
REPORT 1
(1215/52/IM)

OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH MANAGEMENT PLAN

1. Purpose of Report

This report intends to aid the decision making of Councillors in approving the final Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan and referring it to the Minister of Conservation for final sign-off. The report summarises the submissions received on the draft Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan (see *Appendix 1*), highlights key considerations falling out from these submissions (see *Appendix 2*) and the subsequent amendments to the draft plan (see *Appendix 3*).

2. Executive Summary

The Draft Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan was approved by the Strategy and Policy Committee on 26 October 2006. Following this an almost three month consultation period was held. 28 written submissions were received and 9 oral submissions were heard by the Strategy and Policy Committee on 8 February 2007. There was a high level of support for the Draft Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan (at least 68% support for the vision and goals). The interest in Otari-Wilton's Bush was diverse.

As well as minor additions and amendments to provide additional clarity and direction to the management plan, this report outlines the main issues which were raised by submitters. The main issues discussed were:

- Effective marketing and promotion of Otari-Wilton's Bush
- Improvement of education and visitor facilities
- Protection for bush area and heritage values
- Expansion of the collection area
- Establishing linkages within the reserve and outside its boundaries

As a result of the discussion within this report and the amendments within the Management Plan it is recommended that the Committee adopt the Management Plan.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*

2. *Agree to the amendments of the Draft Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan, giving full consideration to submissions.*
3. *Recommend to Council that the final Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan is approved and forwarded to Minister of Conservation for final sign-off under the Reserves Act 1977.*
4. *Agree to approve the final Otari Wilton's Bush Management Plan with any minor editorial amendments to be signed off by the Environment Portfolio leader.*
5. *Approve the five year implementation plan.*
6. *Recognise that a separate funding bid for the implementation of the Landscape Development Plan will need to be considered for the 2009/2010 to 2012 financial years.*

4. Background

On 25th October 2006 Council approved the Draft Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan for public comment in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977.

Public submissions were invited from 1 November 06 to 26 January 07. 28 submissions were received and 9 presented their submissions in person to the Strategy and Policy Committee on 8 February 2006. Submissions generally supported the vision, goals and objectives of the management plan. Submissions and responses to submissions are provided in *Appendices 1* and *2* respectively.

5. Discussion

5.1 Summary of submissions

Of the 28 submissions received, 19 clearly stated their support for the vision and goals stated in the Draft Management Plan. 17 made detailed suggestions to specialist areas. Following is a summary of some of the feedback received. For full submissions and responses to the submissions, please refer to *Appendices 1* and *2* respectively.

5.1.1 Vision Statement

Four submissions suggested minor alterations to the vision; these ideas were already incorporated into the goals that sit directly under the vision.

5.1.2 Heritage Conservation

This section includes goals, objectives and policies around the plant collections, natural ecosystems and cultural heritage of Otari-Wilton's Bush. Key comments include:

- Concern with regard to the limited area for collection space.
- Extension of forested reserve area up to the Skyline track.
- High priority given to pest management and support for policies on pest management.
- Re-opening and recognition of historic tracks and cultivation areas.
- Better protection for cultural heritage sites.
- Concerns around stream water quality.

5.1.3 Education

Wide support for the education goals, objectives and policies.

- Potential for collaboration between Otari-Wilton's Bush and other relevant organisations e.g. Wellington's Botanic Garden.
- Important that adequate facilities are available.

5.1.4 Recreation and Access

Wide support for the recreation goals, objectives and policies.

- Establish some of Cockayne's proposed track names.
- Support links to the Outer Green Belt (Skyline Track) as well as to Karori Wildlife Sanctuary and Trelissick Park.

5.1.5 Marketing and Promotion

- Need to increase visibility of the reserve and create reasons for visitors to spend time in the reserve.
- Some recommended marketing Otari-Wilton's Bush as part of an eco-tour circuit, some as a stand alone attraction.
- Expand the list of key stakeholders e.g. volunteers, Landcare Research, Friends of Wellington's Botanic Gardens.

5.1.6 Management and Administration

- Twelve submissions directly related to the Landscape Development Plan and the need for improved education and visitor facilities.
- Increasing the boundary to include 'Wilton Park' is widely supported, with just one submitter expressing concern around maintenance of existing land being a priority over new acquisitions.
- Inclusion of newly acquired 'Otari Farm' area also suggested.
- General support regarding statements about the Wilton Bowling Club area and future uses of the area.
- Some expressed concern that 'improvements' are destroying the nature of Otari-Wilton's Bush.
- Clear timeframes and budgets required for key implementation actions.

5.2 Feedback from Treaty Partners

Two meetings were held with the Tenth Trust. Amendments to some of the details in the historic outline (*Section 2.2.1* and *Appendix 2* of the management plan) and the cultural heritage section (*Section 3.3*) resulted from these meetings. Overall the Tenth Trust are happy with the direction of the

Management Plan and in particular support education initiatives around *rongoa maori*.

Ngati Toa were also contacted and have verbally expressed their support for the draft management plan.

