

6.5 SECTOR 5: MAKARĀ PEAK



Key features / values:

- **Makarā Peak (412 m asl) a rugged landmark in Karori.**
- World-class, nationally recognised mountain biking destination.
- More than 35 kilometres of cross country mountain-bike-priority tracks.
- Community-led bike park / forest restoration project.
- Part of the continuous Skyline Track route.
- Significant further development planned.

Local communities of interest: **Karori, Makarā**

Local community volunteer activities include: track maintenance and building, animal pest control, restoration planting

6.5.2 OVERVIEW

Sector 5 (342.4 ha) extends **south from Makarā Road, taking in the Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park** and contiguous Council-owned land further south in the Karori Stream Valley, which is currently designated for waste water treatment. This latter parcel of land has been added to the Outer Green Belt as part of this management plan review. **Note: the term ‘Makarā Peak’ is being used in this plan instead of the official name, ‘Makarā Hill’, because it is the more commonly used name now, which most people recognise.**

6.5.2.1 **Makarā** Peak Mountain Bike Park

The mountain bike park is managed under the 10-year *Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park Master Plan 2017*, which comes under this over-arching Outer Green Belt Management Plan. Therefore, only the main features in the master plan are summarised here and readers wanting more detail are referred to the master plan itself, which is available online.

The mountain bike park was established in 1998. Since then it has been developed collaboratively by **the Council and Makarā Peak Supporters Group as both a mountain biking facility and an area for nature conservation and restoration.** By 2017, some 35 km of mountain biking priority tracks had been developed and **35,000 native seedlings planted, much of it by volunteer effort.** **Makarā Peak has become a regionally significant mountain bike destination offering a world-class mountain biking experience for riders of different skill levels and experience, though mainly geared for the intermediate-advanced grades of rider. The area’s development has paralleled steady growth in the mountain biking market and increasing demand for mountain biking opportunities.**

The master plan was developed to plan for mountain **biking growth and sustain the park's status as a** world-class local and regional mountain biking destination whilst also addressing existing issues and ensuring the principles of long-term sustainability are clearly articulated. Its objectives, developed through engagement with key stakeholders, are in brief: to be a regionally significant mountain biking facility and key component of the regional track network; to have tracks and facilities of a scope, scale and nature compatible with the regional status; to ensure adequate ongoing resourcing and funding; and to tell the story of the ecological context and conservation efforts alongside the signage and track development.

The main proposals are:

- *Sustainability framework:* The framework sets out principles and objectives to ensure ongoing community benefits, landscape benefits, ecological restoration and increased biodiversity, relationships with iwi, and consistent management guidelines to achieve high standards and minimise impacts.
- *Governance.* The partnership between the Council and Supporters will continue, formalised under a renewed Memorandum of Understanding, and with a series of clear governance frameworks covering the key threads of management and development. Responsibilities for implementing the master **plan are also set out under the auspices of a 'park manager' role, which** could be undertaken by one or more people.
- *Track network:* developed to offer a mainly cross-country experience with a wide range of route itineraries and loops appropriate for a regional facility including:
 - catering for novice, intermediate and advanced riders, especially for medium to advanced riders, who are the majority, and comparatively little for the technical grade-5 riders;
 - achieving a track system that users will find easier to understand, aided by upgraded way-finding;
 - better integrate the existing under-used tracks and develop new tracks in the southwest and north areas;
 - enhanced access from the north, including a safe at-**grade Makarā Road crossing**, connecting to the Skyline Track and an enhanced loop track system centred on Karori Park;
 - strengthened links to Wrights Hill and the south coast through the Outer Green Belt;
 - eventually eliminate two-way sections of track.
- *Entrances and access:* the main entrance/carpark on South Karori Road will continue to be the central hub but improved and expanded to increase its capacity. The other secondary entrances from local streets will remain to offer more route choices for locals especially, but not expanded.
- *In-park visitor facilities:* the master plan also proposes developing facilities within the park, mindful of providing for a range of visitors with varying degrees of experience and fitness over a track network that can take users to relatively remote and exposed places. Proposals include dedicated rest/picnic areas at nodes and destinations in the network; possible emergency shelters **at key points, and the provision of drinking water at the Makarā Peak summit.**
- *Ecological restoration* is to continue alongside the track development.

6.5.2.2 Land administration

The Council owns an area of approximately 106 ha down South Karori Road, which is currently designated for waste water treatment. Only a small proportion is required for this purpose, being the **Council's Western Waste Water Treatment** Plant, access road and the corridor that carries the sewer main into the treatment plant and the treated waste water out of it. It is proposed to reclassify most of the land as scenic reserve and manage it as part of the Outer Green Belt. The land containing the waste water treatment infrastructure and any other areas for future infrastructure needs will be surveyed off and will continue to be managed for wastewater purposes. The area of proposed reserve

land is former farmland covered in regenerating scrub and secondary native forest, and includes some kanuka/manuka forest on the east side of the Karori Stream with high natural value, which will usefully connect to Long Gully Reserve and Zealandia beyond. Most of the area is registered as a permanent forest sink and it will be managed as part of the wider Outer Green Belt ecological corridor, with the west side potentially added to the mountain bike park.

There are other utility uses on Makarā Peak also; transmission lines, a telecommunication tower near the summit and a water reservoir close to Makarā Road saddle. The utility operators have access to maintain their infrastructure.

