

FERGUSON CONSERVATION PARK MANAGEMENT PLAN

AMENDMENT TO PLAN OF MANAGEMENT

Adelaide

SOUTH AUSTRALIA



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**This plan of management has been prepared and
adopted in pursuance of Section 38 of the
*National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972.***

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Ferguson Conservation Park (8 ha) is a small, semi-natural bushland reserve located in the eastern suburbs of Adelaide. It protects one of the few remaining examples of a natural habitat type that was once widespread along the foothills of the Mount Lofty Ranges. The majority of this region has been incorporated into residential development and native vegetation virtually eliminated as a consequence. Ferguson Park then, conserves a significant remnant; the reserve was originally proclaimed in 1949.

A draft plan of management for Ferguson Conservation Park was released for public review in 1981. This plan was then amended as a result of submissions received and formally adopted in 1984, serving as the basis for park management since that time.

Park management strategies have been directed towards achieving the objectives of the plan. There is a strong local community support for the park; an active and successful friends group has operated for a number of years. Consequently, most of the actions proposed in the plan either have been or are being completed. It is considered that the 1984 management plan is still valid in most aspects.

However, on one particular issue, the action proposed in the 1984 plan is no longer considered appropriate. Because the plan was quite specific on this matter, a formal plan amendment is required to accommodate the proposed change.

The National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972 acknowledges that, due to changing circumstances, some aspects of management plans will become redundant. Plans will, as a consequence, need to be amended and the Act includes provision for this.

In the particular case of Ferguson Conservation Park, the existence of the toilet facility within the park has been a topic of debate since the release of the draft plan in 1981. As foreshadowed in the 1984 management plan, the Burnside City Council assumed responsibility for maintaining the toilet and this arrangement continued until 30 June, 1989. As Council are no longer prepared to undertake this function the Service takes the view that the toilet should be closed and eventually demolished. This amendment to the management plan recommends the removal of the toilet block from the park.

The amendment to the plan was released in draft form for public review in late 1989. All submissions received favoured the proposal to remove the toilet facility.

Following consideration by the Reserves Advisory Committee, the amendment has now been formally adopted under Section 38 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972.

(Susan Lenehan)
Minister for Environment and Planning

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Planning Process

The National Parks and Wildlife Act, 1972 provides the authority by which the Minister for Environment and Planning controls and manages all reserves in South Australia which are proclaimed under the Act.

Section 38 of the Act states that plans of management are required for all reserves. Plans should include proposals for the management and improvement of reserves and indicate the means by which relevant objectives of the Act are to be achieved.

Section 37 lists ten objectives which the Minister, Chief Executive Officer and Director "shall have regard to" in managing reserves:

1. The preservation and management of wildlife.
2. The preservation of historic sites, objects and structures of historic or scientific interest within reserves.
3. The preservation of features of geographical, natural or scenic interest.
4. The destruction of dangerous weeds and the eradication or control of noxious weeds and exotic plants.
5. The control of vermin and exotic animals.
6. The control and eradication of disease of animals and vegetation.
7. The prevention and suppression of bushfires and other hazards.
8. The encouragement of public use and enjoyment of reserves and education in, and a proper understanding and

recognition of, their purpose and significance.