5.3 Significant amendments

- Recent acquisition of pine/native block to south-west: Additional resources would be required for this to be added to Otari-Wilton's Bush, including managing the current pine forest and pest populations. Recommend that over next 10 years it is managed by the Parks and Gardens Business Unit as a buffer – in accordance with the Outer Green Belt Management Plan. Its practicability as an addition to Otari-Wilton's Bush will be considered in the next management plan review. (Section 3.7.2 pg 44)
- Heritage values have been outlined and further protective policies and implementations put in place, e.g. carrying out archaeological investigations within the bush area. (Section 3.3 page 29)
- Stipulating that the picnic area adjacent to the Kaiwharawhara Stream and the Project Kaiwharawhara planting area will be maintained in accordance to user need. (Section 3.5.3.5 page 39)
- Expressly stated that no new cultivations or tracks are permitted within the Wilton Bush forest management zone. (Section 3.2.3.1 iii e page 25)
- Enhancing the reference library. (Section 3.4.4 6 pg 35)
- Stipulating that anyone carrying out research or the collection of material from within the reserve must have the written permission of the curator/manager. (Section 3.4.3.1 vii pg 33)
- Giving recognition to the need to provide links to nearby reserves. (Section 3.5.3.4 xii pg 39)
- Outlining clearer conditions on the use of Otari-Wilton's Bush for commercial purposes. (Section 3.7.4.1 pg 46)
- Mobility scooters included as exception for wheeled/vehicular access. (Section 3.5.3.3 ii pg 37)
- The addition of rabbits and hares to the list of pest animals. (Section 3.2.3.3 ii e pg 27)
- Including the demonstration of the importance of native plants in ecosystems, including relationships with animals. (Section 3.4.2 7 pg 33)

5.4 Implementation

The draft management plan included an implementation section. No costs or timeframes were provided in order to encourage submitters to focus on the actions themselves and the priorities. The intention was to include budget and timeframe estimates in the final management plan once priorities and actions had been confirmed.

The revised implementation plan can be found in Section 4 of the management plan (see Appendix 3 of this report). Actions are separated either into those that are key to the strategic development of the reserve, or are maintenance activities (included within existing service levels). The implementation plan (year 1) will commence in 2007/2008.

The majority of actions are to be funded through reallocating existing budgets.

However, new funding for capital works projects may be required once the Landscape Development Plan is completed. It is envisaged that the development of the Landscape Development Plan will commence in 2008/2009. Funding for the plan preparation is already allocated within existing projects. Any likely capital funding increases will be included as part of the Asset Management Plan. Additional operational funding may be required for marketing and promotion, using alternative sources such as key internal and external partners.

Where appropriate, any new initiatives will consider alternative funding sources through sponsorship, grants, trust funds and strategic partnerships.

6. Conclusion

In general, submitters were supportive of the draft Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan. Although few submissions were received, most were highly detailed and many have resulted in amendments to the management plan.

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Supporting Information

1) Strategic Fit / Strategic Outcome

The management plan supports Council's Environment Strategy, contributing to a number of Environmental Outcomes (see Section 4.1 of the Draft Management Plan). It also contributes to the Economic and Development Strategy in advocating for tourism products that promote Wellington's unique sense of place; and to the Culture and Wellbeing Strategy.

2) LTCCP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

Funding for Otari-Wilton's Bush is managed under the Botanic Gardens Asset Management Plan, C560 (Botanic gardens services) and CX348 (Botanic gardens renewals). Many of the implementation actions are funded through existing budgets. Some new initiative funding is required and some funding will be sought through sponsorships and grants.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Otari-Wilton's Bush is an area Mana Whenua regard as important, both for its historical import, and for its education potential in matauranga maori (traditional knowledge) and rongoa maori (traditional medicine). The review of the management plan was been discussed with both the Tenths Trust and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira. Feedback on the draft management plan was supportive.

4) Decision-Making

Council is asked to approve this management plan so that it can be forwarded to the Minister of Conservation for final approval in accordance with the Reserves Act (1977). Implementation represents key strategic actions required over the next 5 years in order to achieve the strategic vision of Otari-Wilton's Bush.

5) Consultation

a) General Consultation

Consultation has been carried out in accordance with the Reserves Act (1977). In addition, workshops have been held with interested persons on identifying issues and opportunities for the reserves and on developing a strategic vision.

b) Consultation with Maori

Mana whenua were consulted prior to the initial discussion paper and notification of the review of the management plan. Although submissions have not been received, at all meetings interest in the review was expressed, and support for the draft management plan was indicated.

6) Legal Implications

None.

7) Consistency with existing policy

This report and draft management plan is consistent with existing policy, including the Outer Green Belt Management Plan (2004), the Recreation Strategy (2003), the Open Space Access Plan (2004), and the Pest Management Plan (2005).

Appendix One:

**Submissions received on the draft Otari-Wilton's Bush
Management Plan**

Appendix Two:

Key considerations from submissions and responses

Appendix Three:

**Final Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan including
amendments**