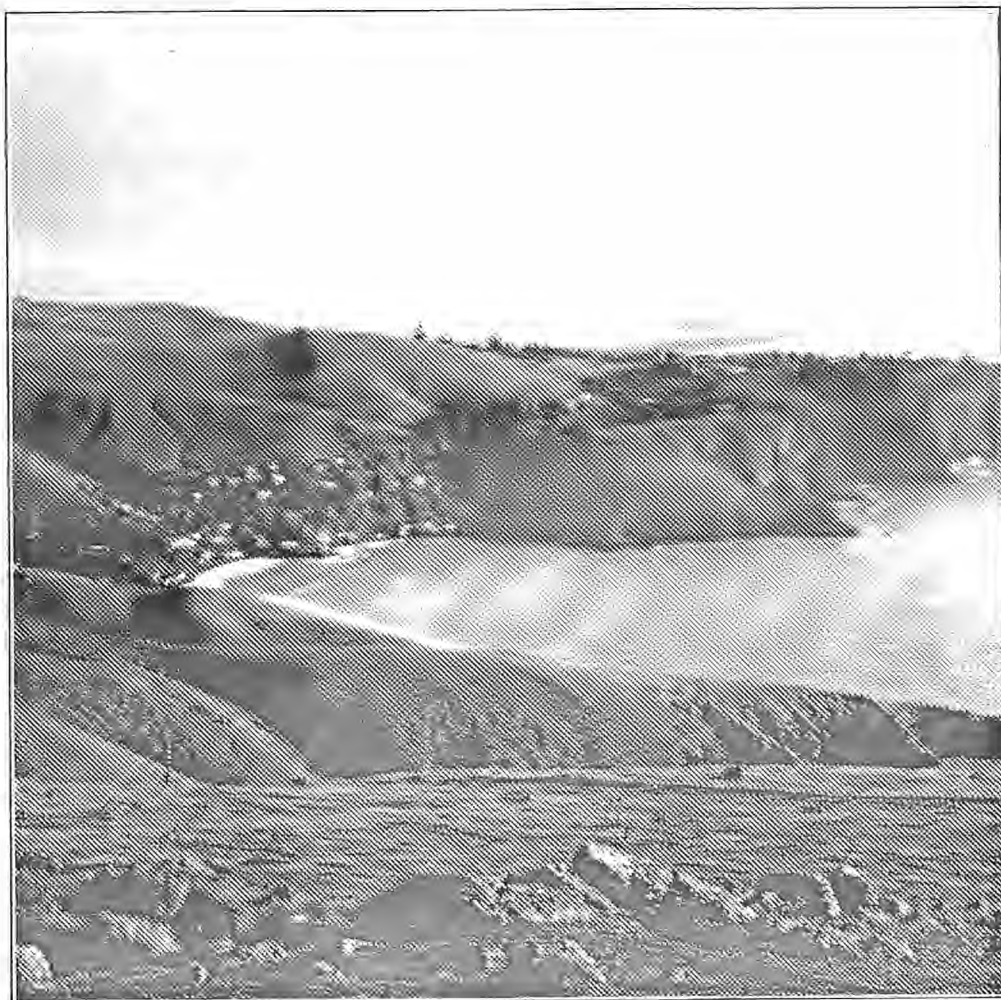


Taylor's Mistake



Christchurch City Council

GUIDELINES FOR THE RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

AND MANAGEMENT OF

TAYLORS MISTAKE AND ITS ENVIRONS

A DOCUMENT FOR DISCUSSION

(APRIL 1985)