6.5.2.3 Nature

This was once pastoral farmland, cleared of native forest except for some remnants at the south end and in steep gullies, but has not been grazed for many years. The succession of the former pasture to **scrub (mainly gorse and Darwin's barberry) to secondary forest has been aided by restoration** planting and pest animal control largely carried out by volunteers. Today the regenerating scrub and native forest includes mapou, kamahi, tawa, porokaiwhiri (pigeonwood), rewarewa, hinau and nikau (planted). The recently added areas of kanuka/manuka forest on the east side of the Karori Stream are valuable as they often have higher species diversity than other shrublands e.g. the presence of **ground orchids. An interesting feature of the flora on Makarā Peak are some hillsides where tree** ferns and astelias are prominent, which is also seen at Te Kopahou, perhaps reflecting more a shared coastal influence in these two areas.

The ecological restoration outlined in the *Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park Master Plan 2017*, is aligned with the conservation and ecological aspirations in this Outer Green Belt Management Plan and *Our Natural Capital*. Activities will include ongoing pest animal control, stabilising and replanting disturbed ground as soon as possible, and continuing with restoration planting to assist natural regeneration and diversify species. The restoration planting is doing well and Makara Peak promises to be another hub in the Outer Green Belt ecological corridor in future.

Most of Makarā Peak is registered as a permanent forest sink. The developing vegetation cover is also helping to protect the upper catchment of tributary streams to Karori Stream. Karori Stream is badly polluted from the urban area of Karori, which makes maintaining the health and water quality of the tributary streams even more important.

6.5.2.4 Landscape and land use

Makarā Peak is the dominant landform and landmark at the south end of Karori, rising to an elevation of 412 m asl. It is a steep landscape covered mainly in regenerating scrub and native forest. The skyline is mainly clear of structures except for a telecommunications tower close to the summit and transmission pylons that cross on the south flank. Although the track network is extensive, it has little visual impact from Karori as it is increasingly concealed by the advancing vegetation.

The landscape experience within Makarā Peak itself is changing. Tracks lower down the flanks and in gullies are becoming more sheltered and enclosed by vegetation. High up on the more rugged exposed tops, the vegetation is still low and wind-shorn, allowing visitors to experience the exhilarating climatic extremes and the spectacular 360° **views, across the Makarā windfarm to the Marlborough Sounds and Kaikoura Ranges of the South Island as well as Wellington's city, harbour** and mountains beyond. In future, popular viewpoints will need to be kept clear as the forest restoration and regeneration progresses.

6.5.2.5 Recreation and access

Walkers and runners in the mountain bike park

All tracks in the mountain bike park are prioritised for mountain biking use (*Open Space Action Plan 2016*), meaning that walkers and runners on the shared tracks are expected to give way to bikers. Some of the tracks are further designated for downhill mountain biking use only for safety reasons. The master plan comments on the benefit **of being a 'bike priority facility' without the challenges associated with other mixed-use areas in the open space network.** Nevertheless, it also seeks to encourage other recreational users, including local residents, to use the park and participate in associated activities. So, it will be important to ensure the signage, information and way-finding clearly communicates user behaviour codes and directs non-bikers to the most suitable tracks for avoiding potential conflict.

At least one through-route –the Skyline Track – should be allocated to shared use and clearly marked as such. While some Skyline Track walkers and runners might prefer to avoid the bike-priority area altogether (see alternative route proposed in Management Sector 4) the Skyline Track was conceived as a continuous route along the ridgetops of the Outer Green Belt and, so, it should traverse **Makarā Peak and enable walkers to experience and appreciate the park's unique story as well as its regenerating natural values.** A suitable route needs to be marked.

Events

Events are an important part of the value of the park and provide a significant benefit to the city. A balance needs to be struck between providing for general use and enjoyment and the ability to appropriately manage an event through partial or full closure of the park to the general public.

Toilets and water supply

An issue that isn't addressed in the master plan is the potential need to provide toilets within the park, as well as at the main entrance. As visitor numbers build, soiling could become a problem (as it has happened at the Mt Kaukau summit) and, so, future options should be investigated. Closely related is the question in the master plan of how to reliably supply drinking water to at least the **Makarā Peak summit to reduce risk of dehydration in unprepared riders.**

Relationship with Karori Park

Two proposals in the master plan are related to Karori Park: (i) to look into the feasibility of creating **a safe crossing of Makarā Road between the mountain bike park and Skyline Track / Karori Park, and** (ii) to at the same time look into the feasibility of developing safe and sustainable linking tracks **between Makarā Peak and Karori Park. Both these matters are relevant to the larger scale of the Outer Green Belt as follows.**

- As noted in Management Sector 4, **there have been issues in the 'wild side' of Karori Park with track proliferation and conflicts between different user groups.** A plan⁴³ was commissioned to assist community consultation on these issues and the agreed initiatives are being implemented, including rationalisation of and closure of some tracks and better demarcation for different users. Mountain bike tracks (except for the existing grade 5 98DH track) are aimed at providing an easy **trail for children and beginner riders, to complement the more advanced trails in the Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park.** However, the potential was noted for a new 'climb and descend' loop bike track **to be developed from the beginners' trail to the Makarā Road saddle quite separately from the existing network in the 'wild side'.** The development of such a new loop would be enhanced by a safe crossing at the top.
- The Skyline Track is a key continuous feature in the Outer Green Belt and, so, a safe road **crossing at Makarā Road would be desirable for all walkers, runners and bikers on the route, as well as people specifically using the mountain bike park.**

Outer Green Belt entrance

Primary Outer Green Belt entrances are being planned at regular intervals, with toilet and drinking water facilities (see general policy 4.5.2.4). One of these needs to be located somewhere in the vicinity

⁴³ *The wild side of Karori Park, dog exercise and trail plan 2015*

of Karori Park, given the distance north for Skyline Track walkers to Mt Kaukau, where toilets and water are proposed. The Makarā Road saddle would be a logical location but the limited space available for parking and additional facilities is a constraint. If toilets and water are developed at the Makarā Peak summit, however, only upgraded signage at the road crossing would be needed and Skyline walkers who choose to avoid Makarā Peak and take the alternative route through Karori Park, would find facilities there.

