

AEE for Castlepoint carpark upgrade 2010



Photo 1. Castlepoint Lighthouse.

The Project

Project aims and objectives:

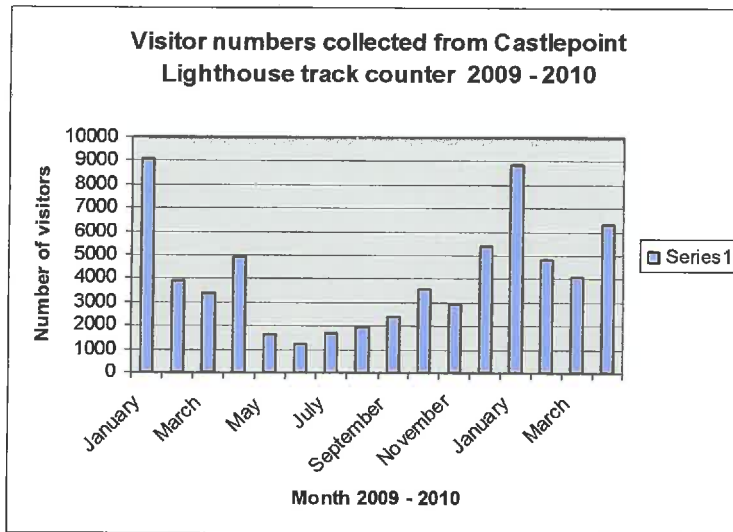
This project aims to improve the visitor access to facilities at Castlepoint.

Objectives:

- Improve the access road and main carpark surface and layout.
- Improve pedestrian safety at the site.
- Reshape and restore the dune area in front of the carpark, including pedestrian access tracks.
- Provide visitor information within a kiosk.

Background:

This iconic site is frequented by 50,000 - 100,000 visitors per annum, a figure estimated by the lighthouse track counter which recorded 40,000 visits during 2009-2010. Tourists and locals enjoy the spectacular coastline, lighthouse, limestone reef and magnificent 162m Castle Rock. The sheltered lagoon is frequented by kayakers, swimmers and surfers, while ocean line fishing is popular from the reef itself. The area has high significance for Iwi and the local Hapu. During summer, visitor numbers can peak at 8000-9000 per month. Refer graph below.



Graph one: Castlepoint Lighthouse Visitor Numbers.
Source: Department of Conservation, [amis-56751](#)

The current carpark has a rough, pot-holed surface, is unmarked and contains a mixture of different surface materials. The carpark holds approximately 12 standard cars. There is currently no bus or campervan parking or facilities to turn longer vehicles around. A potential hazard for families visiting with children, the elderly and people with disabilities is the lack of a footpath at the site. The dune area in front of the carpark is unfenced which encourages unrestricted access by pedestrians, potentially damaging the dune and flora. The majority of the vegetation cover is marram grass (*Ammophila arenaria*), an exotic sand binding plant which typically forms steeper dunes, often excluding other dune plants such as pingao (Bergin et al 1997).



Photos 2 and 3. Current car-park at Castlepoint.

Location:

Castlepoint is located 50 km east of Masterton in the lower north island. A settlement of both modern homes and historic baches can be found in the community along with a campground, petrol station and local store.



Map 1. Location of Castlepoint in the Wairarapa.

Detailed project description:

Improve the access road and main carpark surface and layout.

Refer to photo 5 below. From the Castlepoint Jetty Road a short piece of road currently provides access to the existing carpark. This section of road will be compacted gravel and include a turnaround section for buses to drop off passengers and park. Drainage from the turn-around area will slope to the centre where a 'rain garden' is proposed.

The new carpark will be reached via the access road and provides parking space for 32 cars, including 2 disabled carparks. The surface of the carpark will be compacted gravel. The carpark area will have a slight slope to encourage water to drain to the north-western edge (away from the dunes).

Alongside the access road a 2m wide pedestrian footpath will be constructed using crushed lime.



Photo 4. Current road access to Castlepoint car-park.