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1.0 Introduction

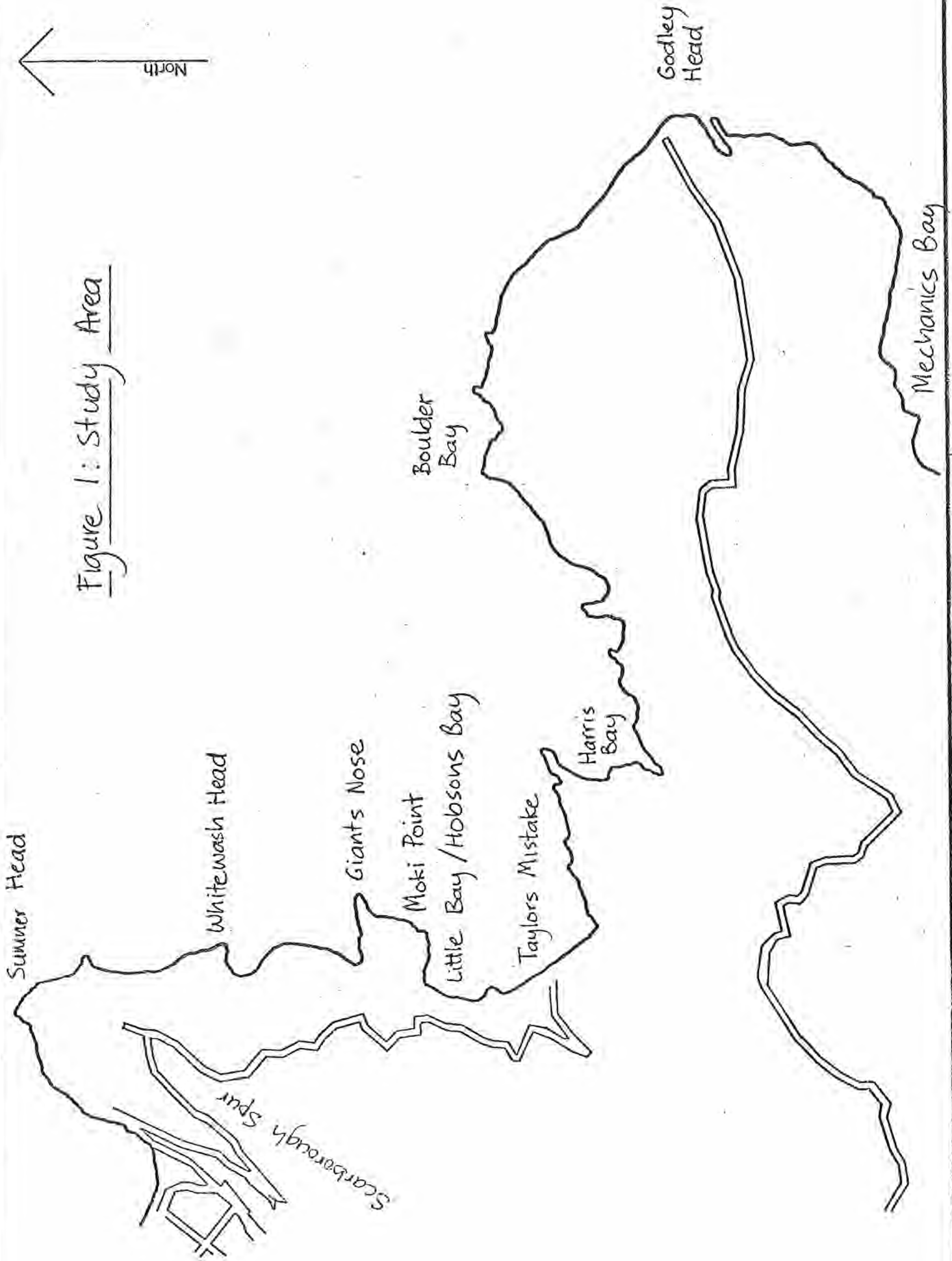
In past years the Council has spent some time establishing policies for the Taylors Mistake area. A number of broad issues based on unpublished studies have now been settled and incorporated in the Councils Reviewed District Planning Scheme.

The aims of this report are to:

1. Complete and consolidate earlier reports for background information.
2. Provide information on the area's natural and man-made features.
3. Examine the recreational potential of the Taylors Mistake area.
4. Recommend policy guidelines for the future development and management of the area.

The study area is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Study Area



2.0 HISTORY

2.1 Place Names

Johannes C. Andersen describes how Taylors Mistake got its name in his book "Place Names on Banks Peninsula" as follows:

"The name is said to have been given through a Captain Taylor of the United States ship "Volga" having mistaken the bay for the entrance to Lyttelton Harbour.

The New Zealand Almanac, published in Lyttelton from 1853, gives the name as Vincent's Bay or Taylor's Mistake, so called because it is sometimes mistaken for Sumner, which is the next bay west. It appears far more likely that it should be mistaken for Sumner than Lyttelton."

The Maori name is "Te One Poto" meaning "short beach".

Godley Head which guards the entrance to Lyttelton Harbour, is named after John Robert Godley, the first leader of the Canterbury Settlers which established Christchurch in 1850.

Sumner Head takes its name from the original settlement in the adjoining bay. It was named after Dr J.B. Sumner, Archbishop of Canterbury (England), and President of the Canterbury Association.

Nicholson Park is named after W.H. Nicholson, Mayor of Sumner Borough from 1923 to 1935.

Whitewash Head is an unofficial name. An early Lands and Survey map identifies it as Whitewash Point. The "Acheron" survey of 1851 gave the name Whitewash Head to the northernmost point, now called Sumner Head. The confusion is perpetuated by the fact that Whitewash Head Road leads to Sumner Head, not Whitewash Head!

2.2 Local Government Control

The earliest control was exercised by the Superintendent of Canterbury who was authorised to establish road districts in 1853. Sumner, of which Taylors Mistake was part, was included in the Avon Road District.

After the Counties Act 1876, the area became part of Selwyn County. In 1883 the residents of Sumner elected a Town Board which, in 1891, gave place to the first Sumner Borough Council.

The Sumner Borough covered all of the land between Godley Head, Major Hornbrook Road and Lyttelton Borough. On 1 April 1945, the Borough became part of the City of Christchurch.