Expansion of the mountain bike park / track network south

The master plan provides for the Makarā Peak track network to extend into the wastewater treatment facility land down South Karori Road and some tracks have already been developed there. There is the opportunity for the network to connect to the start of the proposed south coast link from the end of South Karori Road (*Open Space Access Plan 2016 (OSAP), 7.5*). Making it a shared track, as per the OSAP network principles, would open up a range of long distance walking, running and biking opportunities.

6.5.2.6 Community

The Council and Makarā Peak Supporters Group have developed a strong collaborative working relationship over time, which is formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding. The supporters group has also worked hard to develop a positive relationship with the Karori community and is keen to encourage participation in shared activities, including nature conservation and track work, as well as mountain biking. Makarā Peak is used by Karori residents quite compatibly for walking and dog exercise in off-peak biking times (e.g. mid-week) and/or by using the wider tracks more suited to shared use.

6.5.3 ACTIONS

N = new initiative; E = Existing; Ex = Expand existing

(Notes: (i) Some 'new' projects come within larger funded programmes but have not yet been started. (ii) Implementation depends on budget allocations.)


6.5.3.1 Land administration		
Land status		
1. Survey off from the land designated for 'Wastewater Treatment Conveyance and Drainage Purposes' along South Karori Road all the land not required for the Council's waste water treatment infrastructure and reclassify it as scenic reserve (as proposed in Appendix III) to be managed as part of the Outer Green Belt reserves.	N	1-2 yrs
2. Initiate the process required to stop the legal road through Makarā Peak to facilitate its primary use for recreation.	N	3-5 yrs
6.5.3.2 Nature		
Caring for nature		
1. Protect and restore the biodiversity values of Makarā Peak by implementing the conservation and biodiversity policies in the master plan.	Ex	Ongoing
Streams		
2. Manage the tributary streams and potential effects on streams from track building and maintenance activities within this sector in accordance with the 'waterways and receiving environments' approach outlined on in the Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park Master Plan (where they are superior to	E	ongoing

regional, national and local policies in terms of protecting environmental values.)		
Indigenous flora and planting		
3. Continue restoration planting on Makarā Peak of a wide variety of indigenous species, with a focus on planting emergent tree species.	Ex	ongoing
4. Protect and encourage the spread of the tree fern / astelia plant communities that are a feature in places on Makarā Peak .	E	ongoing
Weeds and pest animals		
5. Implement the weed and pest control programmes for the Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park outlined in the master plan.	Ex	ongoing
6. Work with the national Biocontrol collective to monitor the effectiveness of the Darwin's barberry weevil as a biocontrol agent on Makarā Peak and Chartwell to guide improved biocontrol of Darwin's barberry in the Outer Green Belt.	E	ongoing
Research		
7. Support research into the factors limiting the dispersal of threatened or locally significant bird species from Zealandia such as tīeke (saddleback), kākāriki (red-crowned parakeet), and toutouwai (North Island Robin).	Ex	ongoing
6.5.3.3 Landscape and land use		
Landscape character and views		
1. Manage vegetation to maintain open views from the Makarā Peak summit and other memorable viewpoints, in conjunction with providing the rest places proposed in the master plan, where appropriate.	E	ongoing
2. Keep the ridgetops and hilltops along the main ridgeline clear of any additional buildings or utility structures to retain the sense of undeveloped open space on ridgetop and the skylines as natural when seen from elsewhere.	E	ongoing
6.5.3.4 Culture and Heritage		
Interpretation		
1. Support telling the unique story of community volunteering to both develop a world-class mountain biking park and restore natural values, as proposed in the master plan, and integrate that story into the proposed overall Outer Green Belt interpretation plan.	N	5-10 yrs
6.5.3.5 Recreation and access		
1. Consider the potential and feasibility for extending the track planning through the additional reserve land along South Karori Road to link in with a route down Karori Stream to the south coast, taking into account how it would connect with the existing track network, likely use, and potentially diversify the type of riding experiences at the mountain bike park.	N	ongoing

