

# Mairangi Bay Beach Reserve

## Public Use Study

The Mairangi Bay Beach Reserve Public Use Study assessed how the beach and reserve areas are currently used to guide future design and management decisions, including the potential relocation of the Surf Lifesaving Club facility.

Conducted over four days in November and December 2024, the study area covered approximately 8,000 m<sup>2</sup>, including the beach, foreshore reserve and the area surrounding the Surf Lifesaving Club.

Data was collected through drone flights, structured observation studies, and intercept surveys which captured visitor numbers, behaviours, activities, and preferences.

Drone imagery was turned into easy to understand heat maps, which showed the areas of the reserve were most used.

The research provided a detailed understanding of visitor demographics, peak use times, high-use areas, and key amenities valued by the community.

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## Land Status Review and Classification

### Devonport-Takapuna

Xyst completed a comprehensive land status review for all

parks and reserves in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area to determine how the land was held and if held under the Reserves Act 1977, if appropriately classified.

This work included research and analysis of publicly available information for each land parcel, including title searches, review of survey plans and New Zealand Gazette Notices, dating as far back as the late 1800s.

Based on the research about land status and use and values of the different land parcels, Xyst made recommendations on appropriate classification actions, using best practice approaches and an agreed set of principles.

Xyst also undertook engagement with Council staff, the local board and liaison with mana whenua to seek feedback on classification recommendations. We then drafted reports to the local board for approval of classification proposals and public notification where required.

Following this we supported Council in the preparation of public notices and leaseholder communications. The project included review of over 600 individual land parcels and was completed on time and below budget.

Project benefits includes:

- Confirms land status to inform the draft Local Parks Management Plan
  - Ensures compliance with the Reserves Act and statutory processes
  - Supports timely and effective public notification
  - Enables meaningful engagement with the local board, mana whenua and leaseholders.
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# Play Value Assessments

Xyst completed a comprehensive assessment of over 200 playgrounds and skate facilities to evaluate their overall play value.

As part of this project, we developed a set of agreed service levels to guide the appropriate scale and type of development for each playground category.

These service levels helped define key elements, such as:

- Target age groups
  - Play value goals and experiences
  - Number and type of play elements
  - Opportunities for nature play
  - Additional features such as basketball courts, water play areas, skate parks, BMX and scooter tracks
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## CPTED Audits

### Parks / Playgrounds and Public Toilets

Xyst conducted the individual assessments for three park playground locations, and three public toilet conveniences across the district.

Xyst provided Council with a report of CPTED assessment points, including photos of assets and other key pertinent features and commentary of suggested upgrades/recommendations.

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# Parks Planning Masterclasses

Xyst, in partnership with Recreation Aotearoa, delivered a series of five one-day, in person, parks planning masterclasses across Aotearoa, New Zealand in September 2024.

Across the five locations, 117 participants from 34 local government organisations participated in the masterclasses.

The classes were designed for new and experienced parks planners and managers to build practical knowledge of the Reserves Act 1977, reserve classification, reserve management planning and other parks planning tools.

The day included expert-led sessions, real-world case studies, and an interactive Q&A featuring Paul Beverley from law firm Buddle Findlay.

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# Service Review Assessment

## Arboriculture (Tree Section)

Xyst worked with Randwick City Council's management and operational staff involved in the delivery of arboricultural services in the streetscape, identifying areas for improvement, operational excellence and efficiency in service delivery.

Xyst conducted reviews, analysing the procedures and resources used, the asset information, current service levels, relevant

policies and procedures and financial data.

In addition, Xyst carried out a cost analysis of services, resourcing, recruitment and career opportunities, the current use of technology and opportunities for additional technology to assist, undertook internal and external stakeholder consultations to identify opportunities for improved services. Xyst then considered service levels and efficiencies to meet customer needs.

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# **Hall Crescent Reserve**

## **Engagement, concept and detailed design**

Xyst was commissioned by Hutt City Council to enhance the recreational amenities of the existing reserve following subdivision, with a focus on strengthening connections to the surrounding community.

To ensure the design met local needs, Xyst conducted targeted community engagement with the Epuni neighbourhood and other key stakeholders. This process included stakeholder interviews and a community drop-in session, which informed the development of a draft concept plan. The plan was then shared online for broader community feedback.

The final design introduced new play opportunities, including nature and tunnel play, a high swing, a mini-pump track, and a rebound wall. Accessible pathways were incorporated to improve connectivity between the park and three surrounding streets. Additionally, amenity planting was included to enhance

environmental quality and provide shade.

The project advanced to detailed design, with landscape specifications prepared for tender.

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# **Event Strategy**

## **Waikato District Council**

Xyst was engaged by Waikato District Council to develop an Event Strategy that provided a clear and coordinated direction for how events are planned, managed, and supported across the district. The completed strategy defined Council's role in events, identified key opportunities and constraints, and ensured alignment with long-term planning goals and community outcomes.

Developed in close collaboration with Council staff, the strategy was informed by a series of workshops and internal reviews. It clarified event categories and provided a guide to decision-making for future events.