2.3 Land Tenure

2.3.1 Private Land

The Taylors Mistake/Godley Head area was originally part of the Taylors Mistake Run. This in turn was part off the larger Mt Pleasant Run farmed at first by J.T. Parkinson. The grazing rights and leases for the various pieces of land comprising the Mt Pleasant Run were first united by Major A. Hornbrook in 1863. Hornbrook sold 850 acres of freehold and leased the balance of his run in 1871 to R.W. Morten and W. White. These tenants lost 62.5 ha at Godley Head in 1876 when that land was reserved for lighthouse purposes. In 1885 W. Altwood was the lessee although his estate sub-leased the area to J.S. Monck.

R.M. Morten successfully tendered for the lease in 1907. Morten owned the adjoining land in Mt Pleasant/Scarborough. Subsequent lessees of the Godley Head land included A.E.L. Hunt (1910), A.H. Forbes (1919), I.W. Retallick (1924), and H.L. Scott (1937). In 1941 the whole of the present farm park was declared a prohibited place under the emergency military regulations.

Following the war, Scott continued his lease and renewed it in 1958. In 1959, 27.3 hectares of the lighthouse area was also leased to Scott. Both leases were transferred to L.H. Parish in 1968 and held by him until their expiry in 1979. Since then the land has been farmed by the Department of Lands and Survey in conjunction with recreational use of the land as a farm park.

The Morten Estate began subdividing its land on Mt Pleasant/Scarborough in 1911. Many interesting identities have been associated with the development. Mr A.D. Paterson, formerly Selwyn County Engineer has been credited with the construction of

Scarborough Road and with building the first house, "Stonehaven". This house may be seen at the first bend adjoining Whitewash Head Road.

Another part of Scarborough was transferred to Edwin Coxhead Mouldey on 3 May 1911. His name has long been connected with Scarborough's development.

Development of the Taylors Mistake side of the Scarborough Spur began with the deposit of Plan 6419 and the transfer of 53 lots to Frank Noel Sinclair on 16 January 1923. Further plans of subdivision followed creating the pattern of initially large allotments at the top of the ridge near Scarborough and smaller residential sites from Moki Point south into the bay.

Scattered subdivision of these underlying lots continued up to September 1967. Since then no subdivisions have proceeded within the study area because of the lack of a sanitary sewer connection.

2.3.2 Government Purposes

In 1849, Captain Joseph Thomas, the advance agent for the Canterbury Association, suggested in one report that a lighthouse should be established at Godley Head. Reserve 2055 of 62.4859 ha was set aside for Lighthouse Purposes in 1876 (N.Z. Gazette p.457). The boundary of the reserve runs from Boulder Bay to Mechanics Bay.

In 1848 an area of 270 ha on Godley Head was reserved by the New Zealand Company, and it was gazetted before 1851 as reserve for General Government and Military Purposes. It was not used for military purposes, however, until World War II when Part Reserve 60 of 190.4830 ha was gazetted in 1941.

2.3.3 Council Property

Council involvement in the area has been important from the early days, when Sumner Borough looked towards service problems connected with the first subdivisions.

A land transfer on 19 March, 1912 to the "Mayor, Councillors and Burgesses of the Borough of Sumner" of C.T. 277/213 at the western edge of the Scarborough development for drainage and water purposes, shows the active planning even in those early days.

When the subdivisions of the coastal land were approved, provision was made for access to the cliff top Crown Grant Road from Taylors Mistake Road.

Publicly owned land on the Taylors Mistake valley floor was vested as legal road. C.T. 573/20, containing about 5050m² was acquired by the Council in 1953 for road purposes. Today, the public toilets, water tanks, and the present car park are mainly situated on this land. Lots 7-9 D.P.6419 were purchased by the Council to ease access to the north of the surf club. In 1982 Lot 1 D.P.42746 of about 7264m² was vested in the Council as a Recreation Reserve as a contribution from a subdivision on Richmond Hill.

2.4 Buildings

2.4.1 Baches

The first baches or cave dwellings were built in the 1890's. Access to Boulder Bay was improved in the early 1900's when a track, the Pilgrims Way, was cut from Taylors Mistake. Other baches were built along this track and near the beach at Taylors. Perhaps the most well known was The Hermitage, a substantial place built with materials salvaged from the 1906 exhibition and the old Fuller's Theatre.

By 1911 there were thirty baches in Taylors Mistake and Boulder Bay. The first hut in Rotten Row appeared in 1913 and by 1920 about another 12 were built. The busiest building period appears to have been the 1920's and 1930's when many older places were substantially rebuilt and enlarged. By 1940 some 72 baches were in existence on the foreshore. Many of the baches were named: Deans Landing, Guthries, Pilgrims Rest, Armstrongs, The Tables, Rosie Morn, Stone End, Giants Eye are names closely linked to the history of the Bay.