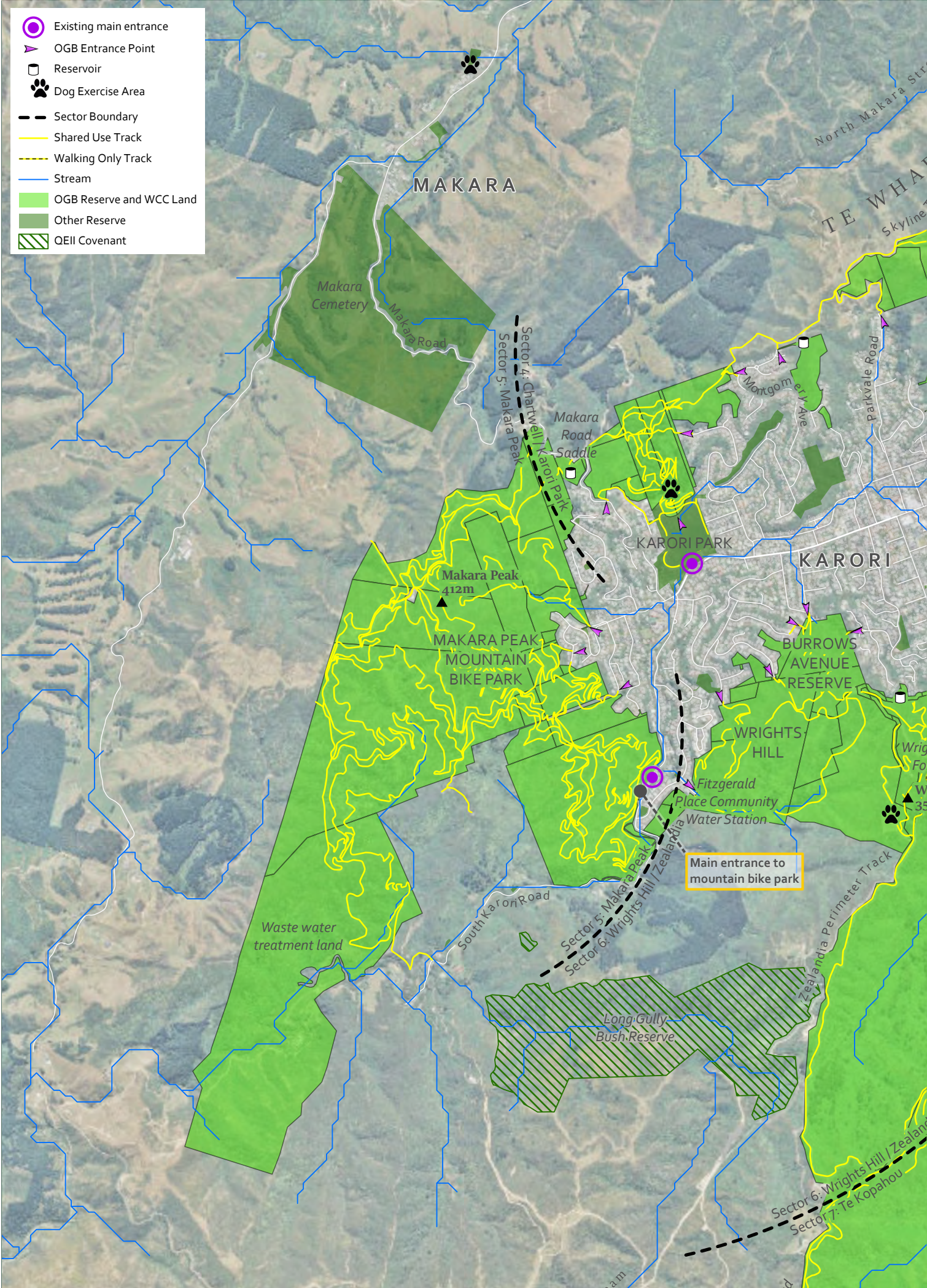
2. In consultation with the Makarā Peak Supporters, work out the best route for the Skyline Track to traverse the Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park, and mark it clearly to ensure Skyline users, travelling in either direction, can easily find their way.	E	ongoing
Facilities and way-finding		
3. Develop and/or signpost a walking/running route (Skyline Track) through the bike park for people on foot so that the Outer Green Belt aspiration of a connected route from Tawa to the South Coast is a reality and a valued part of the Makarā Peak experience.	E	ongoing
4. Investigate the inter-related questions of where and how to locate toilets and drinking water supply within the Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park and at suitable intervals along the Skyline Track.	E	3-5 yrs
5. Install signage at the Makarā Road saddle that makes clear the Outer Green Belt is on both sides of the road, with recreational opportunities.	E	ongoing
6. As part of the comprehensive review of signage and way finding proposed in the master plan, ensure that adequate provision is made to guide and communicate key messages to walkers and runners as well as riders, including codes of behaviour on bike-priority tracks, to ensure non-bikers feel welcome while also understanding their responsibilities.	N	ongoing
7. Ensure that dog walkers in the mountain bike park are aware of their responsibility to keep dogs on a leash and under control on bike-priority tracks.	E	ongoing
Events		
8. Limit the number of mountain biking events held in Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park to no more than 12 per year, to ensure all users have good access to the mountain bike park, while allowing sufficient events to reflect the park's significance as a mountain bike destination , as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 days full park closure per year, and no more than 1 per month; • 3 days partial park closure; • 3 days when events take place with no closure. 	N	ongoing
6.5.3.6 Community		
Work with volunteers		
1. Continue to support and partner with the Makarā Peak Supporters Group to implement the Makarā Peak Mountain Park Master Plan.	E	ongoing
Work with Neighbours		
2. Continue to encourage and support neighbouring landowners to participate in local pest animal management / weed control / restoration planting on their land, especially if it contains important native bush remnants or helps connect up or extend the restored forest on Makarā Peak.	Ex	ongoing