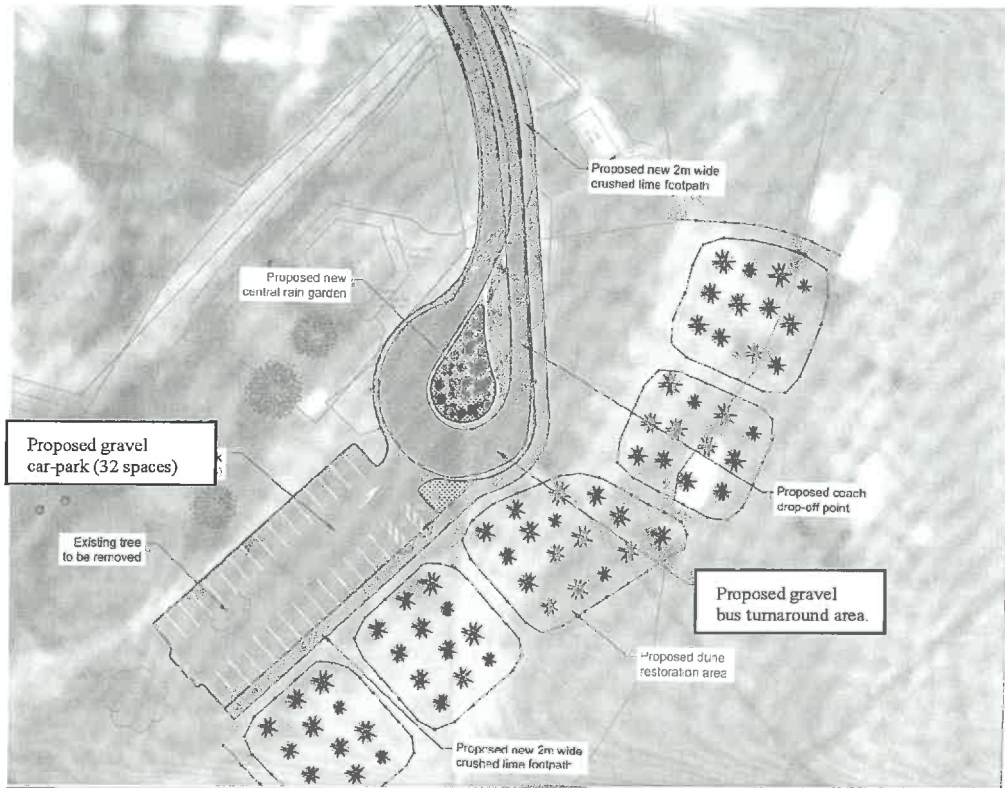


Photo 5 of proposed car-park, access road and dunes.

Reshape and restore the dune area in front of the carpark, including pedestrian access tracks. Existing weeds along the dunes will be sprayed prior to a bulldozer reshaping the main dune. Five main areas for planting will be identified and fenced off with bollards and ropes. This will also identify pedestrian access-ways through the dune area. Wildlands (2009) suggest access tracks no more than 20m apart are used to prevent visitors constructing their own shortcuts through the dune area. Native seeds have been eco-sourced from the Castlepoint area and sent to Naturally Native nursery for contract growing. These will be re-planted into the dunes in May 2011.



Photo 6 and 7. Current Dune profile at Castlepoint.



Photo 8. Dune access way with marram grass.

Provide a visitor information kiosk.

In the area just south of the existing toilet block, an information kiosk will be installed. The kiosk is expected to be a focal point for visitors to plan their Castlepoint experience. The kiosk is proposed to be 6m x 4m in dimension with walls and a roof to provide shelter while reading the interpretation.



Photos 9 and 10. Possible kiosk ideas (+ walls !) From www.landmarkpro.com.au

Timeframe:

The first three objectives are expected to be completed within the 2010-2011 financial year. The kiosk will follow at a later date.

Proposed timeline:

| Date | Activity |
|----------------------------|--|
| February – March 2011 | Herbicide removal of marram on the site |
| Late April 2011 | Earthworks to relocate sand to designated areas. |
| Early May 2011 | Rabbit control programme at site. |
| Late May – Early June 2011 | Planting of dune area. |
| June 2011 onwards | Monitoring of planted area. |

Existing knowledge

Jenks, G.K. 2008. Ecological advice for dune frontage restoration at a proposed car-park and visitor facility, Castlepoint, Wairarapa. Wildland Consultants. (Electronic version available).

Jenks, G.K 2009. Ecological Assessment and dune restoration plans for a proposed car-park facility, Castlepoint, Wairarapa. Wildland Consultants. (Electronic version available).

Bergin, D. O., FitzSimons, P., Freeman, C., Herbert, J. W. and Kesby, N. A. (1997). Management of Marram Grass in the Restoration of Indigenous Coastal Dune Vegetation in Australia and New Zealand. Paper accepted for The Pacific Coasts and Parks Conference, 7-11 Sept. Christchurch, New Zealand.

[DOCDM-594610](#) File note Visit to Castlepoint 10 June 2010.

Naturally Native nursery; www.naturallynative.co.nz Whakatane branch - specialists in sand dune plants.