The bach holders began as squatters, with no legal status, but from 1911 they paid an annual licence fee of one pound to the Sumner Borough Council. From 1945 the Christchurch City Council continued to issue or renew these licences in an ad hoc manner. No new baches were allowed, but substantial rebuilding did take place. In 1976 the Council decided the baches were a health hazard and required certain sanitary standards to be met. Those baches that could not comply were destroyed. The remainder were granted licences in 1979 but the owners are required to remove their baches in 1986.

2.4.2 The Surf Club

The first club house was erected in 1917 to service a membership of 60. During World War II the surf club was taken over by the Army and trenches and barbed wire entanglements covered the bay. The surf club was destroyed by fire in 1952. It was rebuilt almost immediately and remains the focal point for beach and swimming activities in Taylors Mistake. The Bay has been severely affected by storms several times and the club house had some narrow escapes from being washed away. 1928 and 1978 are two years when severe storms greatly eroded the beach and the club house was saved by temporary erosion protection works.

The club house has been added to in 1965 and 1971 and altered in 1972 to meet the needs of its members and to provide additional storage. In 1979 a retaining wall was built as protection against sea erosion.

2.4.3 The Lighthouse

The Canterbury Provincial Council approved the erection of a beacon in 1859. However, it was 1865 before the first stone-structured lighthouse was built and 1876 before Reserve 2055 was gazetted for lighthouse purposes. The first light was a dioptric white light visible for about 29 nautical miles out to sea.

At the beginning of World War II the original tower was dismantled to make way for a coastal gun site. The new tower, built into the side of the headland is 6.1 metres high and exhibits flashes every 26 seconds. The light is about 97 metres above sea level and is

visible for 19 nautical miles. The station incorporates a radio beacon and fog signal. Mains electricity supply was connected in 1946.

The stone lighthouse and associated cottage no longer exist. The new equipment is automatic and the lightkeeper's house is occupied by a Harbour Board caretaker.

2.4.4 Military Buildings

With the outbreak of World War II two sixty-pounder guns and their crews were posted on Godley Head. Shortly after two six-inch Mark 7 guns were placed on the cape above Boulder Bay and a third gun added in 1942. This was known as Taylor Battery.

In 1940 two six-inch coastal guns (Mark 24) were sited in concrete emplacements above the Godley Head cliffs and the 11th Heavy Coastal Artillery Regiment formed in 1942 to man them. This was when the lighthouse was shifted. Radar was installed, heavy concrete magazines were added together with observation posts and searchlight emplacements. Steep tracks to the water's edge were formed and a 120 metre tunnel driven into the hillside.

Original accommodation, messes and stores were built of concrete but later buildings were wooden. The two cottages above Boulder Bay were built for the Commanding Officer and other staff.

After the war the 11th Coastal Regiment continued to operate, training compulsory Military Servicemen and Territorials. It was disbanded in 1958 and the guns removed. Between 1958 and 1978 infrequent use of the buildings was made by the Army. In 1979 the Ministry of Defence had substantial maintenance carried out on the buildings and since then the area has been used regularly for military training. The ToCH organisation used the facilities between 1967 and 1974 for athletic training camps. The facilities were also in great demand from other youth and community groups. The ToCH Committee envisaged the development of a major training base at Godley Head but this failed to eventuate. ToCH stopped using the buildings largely because of security problems. The facilities are now administered by the Marine Division of the Ministry of Transport and used by Sea Cadets.

3.0 PLANNING POLICIES

3.1 The City Plan

The Second Review of the District Planning Scheme in 1979 made some significant planning changes for the Taylors Mistake area. These related to the residential and recreation policies for the area. The first was directed at providing a better check on the suitability of sites for housing development, and the latter took advantage of a greater understanding of the coastal processes affecting sand beaches in Pegasus Bay as a result of Dr Kirk's studies for the Council in 1978-9. The zoning pattern is shown in Figure 2.

3.1.1 Residential Zones

The Residential H Zone is the only residential zone in the Taylors Mistake area. This zone allows the normal range of Residential 1 uses but the performance standards differ because of the distinctive soil and topographical conditions in the hills. Consequently a generally lower intensity of development is provided for. Special controls pay regard to the effect that development may have on adjoining land, and on the erosion risk that may be heightened with the provision of access, walking tracks and garages.

