

For Decision

ADOPTION OF DRAFT TOITŪ TE WHENUA PARKS NETWORK PLAN 2020-30

Te take mō te pūrongo

Purpose

1. To present the Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30 and the Greater Wellington Parks Concession Guideline and Fee Schedule 2020 for adoption.

He tūtohu

Recommendations

That Council:

1. **Notes** the recommendations of Hearing Subcommittee of the draft Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30 and summary of submissions, officer advice and deliberations (Report 20.490, Attachment 1).
2. **Adopts** the Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30, Attachment 1.
3. **Adopts** the Parks Concession Guideline and Fee Schedule 2020, Attachment 2.
4. **Delegates** to the Chair and Chief Executive the ability to make minor editorial changes to the Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan prior to publication to correct errors and improve public understanding.

Te tāhū kōrero

Background

2. The draft Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan was developed based on public feedback received during initial public consultation in 2018 (Report 18.307). This was followed by an extensive internal engagement process and development of strategic directions for the draft Plan. Council endorsed these directions in March 2020 (Report 20.89). In June 2020 Council endorsed the draft Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30 for consultation (Report 20.177) and a revised Parks Concession Guideline and Fee Schedule.
3. Consultation on the draft Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan and the draft Parks Concession Guideline and Fee Schedule 2020 commenced on 18 August 2020 and concluded on 23 October 2020.
4. The process for development of the management plan, and consultation process encompassing hearings for public submissions, is set out in the Reserves Act 1977, and

was outlined in the report Establishment of the Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30 hearing sub-committee (20.372).

5. Greater Wellington received a total of 390 submissions on the draft Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan; 265 of these were received via Greater Wellington's website 'Have your say' and 125 through the Parks Planning email address.
6. Four submissions were received on the draft Parks Concession Guideline and Fee Schedule 2020. All were in support.
7. The Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30 Hearing Subcommittee (the Subcommittee) met on 23 and 25 November to hear 56 oral submissions, followed by deliberations consideration of all submissions (outlined in Report 20.372).

Te tātaritanga Analysis

8. Overall, written and oral submissions indicated a high level of support for the key shifts identified in the draft Plan and its six goals. No substantive changes to the direction of the draft Plan were recommended by the Subcommittee. However, as a result of the public feedback, a number of minor changes were recommended (as per Report 20.490).
9. Key draft Plan changes included:
 - a. More emphasis on the importance of pest plant and animal control work in supporting biodiversity and the success of restoration work. Existing text was rearranged and some information from the consultation fact sheet 'Re-clothing Papatūānuku' was carried forward into the Plan.
 - b. Additional text and imagery about walking, tramping, horse riding, hunting and mountain biking/cycling activities in parks. A number of submitters supplied photos.
 - c. More recognition of park stakeholders including predator free groups and particular recreation, conservation or community clubs, and other organisations.
 - d. Minor changes to policies, actions, rules and other text as outlined in Report 20.490.
10. The draft Plan theme of '*everything is connected*' and its vision for '*restoring healthy ecosystems for the benefit of people and nature*', '*he waka eke noa*' (we're all in this together moving forward), received a high level of endorsement in public submissions.
11. Many submitters commended Greater Wellington for presenting a draft Plan with a bold vision for responding to climate change with action to restore the grazed areas of parks. Many submitters asked to be involved in proposed master planning processes, and to shape future recreation facilities and support native vegetation and wetland restoration work.
12. There was a high level of support from submitters for improving access to and within parks, and for working more collaboratively with partners, park stakeholders, and the broader community. Many submitters asked to be acknowledged in the Plan and sought involvement in implementing actions within it. No support was identified for land

disposal in Belmont Regional Park (proposed through other Council processes). A number of submitters expressed opposition to it.

Looking ahead

13. Implementing the Plan will require adapting the way we work, balancing sometimes competing needs, and the commitment of additional resources. *He waka eke noa, we're all in this together moving forward* is part of the Plan's mana. *Mahi tahi - working together*, drawing on the knowledge, skills and expertise of many, establishing community collaboration groups, and activity or issue-specific groups where needed will support collective implementation of the vision and actions of the Plan.
14. The focus and priorities will shift to restoration and recreation activities in areas of park currently grazed by stock. Phasing out grazing, and restoring park land is being supported by substantial new investment for park restoration in the draft budget for the 2021-31 Long Term Plan. Working with the current grazing licence holders during the transition to broad scale native vegetation restoration and recreation activity focused park management will be important work.
15. The Plan identifies short, medium and long term actions. Some of the actions identified as being short term can be achieved as 'quick wins', for example:
 - a. Developing, or enhancing and promoting a number of 'key destinations' such as
 - i. Adding storytelling to Tane's walk in Pakuratahi
 - ii. Signposting the hill top circuit walk to the munition stores and 'magazines' in Belmont
 - iii. Developing the 'Akatarawa Traverse' and working with park groups to identify historic timber tramways for enhancement as destinations in the Akatarawa Forest
 - iv. Further Baring Head lighthouse complex restoration work
 - b. Working to gain 'International Dark Sky Park' status for Wainuiomata Recreation Area' and developing night sky storytelling.
 - c. Working on access and ensuring each park has at least one highly accessible experience.
 - d. Opening the areas of park currently closed to the public for grazing activities in Belmont and Queen Elizabeth Parks (QEP) e.g. with events to celebrate the change.
 - e. Establishing collaboration groups to support master planning / restoration planning processes for QEP and Belmont, and working with horse riders to improve access arrangements across parks, mountain biking and walking groups on priority trail network changes.
 - f. Changing all park names to 'Regional Park' and supporting mana whenua to identify dual Te Reo Māori names for parks that don't have them.