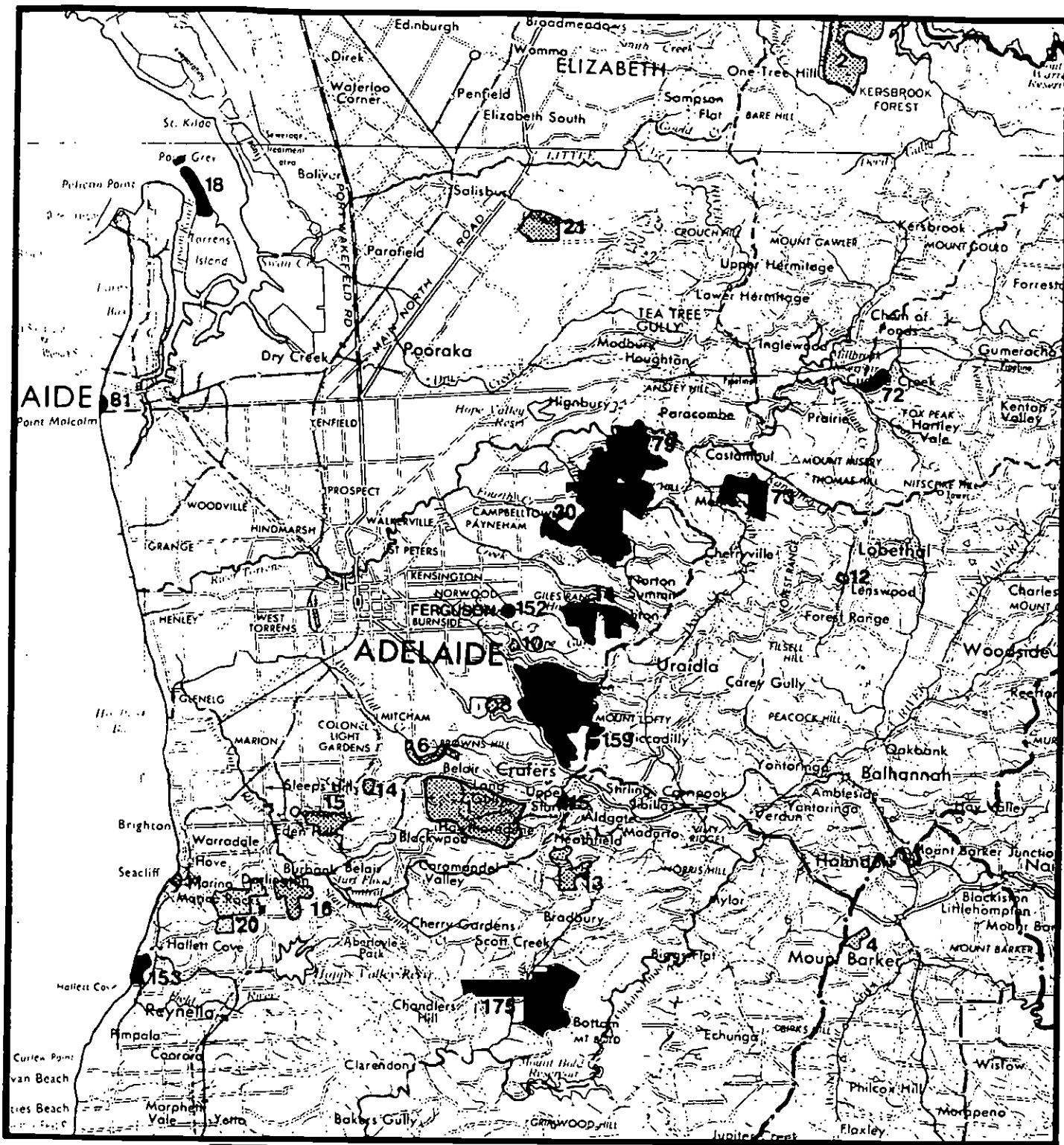
9. In relation to managing a regional reserve - to permit the utilization of natural resources while conserving wildlife and the natural or historic features of the land.
10. Generally the promotion of the public interest.

These objectives form the foundation for all management plans and have been duly considered in preparing this Amendment to the Management Plan for Ferguson Conservation Park.

Upon completion of a draft amendment to a management plan, it must be announced in the Government Gazette and placed on public exhibition for at least two months. During this period, interested persons may make submissions on the amendment. The amendment with all such submissions, is then referred to the Reserves Advisory Committee who may make further comments or suggestions.

The Minister, after considering all representations, may then adopt the amendment with or without any alterations. Notice of such official adoption is published in the Government Gazette and copies of the amendment are made available to the public.

Once an amendment to a plan of management has been adopted, its provisions must be carried out in relation to the reserve in question and no operations may be undertaken unless they are in accordance with the amended plan.