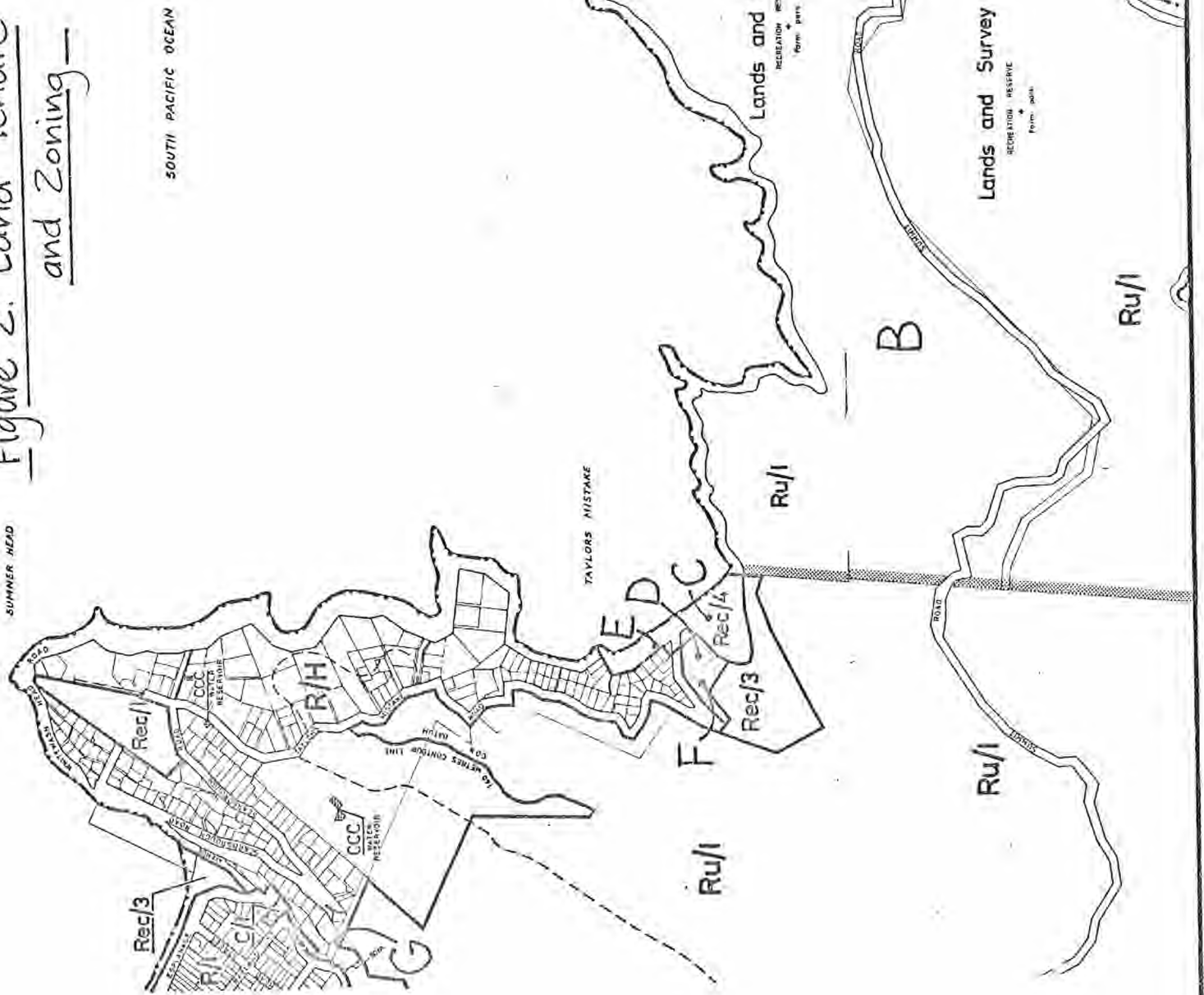
The lack of a sanitary sewer connection south and seaward of Taylors Mistake Road commencing at No. 83 Taylors Mistake Road, is preventing further land subdivision and no new housing is permitted in the area without such a sewer connection.

3.1.2 Recreation Zones

The Recreation 4 zone extends from Mean High Water Mark to the inland boundary of the legal road which skirts the foreshore from the north end of Hobsons Bay to the south end of Taylors Mistake Bay. The purpose of the zone is three-fold;

- (a) to give effect to S3 (i)(c) of the Town & Country Planning Act 1977 which states that "the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment ... and the protection of

Figure 2. Land Tenure and Zoning



- A. Reserve 2055
- B. Pt. Reserve 60
- C. Legal Road
- D. Pt 3 D.P. 10127 C.T. 573/20
- E. Us 7-9 D.P. 6419
- F. U1 D.P. 42746
- G. C.T. 277/213.

them from unnecessary subdivision and development" is a matter of national importance to be recognised and provided for in district schemes.

- (b) To recognise the physically sensitive nature of sand beach/dune areas.
- (c) To recognise its recreation value.

The zone provides for buildings and works which are incidental to the use of the zone. Any new buildings or structures are required to be sited and designed to protect the unstable land form and the natural landscape.

The Recreation 1 zone extends up the valley floor from the road and the Rec/4 zone. It is mostly privately owned and farmed by grazing. In time it will become vested in the Council as the reserve contribution from the subdivision of other parts of the Port Hills. Recreation 1 zones are provided for passive recreation usually in the form of playgrounds, pedestrian links or areas of open space used informally by the public. The major role of this land at Taylors Mistake however will be as an area of amenity used by the public while protecting the natural environment. Only small buildings essential to the use of the land are permitted.

