

**Management Plan for Specially Protected Area (SPA No 27)
for Historic Site No. 15**
(containing the historic hut of Sir Ernest Shackleton and its precincts)

BACKDOOR BAY, CAPE ROYDS, ROSS ISLAND

(Lat. 77°33'10.7"S, Long. 166°10'6.5"E)

1 Description of Values to be Protected

This site was originally listed as Historic Site 15 in ATCM Recommendation VII-9 proposed by New Zealand.

The hut on which this Area is centred was built in February 1908 by the British Antarctic (*Nimrod*) Expedition of 1907-1909 which was led by Sir Ernest Shackleton. It was also periodically used by the Ross Sea Party of Shackleton's Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1914-1917.

Structures associated with the hut include stables, kennels, a latrine and a garage created for the first motor vehicle in Antarctica. Other significant relics in the Area include an instrument shelter, supply depots, and a rubbish site. Numerous additional artefacts are distributed around the Area.

Cape Royds is one of the principal areas of early human activity in Antarctica. It is an important symbol of the Heroic Age of Antarctic exploration and, as such, has considerable historical and cultural significance. Some of the earliest advances in the study of earth sciences, meteorology, flora and fauna in Antarctica are associated with the *Nimrod* Expedition which was based at this site. The history of these activities and the contribution they have made to the understanding and awareness of Antarctica give this Area significant scientific, technical, architectural, aesthetic and social values.

2 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the management plan is to provide protection for the Area and its features so that its values can be preserved. The objectives of the Plan are to:

- avoid degradation of, or substantial risk to, the values of the Area;
- maintain the historic values of the Area through planned restoration and conservation work which may include;
 - a) an annual 'on-site' maintenance programme
 - b) a programme of monitoring the condition of artefacts and structures, and the factors which affect them
 - c) a programme of conservation of artefacts conducted on and off site;
- allow management activities which support the protection of the values and features of the Area including;
 - a) mapping and otherwise recording the disposition of historic items in the hut environs
 - b) recording other relevant historic data.
- prevent unnecessary human disturbance to the Area, its features and artefacts through managed access to the *Nimrod* hut.

3 Management Activities

- A regular programme of restoration and preservation work shall be undertaken on the *Nimrod* hut and associated artefacts in the Area.
- Visits shall be made as necessary for management purposes.
- Control of the number of visitors.
- National Antarctic Programmes operating in, or those with an interest in, the region shall consult together with a view to ensuring the above provisions are implemented.

4 Period of designation

Designated under Measure X (1998) for an indefinite period.

5 Maps

Map A: Cape Royds regional map. This map shows the location of the Area in relation to the existing SSSI No. 1 and significant topographic features in the vicinity. Inset: shows the position of the site in relation to other protected sites on Ross Island.

Map B: Cape Royds Area map. This map shows the boundaries of the Area and the adjacent SSSI No. 1. Also shown are the approaches, field camp and helicopter landing sites.

6 Description of the Area

6(i) Geographical coordinates, boundary markers and natural features

Cape Royds is an ice free area at the western extremity of Ross Island, approximately 40 kilometres to the south of Cape Bird and 35 kilometres to the north of Hut Point Peninsula on Ross Island. The ice free area is composed of till covered basalt bedrock. The designated Area is located to the north east of Cape Royds adjacent to Backdoor Bay. It is immediately to the east of the existing SSSI No. 1, an Adélie penguin rookery. The Area is centred on Shackleton's *Nimrod* expedition hut.

The boundaries of the proposed Area are:

- South and East, by the shoreline of the eastern coast of Cape Royds including Arrival and Backdoor Bays.
- West, by a line following the boundary of SSSI No. 1, from the coastline to Pony Lake and then by a line following the eastern shore of Pony lake to its northern extremity.
- North/west, by a line extending from the northern extremity of Pony Lake along a gully leading to a point at 77°33' 7.5"S, 166° 10' 13"E.
- North, by a line extended due east from a point at 77°33' 7.5"S, 166°10' 13"E to the coastline of Backdoor Bay.

A major feature of the Area is Shackleton's *Nimrod* expedition hut located in a sheltered basin. The hut is surrounded by many other historic relics including an instrument shelter, supply depots and a dump site. Numerous additional artefacts are distributed around the site.

Adélie penguins (*Pygoscelis adeliae*) from the adjacent rookery at Cape Royds often transit the Area. Skuas (*Catharacta maccormicki*) nest in the vicinity.

6(ii) Restricted zones within the Area

None.

6(iii) Structures within the Area

Apart from a Treaty plaque all structures within the Area are of historic origin.

