



The Otago Peninsula – Paradise Lost or Found?

Some personal reflections on the future of the Peninsula in a
Covid World

Paul Pope
Chairman of the Otago Peninsula Community Board

Almost and Island?





Rakiriri







Le Breton 1846











What we are left with today is a highly modified environment that has been stripped back to its bare bones. The physical shape remains largely intact, but its detail and flesh has gone.

Our understanding of the Peninsula environment and its landscape is dominated by the rapid change brought about by the colonial period and that is still evident in our planning instruments that regulate development on the Peninsula today.

Putting out fires?



I would suggest that in light of climate change, population, development pressures and an aging population the Peninsula's landscape and biodiversity is at a crossroads of significant change and challenges in the next 20-30 years.

A sustainable city with treasured natural environments

- Yellow-eyed Penguins on the Otago Peninsula are in crisis for a range of reasons. The probability that they may be extinct on the mainland is very real. The Otago Peninsula needs far greater collaborative funding for biodiversity, habitat restoration, science and pest control.
- It also means that we need to look seriously at how we promote and manage the Peninsula as a tourism destination.
- Coastal dune protection and management programme that enhances coastal biodiversity and preparation for sea level rise at Te Rauone, Smaills, Tomahawk, and Okia beaches.



A Connected City

- We already seeing the effects of climate change on the Otago Peninsula with flooding, land slips and unseasonal dry spells.
- Historical land clearance has led to significant land instability





Our response to sea level rise and coastal management restoration will be critical to the ongoing survival of our iconic species in the next 20 – 30 years.

We need to move away from silo based agency responses to broader multi-faceted approaches of restoration.

We need to recognise the financial and societal benefits of a restoration response and plan accordingly



A sustainable city with treasured natural environments

A recent Ministry for the Environment on the impact of plastic on marine ecosystems reports that on Takiharuru (Pilots Beach):

“There are 15 items of rubbish for every 100sqm of beach, of which 23% is hard plastics and 23% are food wrappers.”



A Thriving & Diverse Economy

We need investment in tourism research to ensure a better understanding of the industry and its economic and environmental effects on the Otago Peninsula. That investment would pay dividends in sound decision making over infrastructural and marketing projects. Initiatives could include:

- Longitudinal tourism studies developed through intern partnerships with the University of Otago and Otago Polytechnic.
- Developing responses to climate change and the effects of tourism on the environment.
- Measuring value against effects.



Critical mass?

Are we really suggesting that mass tourism is the best financial and sustainable outcome for the Otago Peninsula?

Do we really understand what the Peninsula can take in terms of visitor numbers?



An Active City

The Otago Peninsula Track network is a world class visitor and community asset that has great potential for tourism, recreation and conservation. However it has not been maintained or invested in since the mid 1990's.

- The track routes remain but require investment in:
- Signage
- Interpretation
- Advertising in digital and static media
- Development as a key destination brand of the Otago Peninsula



Diversification



Township identity at stake?

Road plans spark fears

By NIGEL MCCORMICK

PROTESTERS against what is termed the loss of township identity have set out their case for the loss of the township identity. The township identity (TID) is not a purely defined plan of the town but includes all up to eight miles out of the town and its surrounding area. The town is not the only place where the township identity is used to protect the town's identity. "The township identity is not a purely defined plan of the town but includes all up to eight miles out of the town and its surrounding area. The town is not the only place where the township identity is used to protect the town's identity."

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Open the highway of the township identity, which is the township identity that could be lost. (Nigel McCormick)

The group wants the township identity to be protected in the town of the township identity. The township identity is not a purely defined plan of the town but includes all up to eight miles out of the town and its surrounding area. The town is not the only place where the township identity is used to protect the town's identity."





Diversification?



DON'T SHAG ABOUT!

GET DOWN TO THE MEETING ON
THE ROAD WIDENING AND THE
FUTURE OF YOUR TOWN.

HAVE YOUR SAY, MONDAY 13TH
MAY, 7 P.M. CORONATION HALL,
PORTOBELLO



A Healthy City



One of the real strengths of the Otago Peninsula are its people. It affords a rural lifestyle only 30 minutes drive from the city. Sadly, some of that rural atmosphere is being eroded.



Last Hurrah

We need to be careful that the Otago Peninsula is not a victim of its own success.

Tourism as we have seen recently is a fragile and fickle industry. It can as “boom or bust” as the extractive industries of the 19th century.

Despite many years of work we must take greater control of the stewardship and restoration of the environment and plan how we are to cope in the face of climate change.

The traditional lifestyles of the Peninsula are very much changing in the same patterns we see globally.

Its not enough to have slogans or aspirations that are unachievable written into public policy documents.

Diversify, restore, rehabilitate and take action