3.1.3 Rural Zone

The balance of the zoned land at Taylors Mistake is zoned Rural 1. This permits most agricultural and recreational activities. Currently the land is farmed either as part of the Lands & Survey Godley Head farm park, or privately. The Godley Head farm park is designated as proposed "Recreation Reserve, Farm Park" and Godley Head itself as "Local Purpose Reserve, lighthouse".

3.2 Godley Head Farm Park Management Plan

The Department of Lands & Survey has responsibility for the administration of the 255-hectare reserve area at Godley Head. It is proposed to classify this area of reserve and Crown land under Section 16 of the Reserves Act 1977 as a recreation reserve.

It is intended to farm the land under Section 53 (1) (a) (ii) of the Act, by the Land Settlement Board through the Department of Lands & Survey, under Section 72 of the Act.

A draft management plan has been drawn up and advertised for public comment. It sets out the management objectives, policies and implementation practises which are considered suitable for the ongoing management of the reserve. The management plan, when operative, will be subject to continual review with a comprehensive review being done after five years of operation.

3.3 Regional Planning Scheme

The Operative Regional Scheme 1971 had two planning areas for Taylors Mistake: the "Urban Settlement Area" which covered the Residential Hills zone and the Rec/1 zone, and the "Special Rural Area" which covered the balance of the land.

The Reviewed Regional Scheme 1980 has two planning areas: Urban Areas, Towns and other Settlements which covered only the Residential H zone, and the "Green Belt" (this replaced the "Special Rural Area") which included the Rec/1 zone and Rural 1 zone. The "Green Belt" does not permit residential development.

4.0 NATURAL FEATURES

4.1 The Landscape

The study area may be broadly divided into the two areas; the hills, and the valley floor and the coastline.

4.1.1 The Hills

The hills that enclose Taylors Mistake were primarily formed by volcanic activity which created Lyttelton Harbour and the surrounding peninsula hills approximately $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 12 million years ago.

Landform is a dominant characteristic of Taylors Mistake. Tawny brown hills covered with loess and tussock extend from the ridgeline of 300 metres down long spurs enclosing the bay to the sea. Some rock outcrops are exposed on the sides of the valley.

Natural landform characteristics predominate in Taylors Mistake. Extensive tussock cover permits the natural pattern of the landform to remain uninterrupted.

Tree planting on Scarborough Spur in farm shelter belts disrupts the natural flow of the land. They are particularly noticeable from the Summit Road.

The Canterbury United Council is undertaking a study in order to protect the visual integrity of the Port Hills on a broad scale. The study will identify critical areas that should remain substantially unaltered, and others that can accommodate change.

4.1.2 The Valley Floor and the Coastline

At the base of the hills, spurs are truncated and the underlying volcanic basement is exposed in an indented rocky shoreline which reaches dramatic heights towards the head of Scarborough Peninsula. A small rocky promontory separates the main area of beach from Hobsons Bay, a smaller rocky beach to the north.

The valley floor which is mainly covered in tussock and sedge extends through an area of dunes (where regeneration is being assisted) up a slightly elevated sandy ridge to an attractive sandy shoreline. A creekbed depression extends from the valley floor to drain into the south of the bay. This is an important natural feature in the Bay which remains in a largely unmodified form.

In the valley floor the natural rural character of grassland tussock and sedges strongly relates to the surrounding hills. The dunes are a characteristic landform within the coastal environment and are being helped to regenerate south east of the surf club. Dunes have formed in the area adjoining the creek to the south of the bay.

4.2 Vegetation

The predominant vegetation is pasture grasses and tussock species on the hill slopes and in the valley floor.

Trees and shrubs are mainly located on the Scarborough peninsula within the residential area north of the bay. The main tree species are pines, macrocarpas and some eucalypts. A few farm shelter belts occur on Scarborough peninsula and groups of pines and macrocarpas are associated with the farm buildings on Godley Head peninsula.

On the valley floor isolated trees, mainly pines and macrocarpas, are planted in the vicinity of the car park and the baches. Other tree species include the natives *Olearia* s.p., *Griselinia littoralis*, (broadleaf), *Myoporum laetum* (nagio), and *Metrosideros excelsa* (pohutakawa). Tamarisk is also common.

Shrubs on the valley floor are mainly associated with the baches and some with the car park. Predominant species are *Coprosma* s.p., saltbush, common broom and geranium.

Ice plant and marram grass are the predominant vegetation within the dune area.

4.3 Soils

4.3.1 Soil Types

The soils in the eastern part of the Port Hills are quite varied reflecting a wide range of parent material, of altitude (sea level to 300m), and of gradient (level to very steep). The rainfall at Godley Head has a mean average of 553mm (NZ Meteorological Service 1975) while the Mt Pleasant mean average is 635mm.