6(iv) Location of other Protected Areas within close proximity

SSSI No 1 Cape Royds is immediately adjacent to this Area. SSSI No 2 Arrival Heights, Hut Peninsula is 32 kilometres south of Cape Royds; and SSSI No 11 Tramway Ridge is 20 kilometres east of Cape Royds. SSSI No 10, New College Valley, and SPA No 20, Caughley Beach are located 35 kilometres north in the vicinity of Cape Bird. SPA No. 25, Cape Evans is 12 kilometres south, and SPA No. 26, Lewis Bay is 36 kilometres to the north east. All sites are located on Ross Island.

7 Permit Conditions

Entry to the Area is prohibited except in accordance with a permit.

Permits shall be issued only by appropriate national authorities and may contain both general and specific conditions. A permit may be issued by a national authority to cover a number of visits in a season. Parties operating in the Ross Sea Area shall consult together and with groups and organisations interested in visiting the Area to ensure that visitor numbers are not exceeded.

General conditions for issuing a permit may include:

- activities related to preservation, maintenance, research and/or monitoring purposes;
- management activities in support of the objectives of this plan;
- activities related to tourism, educational or recreational activities providing they do not conflict with the objectives of this plan;
- the permit should be valid for stated period;
- a copy of the permit must be carried within the Area.

7(i) Access to and movement within the Area

Control of movement within the Area is necessary to prevent damage caused by crowding around the many vulnerable features within the Area. The maximum number in the Area at any time (including those within the hut) is: **40 people**

Control of numbers within the hut is necessary to prevent damage caused by crowding around the many vulnerable features within the hut. The maximum number within the hut at any time (including guides) is: **8 people**

Avoidance of cumulative impacts on the interior of the hut require an annual limit on visitor numbers. The effects of current visitor levels (approximately 1,000 per calendar year) suggest that an increase of more than 100% could cause significant adverse impacts. The annual maximum number of visitors is: **2000 people**

These limits have been based on current visitor levels and on the best advice available from conservation advisory agencies (which include conservators, archaeologists, historians, museologists and other heritage protection professionals). The limits are based on the proposition that any significant increase in the current level of visitors would be detrimental to the values to be protected. An ongoing monitoring programme of the effect of visitors is in place. This will provide the basis for future review of the management plan, in particular whether the current annual maximum number of visitors to the area is appropriate. This could result in the annual maximum number either increasing or decreasing.

Helicopter landings are prohibited within the Area as they have the potential to damage the site by blowing scoria and ice particles and to accelerate the abrasion of the hut and surrounding artefacts.

Landings may be made at the designated landing sites (see Map B). One site is approximately 50 metres to the north of the New Zealand shelter, outside the Area. A further designated site is located 100 metres further north east.

Vehicles are prohibited within the Area. Landings from the sea by boat, or vehicle travelling on the sea ice, may be made by approaching from Backdoor Bay.

7(ii) Activities which may be conducted within the Area

Activities which may be conducted within the Area includes:

- visits for restoration, preservation and/or protection;
- educational and/or recreational visits including tourism;
- scientific activity which does not detract from the values of the Area.

7(iii) Installation, modification and removal of structures

No new structures are to be erected in the Area, or scientific equipment installed, except for conservation or scientific activities that do not detract from the values of the Area as specified in 1. No historic structure relic or artefact shall be removed from the Area, except for the purposes of restoration and/or preservation and then only in accordance with a permit.

7(iv) Location of field camps

Use of the historic hut for living purposes is not permitted. Camping is prohibited within the Area. An existing field camp site and a New Zealand shelter is located at the north western boundary of the Area (see Map B).

7(v) Restrictions on materials and organisms which may be brought into the Area

No living animals or plant material shall be introduced to the Area.

No food products shall be taken into the Area.

Chemicals which may be introduced for management purposes shall be removed at or before the conclusion of the activity for which they are required.

Fuel or other materials are not to be left in depots in the Area, unless required for essential purposes connected with the preservation and conservation of the historic structures or the associated relics. All such materials are to be removed when no longer required.

Use of combustion type lanterns is not permitted in the hut under any circumstances.

Smoking in the Area is not permitted.

7(vi) Taking or harmful interference with native flora and fauna

This activity is prohibited except in accordance with a separate permit issued by the appropriate national authority specifically for that purpose.

7(vii) Collection of anything not introduced by a visitor

Material may be collected and removed from the Area only for restoration, preservation or protection purposes, or scientific reasons consistent with the objectives of this plan, and only in accordance with a separate permit issued by the appropriate national authority specifically for that purpose.

Visitors must remove objects, substances and waste introduced by them during their time in the Area.

7(viii) Disposal of waste

All waste generated by work parties or visitors shall be removed from the Area.