Included in the Strategy was a toolkit for staff to help process event applications.

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# **Bodle Drive Concept Plan**

## **Riversdale Beach**

Xyst undertook key stakeholder engagement in the development of the draft concept, followed by wider public consultation through the Placechangers platform.

The feedback helped refine the design, resulting in a concept plan that includes improvements to parking, pedestrian safety, beach access, ecology, shade and shelter, amenities, and way-finding.

The work supports the next phase of planning – including to QS the concept elements to help the Riversdale Community present a business case to Council, as part of the next Annual Plan or Long-term Plan process, to bring the Bodle Drive concept to fruition.

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## **Christie Park Upgrade – Concept Plan**

Xyst reviewed the earlier engagement reports and original designs (prepared by others), along with feedback from the local community board, to rationalise the design while retaining key recreational and amenity elements.

We produced an aerial concept plan, material palette, 3D visualisation and detailed costing estimate.

The result is a refined design that achieves much of the original objectives while keeping within the overall

development budget.

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## Mark Corea

With over 30 years of experience managing horticulture, parks, and open spaces across Singapore and Australia, I have worked in very diverse sectors including tourism, ornamental plant production, landscape construction, municipal and military facility open space maintenance, golf course, university campuses and local government. I'm very passionate about urban forestry and green infrastructure, I bring deep expertise in the parks sector, community engagement, and strategic planning. My strengths lie in fostering customer-centric solutions, driving organisational change, and providing leadership coaching to inspire teams and enhance operational success.

### You can contact me for help with

- Procurement, tender evaluation, and contract management
- Service reviews for parks and open spaces, arboriculture, sports fields, and infrastructure management
- Quality assurance and auditing of parks and open spaces
- Open space capital works and renewal projects
- Tree policies, operational procedures, and management
- University and institutional campus grounds management
- Community and stakeholder relationship management
- Asset management and green infrastructure planning
- Project management and strategic planning
- Reserve and park management planning
- Operational support and service delivery
- Community engagement, stakeholder workshops, and

capacity building

## **My expertise**

With extensive industry experience across both temperate and tropical climates, I have developed a deep appreciation and understanding of horticulture and park management across diverse cultural and societal landscapes. My career spans a broad spectrum of roles, including managing a horticultural tourist attraction, overseeing a flower production business, running an indoor plant nursery, and leading large-scale interior and exterior plant display projects. I have also managed landscaping initiatives, municipal and military base maintenance contracts, championship golf courses and resorts, university campus grounds, and parks and open space management in local government.

Over the past eight years in the local government sector, I have had the privilege of working with both an inner-city council (Merri-bek Council) and a rapidly growing peri-urban council (City of Whittlesea). In these roles, I have managed parks and open spaces under two distinct service models—one fully in-house and the other entirely outsourced. These experiences have been invaluable in broadening my industry perspective and deepening my appreciation for the vital role that well-managed parks and open spaces play in communities.

In addition to my professional roles, I have been instrumental in establishing the Melbourne Park Managers Forum (MPMF)—a local government network designed to foster collaboration and support among park leaders across the sector. I also serve as a Councillor with Parks & Leisure Australia Victoria/Tasmania (PLA VicTas) and have contributed as a board member for both the Merri Creek Management Committee and the Darebin Creek Management Committee, advocating for sustainable waterway management and the preservation of healthy creek ecosystems.

## **Qualifications**

- Bachelor of Science majoring in Biology, National University of Singapore
- Graduate Certificate in Arboriculture, University of Melbourne
- Specialist Certificate in Green Roofs and Green Walls, University of Melbourne
- Diploma of Management, Chifley Business

## **Accreditations**

- Certified Parks & Leisure Professional, Parks & Leisure Australia
- Certified Arborist (Cert No AU-171652), International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), USA
- Region Awards of Excellence Judge, Parks & Leisure Australia (PLA) – 2018-2025
- Jury member, Landscape Architecture Awards 2022, Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) Victoria chapter
- IAP2 Australasia's Certificate in Engagement – 2020

## **Xyst in action**

My journey with Xyst began as a client, leveraging their Yardstick Parks benchmarking platform for over seven years to enhance service delivery, redevelop our parks contracting model, and implement effective parks auditing. This firsthand experience has given me deep insight into what is truly essential for successful park management.

I led a comprehensive review and procurement project for parks service contracts, resulting in the development of new agreements—one of the City's largest procurement initiatives. These contracts were designed to elevate service standards and deliver substantial benefits to the community.

Xyst's commitment to improving parks, open spaces, and community facilities aligns seamlessly with my passion for ensuring these spaces remain vibrant, well-maintained, and integral to the urban fabric.

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## **Drone Aerial Imagery of Parks and Reserves**

Xyst completed aerial mapping (using a drone) of rural land and reserves to provide a new orthomosaic image to be used for GIS, planning and future concept plan development (including planting/revegetation options).

Xyst also captured images that provide a 360 spherical view of the reserve and the surrounding land areas, that can be used in council, public and staff meetings.