[DOCDM-565012](#) Castlepoint Exit Survey. Claudia Hill. 2010.

[DOCDM-571855](#) Review of Castlepoint Exit Survey. Deborah Burns. 2010.

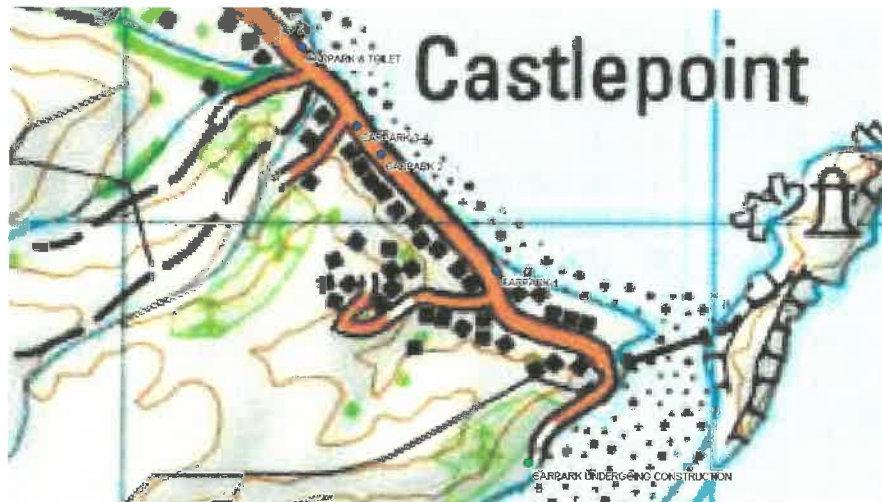
Consultation

Ongoing consultation is occurring with the local Iwi and the local Castlepoint ratepayers group.

Potential Impacts

Effects on visitor activity /access:

During the construction of the new Castlepoint carpark, it is expected that the existing carpark site will be closed. This may have a high impact on visitors but is for a temporary period. Promotion of the closure will be done prior to the construction work taking place. There are alternative carparks available and visitors will be encouraged to park there during the construction phase, refer to map below.



Map 2. Alternative carpark facilities at Castlepoint.

Visitors will continue to have access to the beach via the Jetty road and toilet block via current beach tracks. Access to the Deliverance Cove track will be via a temporary track.

Effects on landscape character:

There will be a permanent change to the dune shape adjacent to the carpark area. The current 170m steep dune face will be reconfigured to a near-natural dune profile.

Summary from the Wildland Consultants report 2009:

- The dune is unnaturally high (approaching 20m above MHWS) with the seaward face and areas of the dune actively eroding.
- The excessively tall, barren and steep front faces of the dunes have developed due to the presence of marram grass. In this condition the dune remnant will continue the trend of ongoing erosion.
- Corrective action including levelling and relocation of sand is recommended to restore the dune. Sand should be relocated to the east and southeast of its current location:

[Sand should be pushed out towards the southeast side, c 20m downslope of existing marram at the northern end of the carpark, widening out to 30m at the southern most extent. This volume should be placed to fill the existing wind-induced concave dune profile and then graded off into a gentle slope running evenly from the new carpark height down to the beach level. This sand will then occupy the same area it was originally blown from, into the increasingly high marram dune over the last few decades.] Wildlands 2009.

Stabilisation with native species will help restore natural function. Dunes dominated by indigenous species will trap sediment and maintain a natural, lower, wider and more resilient dune profile.

The main car-park area beyond the turn-around section, is a permanent modification to the landscape and will involve levelling of existing back-dune area. Refer photo 9 below.



Photo 9. Area at Castlepoint for proposed car-park.

Effects on archaeological and historic sites:

The Wairarapa Area Office has ongoing communication with tangata whenua representatives, Tom Wilton and Charles Morunga, during the recent period of upgrade work at Castlepoint.

Castlepoint has known archaeological sites and historic values. There are no known archaeological sites within the area of the proposed car-park construction. It is recommended that the standard accidental discovery protocol is put in place requiring works to be ceased if any item of potential archaeological significance is discovered, and not restarted until clearance has been given from the relevant authority.



Map 3. Location of archaeological sites at Castlepoint. Source DOC GIS.

Effects on cultural and spiritual values:

The Castlepoint area has significance to the local Tangata Whenua. Site visits have been carried out with Iwi representatives Charles Morunga and Tom Wilton. Charles presented details about the car-park upgrade to hapu in June 2010, feedback received has been positive. Iwi and local hapu representatives will be invited to be present during the reconstruction of the dune. Ongoing consultation with Iwi is taking place. On discovery of any Taonga, work is to cease and Iwi representatives will be contacted.