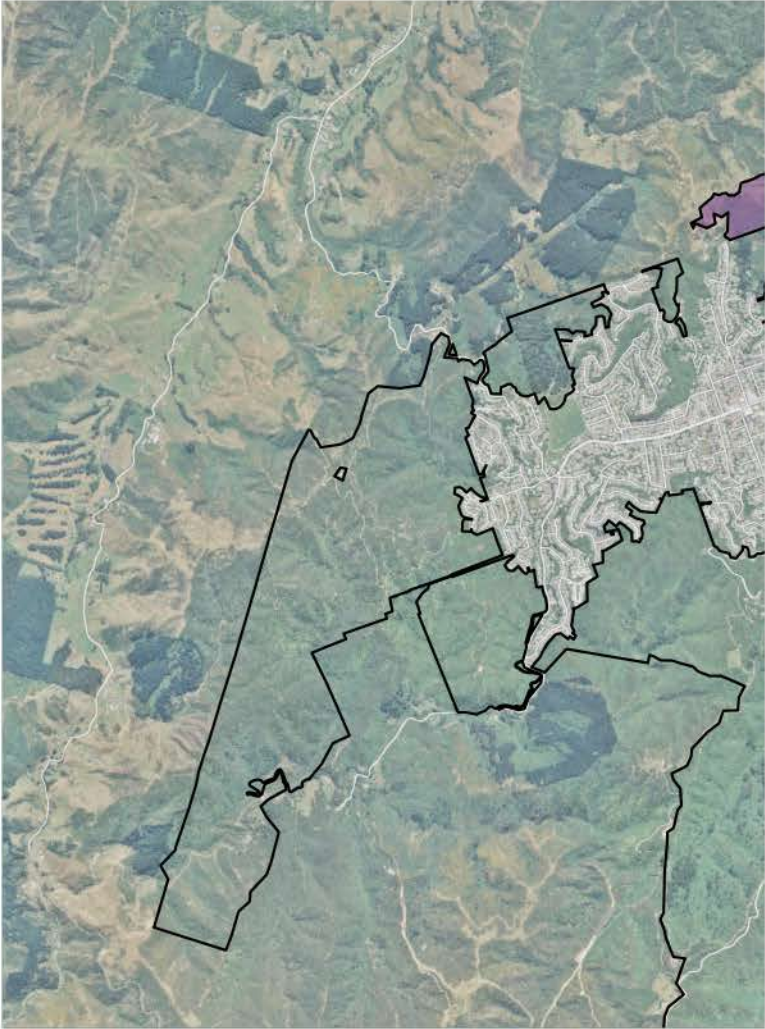
Sector 5: Makara Peak - Current

Scale: 1:24,000



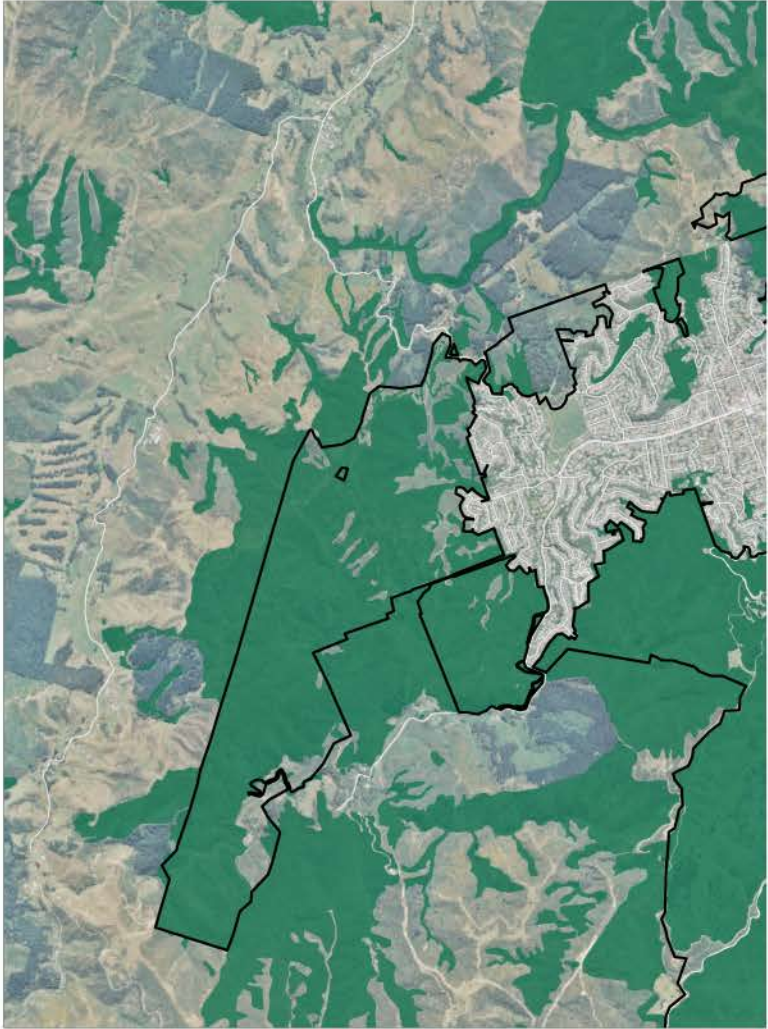
A horizontal scale bar with tick marks at 0, 0.25, 0.5, and 1 KM.