CONSERVATION PARKS

- 79 Black Hill
- 13 Cleland
- 72 Cudlee Creek
- 159 Eurilla
- 152 Ferguson
- 81 Fort Glanville
- 153 Hallett Cove
- 14 Horsnell Gully
- 73 Montacute
- 30 Morialta
- 175 Scott Creek
- 15 The Knoll
- 18 Torrens Island

RECREATION PARKS

- 1 Belair
- 6 Brownhill Creek
- 21 Cobbler Creek
- 10 Greenhill
- 11 Kingston Park
- 12 Lenswood
- 13 Loflla
- 20 O'Halloran Hill
- 2 Para Wirra
- 15 Shepherds Hill
- 16 Sturt Gorge
- 8 The Elbow
- 4 Totness
- 14 Windy Point

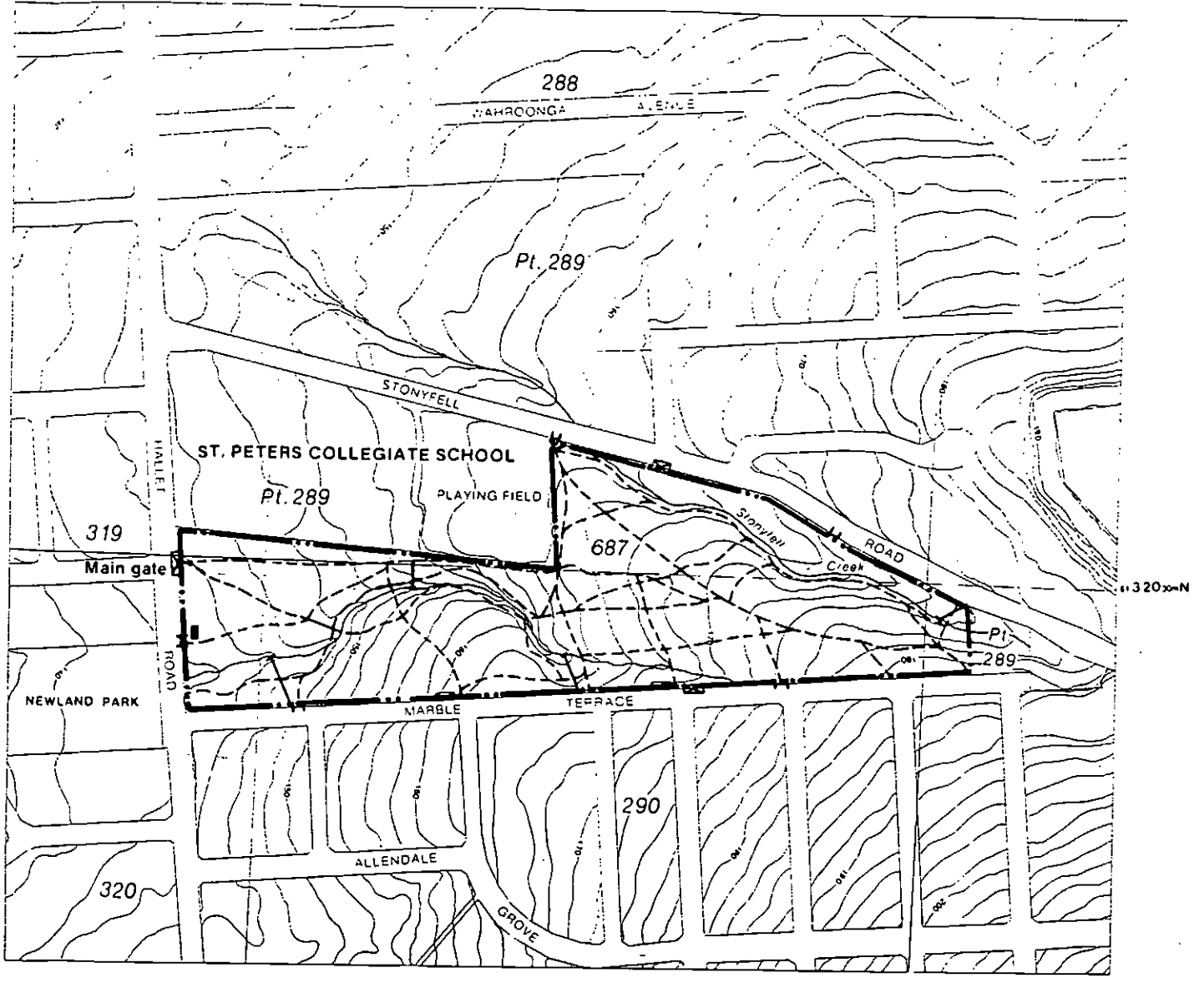
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Figure 1