Effects on native wildlife and flora:

The turn-around area is an upgrade of the existing facilities and occurs within the existing footprint so should not have any impact on native flora and fauna. A new 'rain garden' will be installed in the centre and is expected that appropriate coastal natives will be used in this planting.

The installation of the 32 car spaces in compacted gravel will be constructed in the existing back-dune. One native plant (*Coprosma repens* - Taupata) has been identified for removal from this area, (poor health – refer photo 10). Fauna in this area is dominated by marram grass with small patches of *Gazania rigens*, *Meuhlenbeckia australis*, and periwinkle (*Vinca major*).

Comment [11]: Hahahaha



Photo 10. Taupata to be removed.

Native dune plants spinifex and pingao will be used for replanting the dune, both for dune stability and profile and to provide habitat for native species. Ongoing control of marram will be required using spot spraying.

Effects on waterways and other natural systems:

The Castlepoint car-park reconfiguration does not involve any natural waterways. CPG designs include management of water collected on the car-park surfaces. Water collected on the turn-around area will drain into the central 'rain garden', water collected on the gravel car-park will drain to the rear (northwest) into a swale running the length of this car-park area.

CSU comments – please fill in comments below your name box.

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| Animal Pests/Monitoring | Jack Mace |
|-------------------------|-----------|

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Monitoring | James Griffiths |
| No comment. | |

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Cultural / Iwi liaison | Andrew Luke |
| No concerns everything has been addressed, nga mihi. | |

| | |
|---|------------|
| Fauna: | Lynn Adams |
| Great, no issues. Encourage extensive planting of Pimelia to increase habitat for critical Notoreas moth (rain garden, amenity and dune if appropriate). Also encourage promotion of this species in any promotional material 22.6.2010 | |

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Freshwater: | Nadine Bott / Emily Greenberg |
| Control of stormwater will be through drainage to rain garden and swale. Will footpath and road entry also have stormwater directed to a specific location? | |

Consideration should be given to the use of semi-impermeable surfacing instead of asphalt for the carpark (e.g., gravel or interlocking tiles) to reduce the concentration of stormwater. I agree with Lynn that the swale and raingarden should be planted and maintained in native plants.

28.6.10 ESG

| | |
|---------|---------------|
| Marine: | Helen Kettles |
|---------|---------------|

Agree with Emily's suggestion of considering semi-permeable surfaces for stormwater management. I can assist with marine interpretation for the panels (e.g. perhaps something on the Wairarapa Eddy offshore, area for young rock lobster?).

| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Historic: | Richard Nester |
|-----------|----------------|

An application to the NZHPT for an authority to damage, destroy or modify archaeological sites has been prepared for this work. This should be signed off before work is started at this site to reduce contractors being held up in the event any archaeological material is found. Otherwise the plans look fine.

| | |
|-------------|---|
| Concessions | Tania Wrightson / Deidre Ewart |
|-------------|---|

No issues

| | |
|-------------|---------------|
| RMA Planner | Kris Ericksen |
|-------------|---------------|

I anticipate that an exemption under S4 is applicable for this project, but a formal application to MDC will need to be made for this exemption. Please indicate area of proposed car park on planning map emailed through to you.

| | |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| Flora/vegetation/plant ecology: | John Sawyer |
|---------------------------------|-------------|

| | |
|------------|--------------|
| Recreation | Claudia Hill |
|------------|--------------|

No issues. Let me know the details of the work before the project starts (when, what, how long, etc) so I can update the website alerts and INV.

Also check with Brian Dobbie/R&D that the national capital business case can be adjusted when applying for final approval to allow for the information shelter to be included in the project scope.

| | |
|--------------|------------------|
| Biodiversity | Bruce Vander Lee |
|--------------|------------------|

| | |
|---------------------|---------------|
| Community Relations | Deborah Burns |
|---------------------|---------------|

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Castlepoint Iwi/hapu representative | Charles Morunga |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------|

| | |
|--|----------------|
| Castlepoint ratepayers & residents group | Neville Zander |
|--|----------------|

Hi Sandra

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on the AEE Our comments are attached.

We were first approached in September 2008 to submit ideas to ensure the upgraded car park would be fit for purpose, now and in the future, following the presentation by Gary Foster.

A summary of our submission is appended to our comments.

We do not think the current proposal is fit for purpose at Castlepoint and request that we meet with Chris and Gary to seek a solution to providing a sustainable sealed surfaced and drained car park.

Please contact me to arrange a suitable time for a meeting.

Regards Neville

CRRG comments saved as DOCDM 613856.