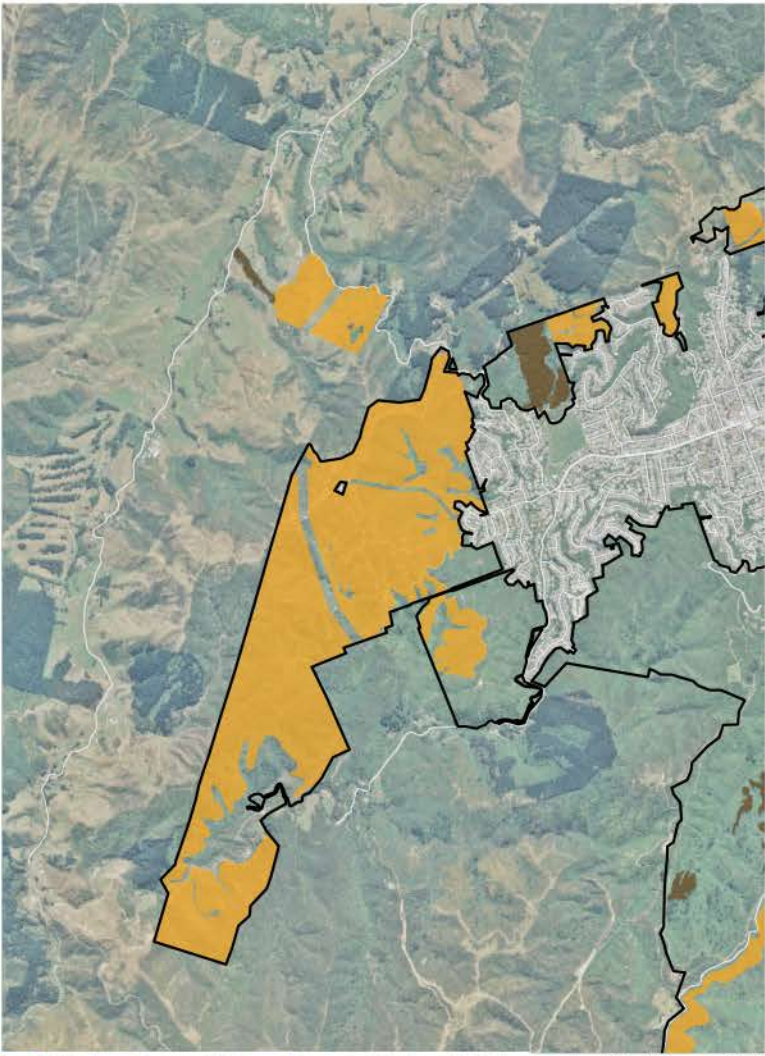
Key Native Ecosystem OGB Area

0 0.3 0.5 1 KM
Scale: 1:47,500



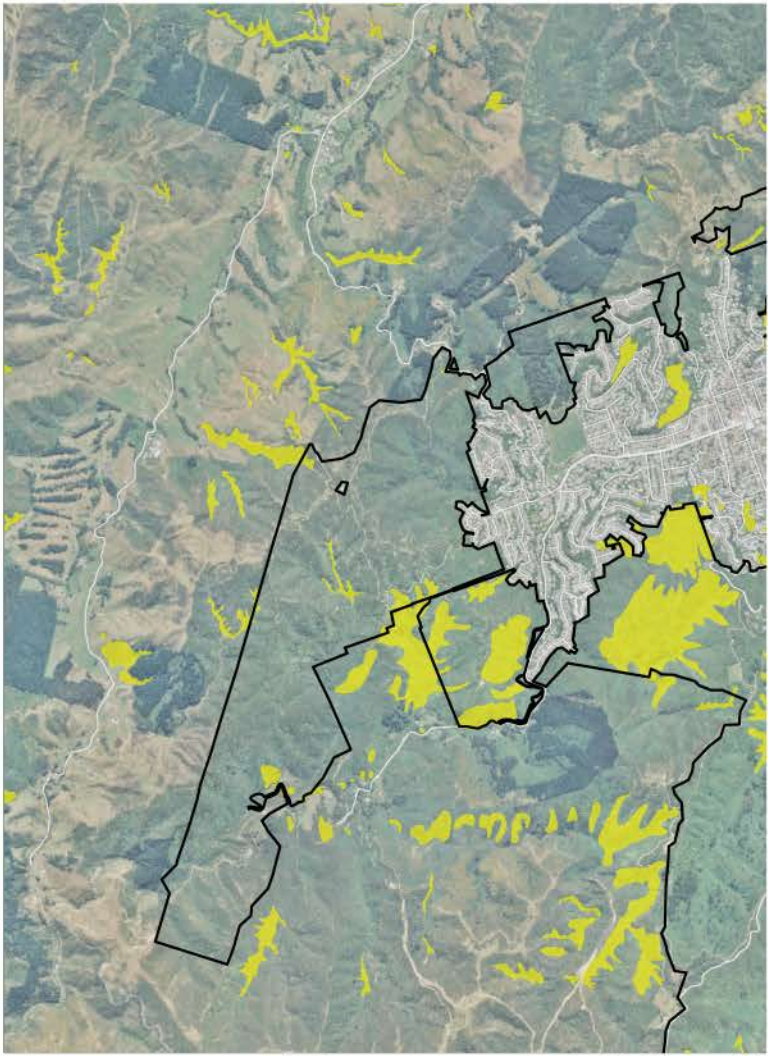
