



Report **06.62**
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Committee **Landcare**
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East Harbour Regional Park Management Plan Review update

1. Purpose

To update the Committee on the review of the East Harbour Regional Park Management Plan and seek approval to begin writing the new draft plan.

2. Significance of the decision

The matters for decision in this report **do not** trigger the significance policy of the Council or otherwise trigger section 76(3)(b) of the Local Government Act 2002.

3. Background

The first phase of public consultation on the review of the East Harbour Regional Park Management Plan has been completed. Submissions closed on 30 June 2005 with fifty-four submissions received. Committee members were supplied with a copy of the submissions in September 2005.

Unfortunately, since then there has been a delay in progress on the plan due to staff changes within Parks and Forests Department. The review is now back on track and a workshop to discuss the draft plan is scheduled for 7th April 2006.

4. Progress to date

Phase 1 of the review, the 'pre-consultation', has been completed. The purpose of this stage was to identify the key issues and to gain an understanding of the views of various stakeholders and the general public. This consultation has involved:

- undertaking initial discussions with key stakeholders and Iwi
- notifying our intention to review the plan and calling for public submissions (54 received)
- holding a public meeting

- developing a newsletter to inform the community about the review

5. Public Meeting

A public meeting was held in Lower Hutt in June 2005 to inform people about the process for reviewing the Management Plan and to seek input on the Park and its management.

Meeting participants put forward a range of ideas on what is special about East Harbour Regional Park. These included its easy access from the city, being traffic free, the high ecological values including the rare and endangered flora and fauna in the area, and the unspoilt, 'remote' nature of the Park, particularly around Gollans Stream. Future opportunities highlighted included continued predator control, the creation of a 'wildlife sanctuary' without a fence, support for revegetation and replanting with native plants, encouragement of research and provision of further educational information. In order to meet everybody's needs, participants wanted the Park to be managed for all Wellington users, not just locals. People felt the Park should provide a variety of walking and other recreation opportunities.

If you wish to view a full list of ideas gathered at the meeting please contact Hilary Aikman.

6. Feedback from Submissions

Fifty-four public submissions were received during the first phase of consultation. Landcare committee members received a copy of all written submissions in September 2005. Views expressed in the submissions included:

- strong support for protection of the high ecological, 'wilderness' and landscape values of the Park
- support for protection of cultural and archaeological sites
- a range of ideas on track locations and the desired level of track maintenance
- differing views on mountain bike access to the Northern Block and general support for biking in the Lakes Block provided tracks are sensitively designed
- strong support for ongoing or increased animal and plant pest control
- support for regeneration and replanting, particularly in the Lakes Block
- support for the reintroduction of native flora and fauna to the Park
- a range of views on the provision of visitor facilities and camping
- support for ongoing community involvement in the Park
- a range of views on dog access and hunting in the park
- suggestion that the appropriate status of the Lakes Block be considered
- suggestion that the Park's name be changed

A number of areas referred to in submissions are not managed by Greater Wellington. While these issues are beyond the direct scope of the management plan there are opportunities to phrase policies in terms of providing guidance or advocacy for protection of areas that have direct links to the Park and regarding

activities that may impact on management of the Park and its values. Issues raised include:

- support for protection of ecological and landscape values on land adjoining the Park
- a range of views on boating, duck-shooting and fishing on the lakes
- call for gravel mining at Port Fitzroy to be stopped
- support for removal of culverts at the outlet to the lakes to allow them to breach naturally, thus restoring fish passages
- support for restricted vehicle access to the Lakes Block

A more detailed summary of the submissions is attached to this paper (**Attachment 1**) and if you would like to see a summary of key points for all submissions please contact Hilary Aikman.

7. Review of the current plan

We carried out an initial review of the aim, objectives and policies of the current plan in light of the approved Regional Parks Network Management Plan, feedback, submissions and proposals for the Park (see **Attachment 2**).

Given the feedback to date, much of the policy in the existing plan is still relevant today and should not need significant changes from the direction set out in the existing management plan. The main areas requiring change will be those affected by the changes in land management in the Park. Since the current plan was written, the three agencies owning land in the Park (the Department of Conservation, Hutt City Council and Greater Wellington) have been working towards rationalising land administration within the park boundaries. This rationalisation allows for East Harbour Regional Park to be managed as a single entity by Greater Wellington. These changes in land administration will need to be reflected in the new plan.

The new plan will be updated to ensure consistency with the Network Plan framework and the other completed park management plans.

8. Where to from here?

With Committee approval, officers will begin drafting a plan starting with the policies that do not appear to require significant changes. We will undertake a detailed assessment of submissions during drafting to identify issues which can be resolved in drafting and those which require a decision by Council. A workshop is scheduled for 7th April 2006 for Councillors to consider the issues requiring substantive change.

9. Communication

Communication with stakeholders is ongoing. Once we have received guidance from the Committee, we will incorporate that information into our consultation with stakeholders.

10. Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. *Receives the report.*
2. *Notes that the pre-consultation phase of the review is complete.*
3. *Notes the key feedback received to date.*
4. *Notes that a workshop for Councillors is scheduled on 7th April 2006 to discuss the East Harbour Regional Park Management Plan and any changes to the plan that may require significant changes.*
5. *Agrees that Officers will draft the new plan.*

Report prepared by:

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Attachment 1: Summary of Feedback on East Harbour Regional Park Management Plan

Attachment 2: Review of current plan – aim, objectives and policies