The main soil types are:

- (a) soils derived from loess
 - Takaka soils
 - Heathcote silt loam
 - Horotane silt loam

- (b) soils derived from mixed loess and basalt
 - Cashmere bouldery silt loam
 - Cashmere hill soils
 - Evans Bouldery silt loam steepland soil
 - Kiwi Hill and Steepland soil

- (c) Soils derived from sand
 - Waikuku sand

Details of the soil types are included in Appendix I.

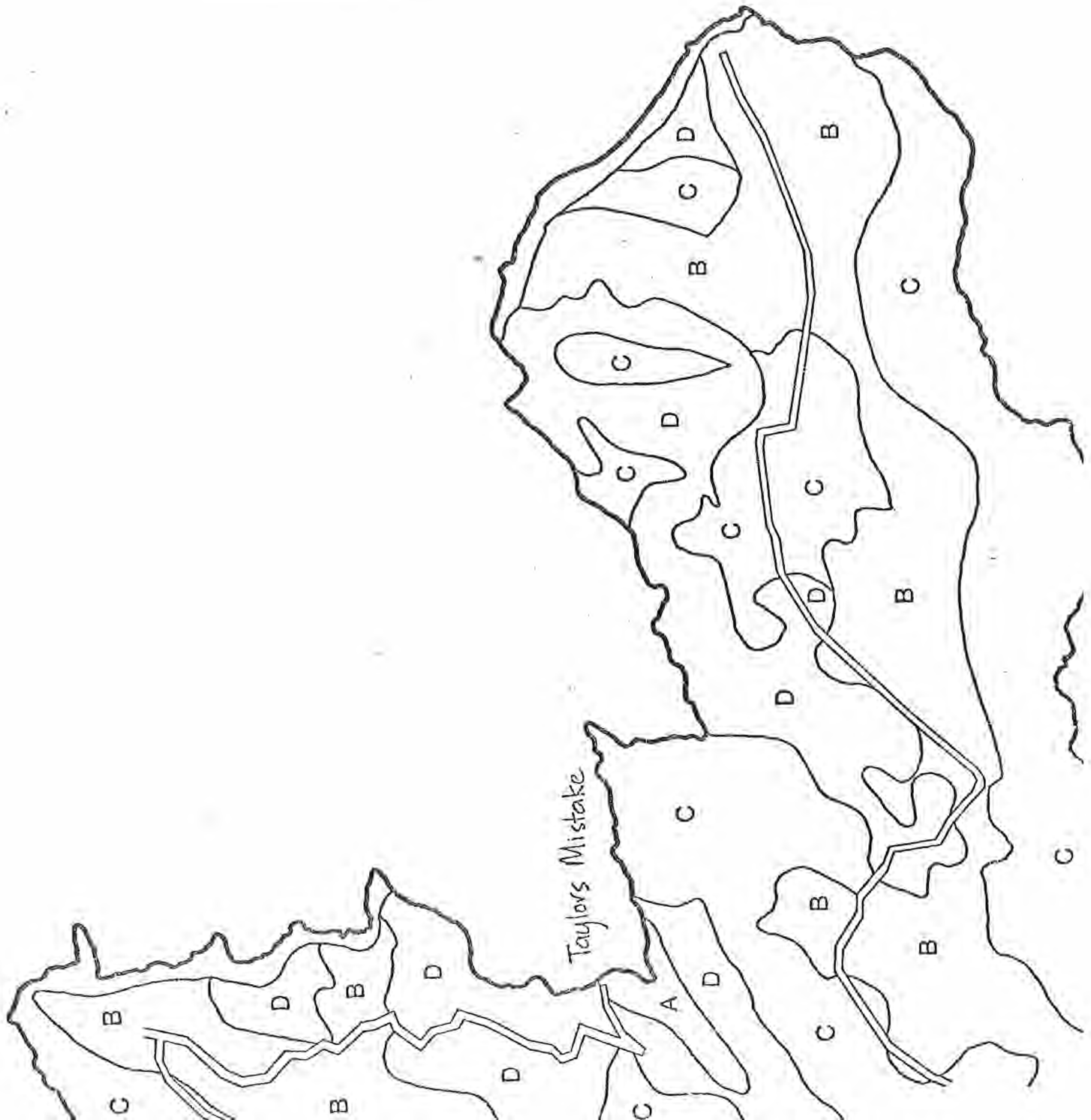
4.3.2 Relative Soil Stability

Four categories of soil stability have been mapped to show the risk of erosion (Fig 3). These range from slight to severe as follows:-

Figure 5: Relative stability - Erosion Risk

(boundaries are approximate only)

A	Very Slight
B	Slight
C	Moderate
D	Severe



<u>Erosion Risk</u>	<u>Soil Type</u>	<u>Erosion</u>
Very slight	Horotane s.l.	-
Slight	Takahe s.l. Heathcote s.l. Cashmere by.s.l Waikuku sand	-
Moderate	Takahe Hill soils (rolling slopes) Kiwi Hill soils Cashmere Hill Evans Steepland	sheet/slip/tunnel tunnel/slip sheet/slip sheet/slip
Severe	Takahe Hill soils Kiwi Hills steepland	tunnel/gully/slip tunnel

4.4 Beach Stability

In the past the dune system was significantly more extensive than at present. Large amounts of sand has been eroded in past storms and unrestricted pedestrian and vehicular access has also accelerated erosion.