Important Natural Area OGB Area

0 0.3 0.5 1 KM
Scale: 1:47,500



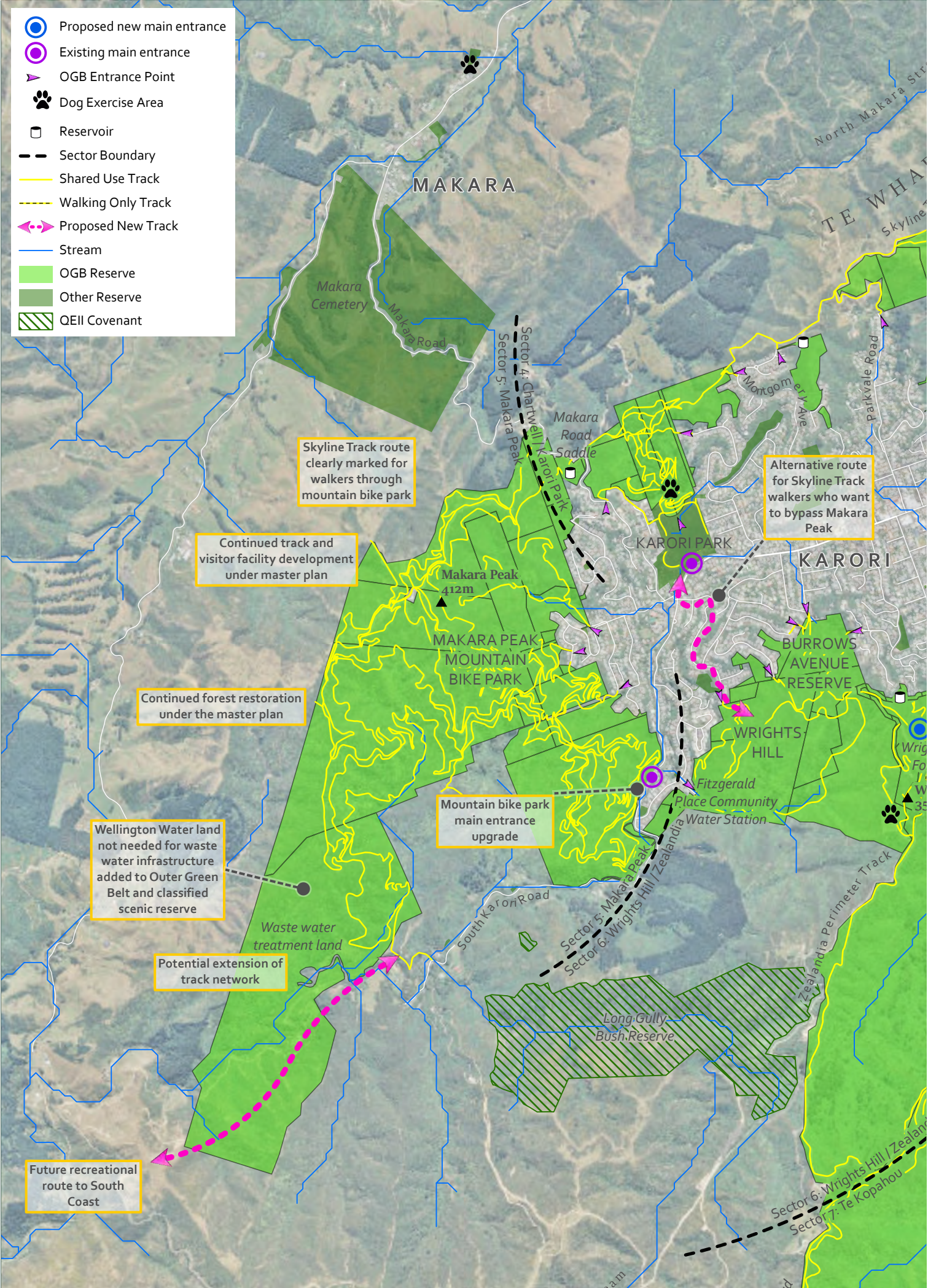
PFSI Pre-1990 ETS Post-1989 ETS OGB Area