7(ix) Measures that may be necessary to ensure that the aims and objectives of the plan continue to be met

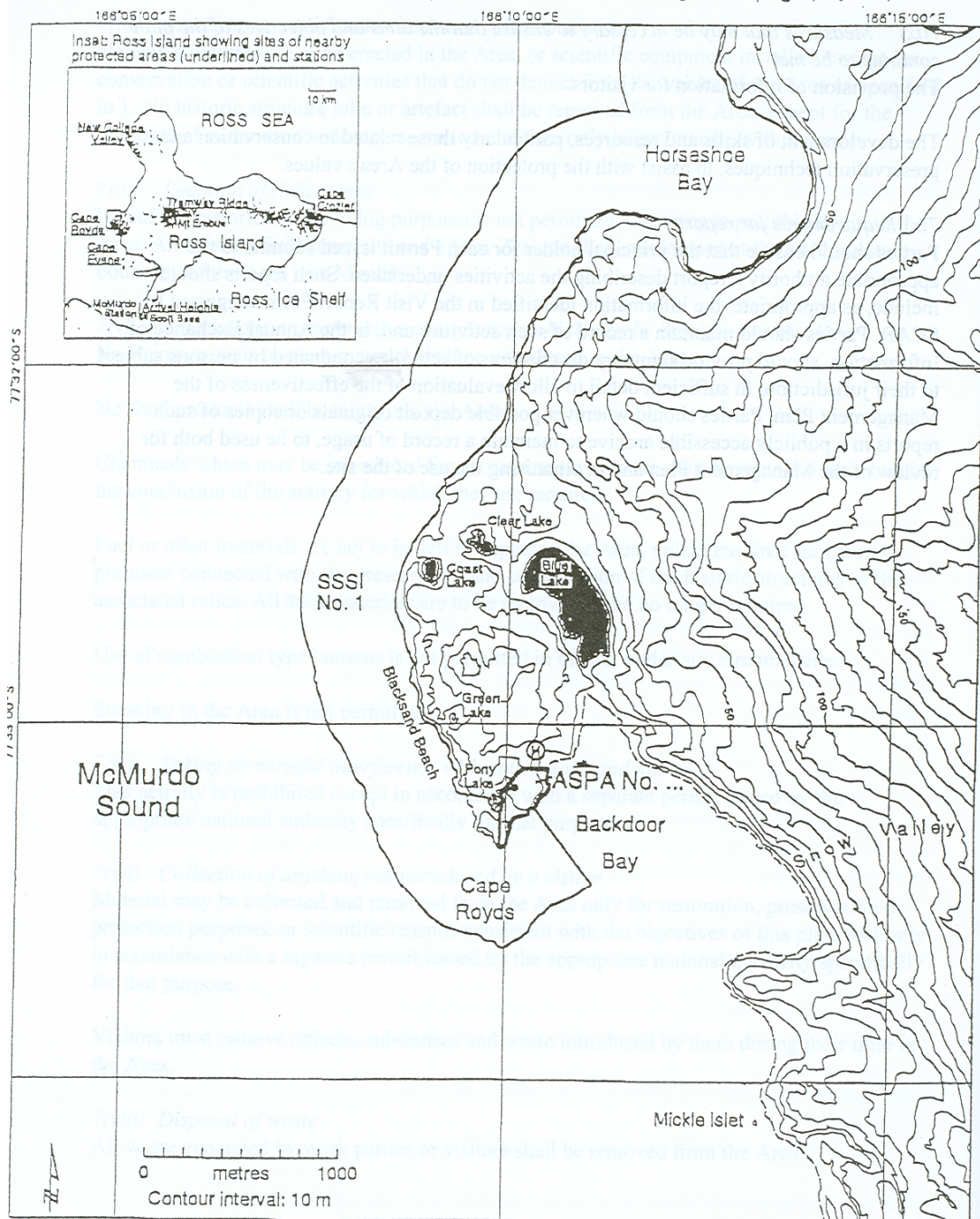
The provision of information for visitors.

The development of skills and resources, particularly those related to conservation and preservation techniques, to assist with the protection of the Area's values.

7(x) Requirements for reports

Parties should ensure that the principal holder for each Permit issued submits to the appropriate authority a report describing the activities undertaken. Such reports should include, as appropriate, the information identified in the Visit Report Form suggested by SCAR. Parties should maintain a record of such activities and, in the Annual Exchange of Information, should provide summary descriptions of activities conducted by persons subject to their jurisdiction, in sufficient detail to allow evaluation of the effectiveness of the Management Plan. Parties should wherever possible deposit originals or copies of such reports in a publicly accessible archive to maintain a record of usage, to be used both for review of the Management Plan and in organising the use of the site.

Map A - Cape Royds, Antarctic Specially Protected Area: regional topographic map



Map B - Cape Royds, Antarctic Specially Protected Area: site topographic map