Since fencing has been undertaken to encourage dune formation and restrict access, the dune area has increased considerably. Dune reclamation is continuing.

The principles of sand beach formation and erosion have been documented by Dr R. M. Kirk in a report to the Council in 1979. His work suggests that the beach/dune system will continue to act in a form of dynamic equilibrium. Erosion of sand will continue to occur periodically but its extent will depend on the extent to which well vegetated protective buffer dunes can be encouraged to establish.

4.5 Discussion

Perhaps the most distinctive thing about the Taylors Mistake area is its natural setting. It contains a variety of land forms within a clearly rural outlook. This combination creates a range of recreational

opportunities unrivalled in greater Christchurch. Nowhere else in metropolitan Christchurch is there this combination of open hills backed by a surf beach with public facilities. New Brighton is a distinctly suburban beach like Sumner; Waimairi Beach lacks the hills but offers a large forestry area for additional recreation. Taylors is best compared to the recreation experiences offered in Banks Peninsula. It is this character, so close to Christchurch, which is valuable. The natural features of the area as recognised in this report should remain as the basis of further development.

The distinctive rural character of the area can best be maintained by allowing the tussock/grassland vegetation cover to dominate the hill slopes. This also allows the natural landform pattern of ridge, gully and rock outcrop to be seen. If tree planting is contemplated for the hills then this should emphasise rather than detract from the natural qualities of the landform. Planting into gullies rather than along ridges or skylines is a way to achieve this.

Commercial forestry is permitted as a conditional use in the Rural 1 zone and any proposals should pay regard to the present character of the area.

The valley floor and the foreshore will be, or are, under the Council's direct control and consequently the ability to control or manage the landscape is greater than in the hills. The valley floor complements the hills in its open grassland nature and visually links the beach area to it.

There is a limited range of tree and shrub species in the area. Future plantings, other than for forestry or shelter purposes, should build on the existing vegetation stock which is obviously well-suited to the climate and soil conditions. The existing species are suitable for additional amenity or functional plantings and will add coherence to the visual qualities of Taylors Mistake.

The present dune reclamation work is proving successful. It is important to encourage the establishment of dunes on the beach both for storm protection reasons and for recreation reasons. As the sand accumulates a marram or ice-planting programme is necessary to stabilise the sand, and to aid sand trapping. The most effective way to assist this natural

re-establishment of the dunes is to fence areas off. However, this is a temporary measure only and can be dispensed with when sufficient sand has been stabilised. In the longer term formed pedestrian pathways will assist the retention of sand trapping vegetation and sand itself.

The creekbed is an important natural feature and its significance should be retained. With the removal of the southern line of baches the creekbed could provide a dividing line between the area of man's obvious influence (car park, buildings, etc) and the natural landscape. The area currently occupied by baches could either revert to tussock grassland, or planting in the area could be retained to provide picnic spots (foot access only). Limiting the car park in this way would recognise the landscape significance of the creek and provide a 'natural' limit to the intrusion of motor vehicles. The seaward dunes separate the car park from the beach making it appear inconspicuous from the sea.

5.0 BUILDINGS

5.1 Housing

The main area of residential development is located between the Taylors Mistake Road and the sea. A significant amount of vegetation harmonises the dwellings and the hillside. Figure 4 shows the extent of residential zoning and of housing development. Additional dwellings below Taylors Mistake Road south and seaward of No.83 can not be built until a sanitary sewer is installed. Above the road the area around the homestead on Scarborough Spur is capable of being serviced by sanitary sewer and any growth in housing is most likely to occur in this area.

Residential development on Godley Spur is not envisaged. This area is subject to severe erosion and climatic conditions. Stormwater and sewerage services would be difficult to install.

The controls for development within the Residential Hills zone were strengthened as part of the 1979 Review of the City Plan. This requires special consideration to be given to the special techniques of construction needed to produce dwelling sites on the typical eroding slopes, and to prevent housing on areas liable to severe erosion.

5.2 Baches

Baches are located in three major locations in Taylors Mistake: Hobsons Bay, Rotten Row (Godley Parade) and Boulder Bay (Fig. 5). They are a distinctive feature of Taylors Mistake.

The Hobsons Bay baches cling to the base of the hill and rocky cliffs. In Rotten Row the baches form a line to the south of the valley on an elevated area of land overlooking the beach. The Boulder Bay baches form a small group clustered around the shore.

The Council's policy with respect to all baches is very clear. Its decision of August 1976 was recommended by a sub-committee established for the purpose, and had been discussed thoroughly over a period of many months including negotiations with the Taylors Mistake Association. The policy states that -