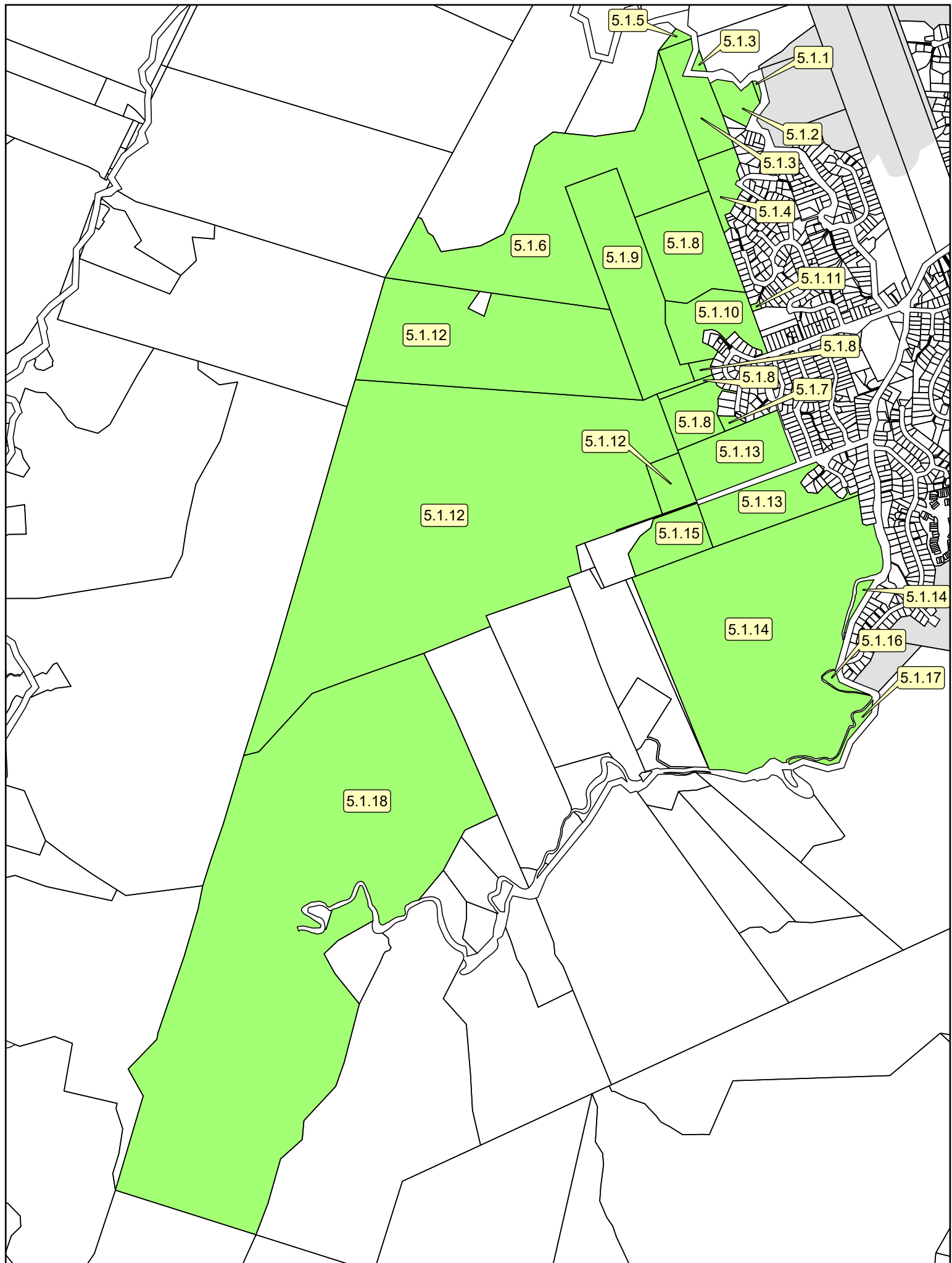
0 0.3 0.5 1 KM
Scale: 1:47,500



Important Forest Remnant OGB Area

0 0.3 0.5 1 KM
Scale: 1:47,500





Sector 5: Makara Peak

- OGB Parcel
- Other OGB Parcel

0 200 400 800 Metres

Scale: 1:15,000

Management Area	Site Name	Mapping Reference	WCC Site number	Legal Description	CT Reference /Parcel Id	Land Area	Reserve Description	Gazette Reference	District Plan Zoning	Notes	Actions needed
Sector 5: Makara Peak	Makara Hill Mountain Bike Park	5.1.1	2464	Pt Sec 41 Karori District	D1/1318	0.0760 ha	Scenic reserve		Open Space B		
		5.1.2	101	Pt Sec 42 Karori District and being also Pt Lot 1 Plan A/2142	942/12	1.4292 ha	Local Purpose (water Reservoir) Reserve	NZG 1555 9 May 2013	Open Space B		
		5.1.3	1205	Lots 1 & 2 DP 49848	28B/896	4.3123 ha	Scenic Reserve	GN 9561291.3	Open Space B		
		5.1.4	2074	Lot 1 DP 48353	20B/198	2.0477 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	NZG 1555 9 May 2013	Open Space B		
		5.1.5	2003	Lot 6 DP 68315	41D/286	0.2905 ha	Scenic Purposes	GN 9561291.3	Open Space B	Telecommunication rights and right of way over part of land in favour of Telecom Networks (transfer B.248575.7).	
		5.1.6	2003	Lot 5 DP 68315	41D/285	26.7760 ha	Scenic Purposes	GN 9561291.3	Open Space B	Telecommunication rights and right of way over part of land in favour of Telecom Networks (transfer B.248575.7). Subject to an easement to convey telecommunication signals to Transpower (transfer B786750.1).	
		5.1.7	2073	Lot 2 386195	344982	0.2807 ha	Scenic Reserve	NZGZ 2013, p 3957	Open Space B		
		5.1.8	2073	A/2142 and Pt Lot 2 Plan A/2539 and Pt Sec 65 Karori	49C/580	11.5491 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	NZG 1555 9 May 2013	Open Space B	This land is subject to a right of way created by transfer B6267.3. Subject to rights of way, right to install and maintain water supply tanks and right to convey water created by transfer B225616.1.	
		5.1.9	2073	Pt Sec 49 Makara District	49C/579	12.3213 ha	Scenic Reserve		Open Space B		
		5.1.10	2073	Lot 12 DP 82980	49C/578	4.8487 ha	Not Classified		Open Space B	Subject to Section 243(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991. B221575.1 Compensation Certificate under S.19 Public Works Act 1981. B597533.8 Transfer grant of rights to lay and maintain electric cables & to convey electric energy. B597533.9 Easement certificate for water, sewage, gas, ROW, electricity & telephone with adjoining properties. B.597533.11 Memorandum of Encumbrance to WCC	Proposed Classification Scenic Reserve b
		5.1.11	1351	Lot 3 DP 43187	39A/511	0.0811 ha	Scenic Reserve		Open Space A		
		5.1.12	2076	Pt Sec 47 & 48 Makara District and Pt Sec 53 Karori District	31A/318	109.7403 ha	Scenic Purposes (b)	NZG 1555 9 May 2013	Open Space B	The land transferred to WCC in 1994 (ex-landfill land. It is zoned Open Space B. Transmission Lines cross through the middle of this land. The land is also subject to the following: 7251711.1 Compensation Certificate under S19 PW Act 1981. 866267.3 Transfer grant of Right of Way. Subject to an easement to convey Telecommunication signals over part of the land to Transpower (transfer B786750.1)	

Management Area	Site Name	Mapping Reference	WCC Site number	Legal Description	Ct Reference / Parcel Id	Land Area	Reserve Description	Gazette Reference	District Plan Zoning	Notes	Actions needed
		5.1.13	1320	Pt Sec 43 Karori District	46B/836	5.6059 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	NZG 1555 9 May 2013	Open Space B	New addition since 2004	
		5.1.14	1320	Pt Sec 45, Karori District	Part of 46B/837	Approx 45 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	NZG 1555 9 May 2013	Open Space B	Transmission lines cross over part of this land. Subject to an easement to convey Telecommunication signals over Part Section 45 Karori District. Compensation certificates, reference 170815.1 & 23079.1 against part of the land under Section 17 Public Works Amendment Act 1948. The land is held as Council freehold, it is not a reserve.	
		5.1.15	2514	Lot 1 DP 16122	WN648/13	3.75 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	NZG 1555 9 May 2013		New addition since 2004	
		5.1.16	1322	Lot 4 DP 51083	20C/396	0.2900 ha	Scenic Purposes		Open Space B	Adjoins Karori Stream.	
		5.1.17	1322	Lot 3 DP 51083	20C/395	0.5480 ha	Scenic Purposes		Open Space B	Adjoins Karori Stream.	
		5.1.18	1191	Sec 1 SO 37211	WN46C/762	106.21 ha	Wastewater Treatment Conveyance and Drainage Purposes	NZGZ 1995/ p1289	Rural		Propose rezoning Open Space B