Financial implications

16. Implementation of the new Plan will be through adjusting business as usual to align with the new directions and actions. It will be supported by additional funding through long term plan and annual plan processes, and community contributions through collaborative work with others, volunteering, grants and other resources.
17. Significant investment has been signalled as part of the 2021-31 Long Term Plan to accelerate the restoration of the majority of the grazed areas of regional parks (except Battle Hill where its purpose is 'farm-park'). This is in addition to the funding already allocated to Kaitoke and Queen Elizabeth parks through the Low Carbon Acceleration Fund for the 2020/21 year.

Te huritao ki te huringa o te āhuarangi

Consideration of climate change

18. The matter for decision in this report was considered by officers in accordance with the process set out in Greater Wellington's *Climate Change Consideration Guide*.
19. The matters addressed in this report are of a procedural nature, and there is no need to conduct a climate change assessment.
20. Many submitters asked Greater Wellington to respond more urgently with climate change action by accelerating proposed peat wetland restoration in Queen Elizabeth Park and native vegetation restoration works across parks, improving access to support local short visit recreation and sustainable transport connections to parks.
21. Two of the Corporate Carbon Neutrality Action Plan (2019) actions are supported by the Plan policies and actions. These are:

'Action 7. Allocate resources to accelerate reforestation planting in regional parks, plan future phases, secure external funding where possible and develop agreements with DOC regarding acquiring carbon credits associated with planting in Queen Elizabeth Park.

Action 8. Review the future of grazing licences in regional parks as part of the review of the Parks Network Plan and options to use this land for native reforestation where appropriate to earn carbon credits'.

Ngā tikanga whakatau

Decision-making process

22. The matter requiring decision in this report was considered by officers against the decision-making requirements of Part 6 of the Local Government Act 2002.
23. The management plan development process is in accordance with section 41 of the Reserves Act.

Te hiranga Significance

24. This matter is considered to be of high significance and has followed the consultation process required under the Reserves Act 1977 and Local Government Act 2002. There is a high level of public interest in the management of regional parks and management plan preparation.

Te whakatūtakitaki Engagement

25. As required by the Reserves Act 1977, submitters will receive a copy of the report identifying the summary of submissions, advice and hearing sub-committee (Attachment 1 to Report 20.490) and final Plan (**Attachment 1**) adopted by the Council.
26. Following publication of the Plan on the Greater Wellington website, communication will be sent to all stakeholders on the parks planning database. A media release and social media posts will be prepared.

Ngā tūāoma e whai ake nei Next steps

27. After adoption and following minor editorial changes Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30 and the Parks Concession Guideline and Fee Schedule will be published on the website and become operative. New policies, rules and fees will come into effect.
28. Submitters and all park partners and stakeholders will be notified.
29. Copies of the Plan will be sent to relevant parties and a media release drafted.

Ngā āpitihanga Attachments

Number	Title
1	Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30
2	Greater Wellington Parks Concession Guideline and Fee Schedule 2020

Ngā kaiwaitohu Signatories

Writer	Fiona Colquhoun - Parks Planner
Approvers	Tracy Plane - Manager, Corporate and Strategic Planning Jo Frances - Acting Manager, Parks Luke Troy - General Manager, Strategy Al Cross - General Manager, Environment

**He whakarāpopoto i ngā huritaonga
Summary of considerations**

Fit with Council's roles or with Committee's terms of reference

Council is authorised to approve the Plan under the Reserves Act.

Implications for Māori

Mana whenua expressed values are reflected in the draft management plan and have a key role in development implementation of it.

Contribution to Annual Plan / Long Term Plan / Other key strategies and policies

Implementation of the management plan will be through long term plan and annual plan processes.

Internal consultation

Officers in the Democratic Services department, Environment, Communications and Engagement and Strategy groups were consulted about this report.

Risks and impacts - legal / health and safety etc.

The adopted management plan is likely to be of interest to the media.