancing the foredune landscape. The plan identifies appropriate maintenance and development options for ensuring long-term sustainability and enjoyment of the Reserves.



**Figure 1:** Winifred Lysnar, as a young girl, walking along the Wainui foothills. The fore dunes, now known as W.D. Lysnar Reserve and Wainui Beach Reserve can be seen in the background.

Photo by: William Crawford (18.10.1908)

## 1.3 HISTORY

### 1.3.1 Wainui, the Tangata Whenua and Their History<sup>2</sup>

Horouta Waka landed in Turanganui A Kiwa (Gisborne) around 1350AD. The sacred calabashes holding the gods and spiritual taonga carried on the waka were deposited in the Kohurau Caves located in the Maungaroa Hills at Wainui (Tuahine Crescent lies at the coastal base of these hills).

Uenuku Whakarongo, a chief on the Horouta Waka settled at Wainui, overlooking the beach at the base of Maungaroa. He established and

<sup>2</sup> Ingrid Searancke, tangata whenua, direct descendant Hine Haeretaua (sister of Rakaiaatane and direct descendant of Konohi, Chief of Whangara).

presided over the Wharekorero House of Learning, a place of supernatural powers.

In the late 1600's Rakaiatane settled on the Tatapouri Headland and held the mana over the whenua (the land). His whenua boundaries extended from Tatapouri headland through Makorori, south to Maungaroa and Papawhariki (Sponge Bay) to Titirangi and Kaiti.

Rakaiatane and his followers, including his brother, Tamahurunga, and his sister Hine Haeretaua, established many Pa throughout the area such as Panehu and Waiwhakata at Makorori; Pukaingakakaho at Tatapouri and Kahuitara at Maungaroa. Tauararo is located at Tuamotu Island (also known as Sponge Bay Island) and Titirangi is located at Titirangi.

In 1769 Captain Cook records a palisade fort on Tuamotu Island, Sponge Bay (known as Ruruhangenge). At the time of Captain Cook's visit in 1769, Rakaiatane's son Tuapaoa lived on Tuamotu and his nephew, Te Maro, was killed by Captain Cook's sailors.

Konohi, the son of Tamahurunga and Rakaiatane's nephew became the chief of Whangara. He was a great warrior in defending his own territory of Whangara and often joining with Tuapaoa the son of Rakaiatane to protect both territories.

Over many generations, Te Aitanga A Mahaki, the inland iwi of Mangatu, were intent on claiming sea border, namely the Wainui, Okitu and Makorori foreshores. Konohi repelled the invaders at Okitu, Hamanatua stream and Makorori Headland<sup>3</sup>. Unfortunately, these battles were to be his last as Konohi later died of injuries sustained in the battle at Makorori.

### 1.3.2 W.D. Lysnar Reserve History

Winifred Lysnar was the only daughter of the late William Douglas Lysnar. Winifred's father was the Mayor of Gisborne from 1908-1911. Later, he became a member of parliament for Gisborne from 1919-1931. William was a generous benefactor of the city of Gisborne. Winifred Lysnar was a well-known, generous and enterprising woman who lived the majority of her life in Gisborne, apart from a few years in her early twenties, which she spent in France. While she never married or had children, she created a legacy of a different kind.

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<sup>3</sup> Konohi's warrior prowess is well-known for another earlier incident, the beheading of Mahaki Chiefs at Whataupoko, Gisborne.

From her penchant to wearing a French beret and throwing annual parties, to being remembered for her love of horses and establishing the Winifred Lysnar Riding School. During her lifetime, Winifred donated most of her inherited family fortune as well as much of her time to numerous charities. As well as her time and financial support, she also gave the people of Gisborne her family farmland. Winifred gifted the majority of W.D. Lysnar Reserve to the Gisborne Borough Council for Reserve purposes on the 5 December 1921. A Deed of Trust was part of the transfer agreement. As conditions of the transfer, Lysnar Domain Board was established to oversee management of the reserve and the reserve was named after her late father. The Deed of Trust only covers the sections gifted to the County.