Near Metropolitan Park Locations



- Footpath
- ⊠ Gate
- Sign board
- ⊥ Access point (stile)
- ⊥ Drain
- Toilet block to be removed

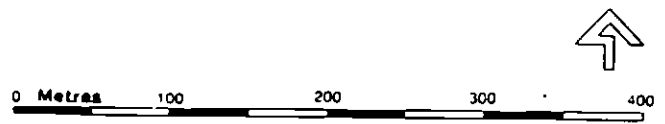


Figure 2

Ferguson Conservation Park

Streams are Intermittent
Contour Interval 2 metres

1.2 Purpose of the Amendment to the Management Plan

Background

The toilet block near Hallett Road was erected in 1955 during the period when the park was administered by the South Australian Government Tourist Bureau. These are still probably the most accessible toilets in the area. Other public facilities are, however, located in nearby Newland Reserve and Stonyfell Road Reserve.

For many years, the presence of persons loitering around the Ferguson Conservation Park toilets has been a cause of concern to local residents and to the Service. In addition, these facilities have been repeatedly vandalized. Consequently, the Service has had to weigh up the costs and benefits of maintaining the toilet block.

When preparing the draft management plan in the late 1970s, a survey was undertaken which indicated that nearby households were about equally divided as to whether the toilets should be removed or retained. Given that the upkeep of this facility was a drain on Service resources and that the public seemed ambivalent on their future, the draft management plan (1981) recommended that the toilet block be demolished. Maintaining the toilet to an acceptable standard demanded a substantial input of staff time and, furthermore, there were Council-run toilets on at least two nearby reserves. It was argued that the presence of a toilet block in this small conservation park was outside the purpose of the reserve.

Public response to the draft plan proposal was fairly evenly divided; however, Burnside City Council strongly advocated the

retention of the toilets. The Reserves Advisory Committee reviewed all the public comments, and in the light of that committee's recommendations, the adopted plan (1984) recommended the retention of the toilet block, with the proviso that a suitable arrangement for security and maintenance be negotiated with Burnside Council.

An acceptable agreement was subsequently reached, and Council maintained the toilet until 30 June, 1989, when Council support was withdrawn.

For the Service to resume responsibility for the toilet would require a substantial outlay to bring the structure up to an acceptable standard. In addition, ongoing maintenance costs and demands on staff time are likely to be very high, given the repeated acts of vandalism. Even with this input of time and money, however, it is considered virtually impossible to keep this toilet in a clean condition and a good state of repair.

The Service considers that the high cost of retaining the toilet far outweighs its usefulness to park visitors and the public in general.

Aware that the Service preferred position was to remove the toilets, Council requested that the public be given an opportunity to comment before any irrevocable action took place.

The Proposal

The Service takes the view that, as there are other public facilities nearby, the cost and frustration of maintaining the toilet in Ferguson park is unwarranted. The toilet has been

closed since 1 July, 1989, and the intention is to demolish the building. This requires an amendment to the Plan of Management. The draft amendment was released for public review in December, 1989; only three written submissions were received and all supported the proposal.

Note: The following paragraphs should be substituted for the relevant sections of the Plan of Management (1984) to which they refer.

2. MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

TOILETS

To remove the toilet block in the park.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF MANAGEMENT OBJECTIVES

To remove the toilet block in the park.

It is proposed that the toilet block be demolished. Maintenance of these facilities requires an unwarranted input of money and time by Service staff and Burnside Council are no longer prepared to maintain the toilet. There are other public facilities nearby so that park users should not be unduly inconvenienced. The presence of a toilet in this small conservation park is considered to be outside the purpose of this reserve.

4. SUMMARY OF MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

Project	Priority	Term
Remove toilet block	High	Short