

2. CURRENT TRACK NETWORK

Wellington City Council is responsible for an extensive and complex network of tracks located in parks and reserves across the city, and across private land, from Rangitatau Historic Reserve and Red Rocks in the south to Belmont Reserve and Spicer Forest at the northern city boundary.

Tracks that form part of the recognised track network have been established over many years and for many purposes. They provided pedestrian access over the Town Belt into the city or were used as local shortcuts. Some tracks started as farm roads. Others were built to satisfy the demand for informal recreation but have been gradually improved over time.

Changing demands have seen a recent shift towards tracks as a recreational resource in their own right. While the environment and destination are important, using the track itself is the primary experience.

2.1 STRENGTHS OF WELLINGTON'S TRACK NETWORK

- Provides opportunities to experience a unique and spectacular environment.
- A strong network of primary tracks (with the exception of the northern area) based on the linear ridgelines and valleys.
- A good local track system based on the Town Belt and open space.
- A strong system of recreational nodes due to the many public and private sporting facilities located in the Town Belt and other open space.
- The opportunity to provide a unique outdoor experience close to the urban environment due to the Town Belt, Outer Green Belt and other open spaces.

2.2 WEAKNESSES OF WELLINGTON'S TRACK NETWORK

- Inconsistent standards (for example, starts off at short walk standard but turns into tramping track standard within a single sector).
- Lack of secondary connectors.
- Uneven distribution.
- Some physical access points not legally secured.
- Poor entry/exit points.
- Poor design.
- Inconsistent signage.

- Few opportunities for people with limited mobility, visual impairment, young family groups and tourists outside the formal garden areas.
- Limited opportunities for horse riders and off-road vehicles.
- Incomplete tracks that end at no particular point.
- Lack of comprehensive maps, information and promotion.

2.3 OPPORTUNITIES FOR WELLINGTON'S NETWORK

The opportunities for Wellington's network surround the improvement of the existing network and extension of new tracks within the network. These specific opportunities are discussed within section 6 as the Top 10 initiatives and the five objectives for each sector which will be developed further in the implementation plan.

2.4 THREATS TO WELLINGTON'S NETWORK

- Unlawful/informal track building.
- Conflict of uses.
- Poor design and/or harsh conditions leading to deterioration.
- Development ending or dissecting access.
- Private landowners disallowing access to tracks on private land.
- Inadequate maintenance

3. VISION

Wellington City Council wants to strengthen and improve the open space access network through a plan that will:

- *provide outstanding opportunities for recreation and tourism within the open spaces of Wellington*
- *ensure that tracks provide for a range of user interests, skills, abilities and fitness levels within each area*
- *achieve a quality primary network accessing major destination points in Wellington and adjoining districts, and linking with an equitable distribution of secondary and local track networks and recreational facilities.*