The reserve has a long and rich history of use, from family and church picnics, to horse riding along the beach and locating the Riding School within the reserve. Another regular activity was the East Cape coach route. Coaches used to travel around the East Cape, accessing the beach through the foreshore, and using the beaches and rock reef around Headlands at low tide to transport people and goods further up the East Cape and onto Auckland. A coach-stop was also located on Makorori Headland. The Lysnar family wanted the public to have access to Wainui Beach and to preserve the dune and foreshore. The Lysnar family were proponents of indigenous plantings, and did not plant any of the reserve in introduced species<sup>4</sup>. It was their desire that the dunes and foreshore remain in “a natural state” for the enjoyment of current and future generations<sup>5</sup>.



**Figure 2:** A mail coach on the Tolaga Bay-Gisborne route negotiating Wainui Beach between tides (1909).  
Photo courtesy of Tairāwhiti Museum

<sup>4</sup> Cook County planted the Norfolk Pines at 'Pines'. Personal Communication with Nikki Searancke.

<sup>5</sup> Personal Communication, Joan Coates, Okitu resident since the 1950's. Supported by tangata whenua and submitters testimonials.

### **The Whales Graves**

Tragically, in 1970, Wainui Beach was the site of a large sperm whale stranding (59 whales). It was an intensely emotive event for both Pakeha and Maori. A local Maori theory of why the event had occurred was because at the time, two French war-ships were berthed in the harbour a royal visit from the Queen was imminent. History had proven to local Maori that major human tragedies had coincided with previous royal visits. Maori leaders agreed with Hirini Te Kani Ferris that the whale stranding was a major tragedy and the whales had taken the consequences for the people. Therefore, the people were protected for this royal visit.

When the stranding occurred, Winifred Lysnar was in the midst of preparations for a social function in honour of the Queen's visit. She immediately stopped working on the menu and was down on the beach with the whales and other members of the local community. It became evident the whales were dying and a decision on what to do had to be made. Ngati Rakai kaumatua, Hirini Te Kani Ferris (uncle of Ingrid Searancke) and son of Reiha Kamau, consulted with Winifred Lysnar as well as Tohunga (Priests), church leaders and iwi leaders of the day. It was decided that the dying whales were "tangata" (humans) and their grave would be revered in the same traditions as a human burial site. The Maori church leaders held prayers over the whales including the Ringatu Church.

Hirini Te Kani Ferris was the kaitiaki of the whale grave and this responsibility was handed over to his niece Ingrid Searancke after his death in September 1970.

The whale grave is located at the northern end of Okitu beach on W.D. Lysnar Reserve. Cook County supplied bulldozers to dig the mass gravesite trench in which the whales would lie. The burying of the whales took four days and nights. Sand to fill the gravesite was dug from along the length of the reserve. Lime was poured over the bones to aid the decomposition and pit bones. The lime rendered the bones useless for bone carving which further served to deter bone-carvers from disturbing the site. The area was then fenced to further stop people from disturbing the site, as well as to stop anyone from falling into the gravesite as the whale flesh decomposed.

During the last twenty years many approaches have been made to Council to harvest the sperm whale bones for carving and private collections. The Council and the kaitiaki have rebuffed all approaches. This will continue to be the stance of the kaitiaki and Council.

### **Makorori Headland**

The striking visual feature of Makorori Headland has a similar oral tradition of occupation by Maori. Two eroding areas of cliff reveal apparent Midden on the Headland. Apart from Midden, archaeologists have reported no other evidence of Maori occupation, however, Ngati Rakai and Ngati Konohi occupied the Headland. Rakaiatane erected Panehu Pa, which was a lookout with its own water supply. The Pa was used to ensure the safe passage of boats that launched from Makorori Beach, which was the shortest route to the Ariel reef, and their fishing grounds. Fire pits on the ridgeline of the hill behind the Headland were used to guide the boats into the beach. There may also have been another Pa site on the Headland.

The name 'Makorori' is thought to have come from the word 'Maka-o-riri', an aloe vera plant known to grow only on the Headland by Maori. Unfortunately, it appears the 'Maka-o-riri' is no longer found in the area. It was used by Maori traditionally to relieve sunburn.

#### **1.3.3 Wainui Beach Reserve History**

Prior to colonization, Ngati Rakai occupied the foreshore of Wainui Beach. In fact, they retained much of their lands post-colonisation with the Native Land Court finalizing their ownership titles in 1873. The area south of Hamanatua Stream was part of the Kaiti Block, 4350 acres and included Gisborne on the harbour side, Sponge Bay and Wainui up to Hamanatua Stream). The Pouawa Block covered 19,200 acres and included Okitu, Makorori, Tatapouri and Pouawa up to Pouawa River.

The Ngati Rakai (Rakaiatane) hapu of Te Aitanga A Hauiti were given two-thirds of the Kaiti block and Te Whanau A Iwi hapu of Te Aitanga A Mahaki were given the remaining third. The Pouawa block was given to Ngati Rakai and Konohi.

Today the tangata whenua of Wainui, Okitu and Makorori including Pouawa are the direct descendants of Rakaiatane, Konohi and Hine Haeretaua<sup>6</sup>.

#### **Rakau A Ue Cemetery**

The Maungaroa Headland is known by all iwi of Tairāwhiti as the ancient burial place of many chiefs. Ruapani, Rakaiatane and Kahungunu are amongst those who were laid to rest here and Uenuku Whakarongo is buried in the Kohurau Caves.

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<sup>6</sup> In 2007 the tangata whenua still residing at their papakainga in Wainui are the direct descendants of Hine Haeretaua. Six generations on from Hine Haeretaua, Reiha Kamau, the grandmother of Ingrid Searancke (nee Ferris), who died in 1924, provided her descendants with lands on Maungaroa. Her papakainga bordering Wainui stream (Lloyd George Road) and ancestral land on Makorori foreshore on Whangara Road, SH 35. The ongoing kaitiakitanga, or stewardship, held by Ingrid Searancke has been tested many times.

Over the centuries the burial grounds extended further towards the Wainui creek along the foreshore as erosion took away the burial caves on Maungaroa. After colonisation, a cemetery site was designated on Tuahine Crescent, and is called after a magical feat performed by Uenuku Whakarongo: Rakau a Ue (the tree withered by his magic)<sup>7</sup>.

Over the years, residents of Wainui Beach have found bones along the foreshore strip. Some finds have been reported and the records are lodged with the Department of Conservation archaeological records. In the 1980's, road workers on Murphy Road dug up many human bones. All the remains were without heads, some 12 bodies in total. After further research it was concluded that the remains were from a period of attacks by invaders in the late 1700's in which women, children and old men had been killed and the heads were taken as trophies. In recent months, remains found on the foreshore have been re-interred in the cemetery<sup>8</sup>. Today, the Reserves are managed as one cohesive eco-system.

## 1.4 MANAGEMENT OF THE RESERVES

### 1.4.1 W.D Lysnar Reserve

When Lysnar Reserve was first gifted to the Gisborne Borough Council, a Lysnar Domain Board was established to oversee management. In 1982, following a change in Government Policy, the Board was abolished and the reserve was vested in the Cook County by NZ Gazette 1982 p.1761. Council then formed its own Committee to administer the Reserve. Today, Council's Community Facilities division is responsible for managing the reserve.

### 1.4.2 Wainui Beach Reserve

The land parcels making up what is referred to in this management plan as Wainui Beach Reserve have been acquired over the past 100 years. Initially, the northern part of the reserve, from the Stockroute (access F) to south of Hamanatua Stream (access J) was known as part of W.D. Lysnar Reserve. During the preparation of this management plan it has been requested that the reserve land south of Hamanatua Stream be known as Wainui Beach Reserve. This is appropriate, given that this land did not belong to the Lysnar family, and has a separate historical background of ownership.

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<sup>7</sup> Today, this cemetery is the final resting place of the descendants of Rakaiatane.

<sup>8</sup> Interestingly, Okitu received its name during the construction of the bridge across Hamanatua Stream. After defending his lands at the stream, Konohi buried one of the attackers upright, as a post, or 'marker'. In Maori custom, iwi cannot walk over their dead, therefore the dead man served to act as a boundary line for neighbouring invaders. The dead man's name was Okitu.