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# Summary of Draft Outer Green Belt Management Plan 2019

The Outer Green Belt is Wellington's wild green connector. It visibly defines the edge of the city, protects and connects nature, and invites people to escape and explore.



Rangitūhi  
Colonial Knob  
(in Porirua City)



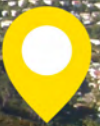
Kilmister Tops



Mt Kaukau



Johnston Hill



Karori Park

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Absolutely Positively  
**Wellington** City Council  
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

## **We'd like to know what you think of the plan.**

This summary contains key points. To see the full draft plan go to [wellington.govt.nz/OGBPlan](https://wellington.govt.nz/OGBPlan). Send us your feedback and ideas by 5pm, Monday 25th March 2019.

# What is the Outer Green Belt?

The Outer Green Belt is a series of reserves along the ridges immediately west of the city and suburbs. Managed by Wellington City Council, it creates a belt of public open space, from the city's northern boundary to the south coast. These reserves help define the character of the city and provide places for nature to thrive and people to enjoy.

### Guiding principles

Five guiding principles highlight what is special about the Outer Green Belt and will be used to help manage change, weigh up decisions and prioritise implementation.

Natural skylines, undeveloped ridges and hills, and healthy native forests and streams are the foundation of the Outer Green Belt.

Continuity and connectivity is fundamental to the Outer Green Belt concept.

The Outer Green Belt's diversity of landscape character and outdoor experience is a strength to be reinforced.

People's enjoyment of the Outer Green Belt is grounded in being able to escape to wild places with a strong 'Wellington' sense of place.

Community participation in managing the Outer Green Belt is enabled and supported.

Open spaces contribute to a diverse city environment with a wide range of interrelated benefits including amenity value, biodiversity and landscape protection, recreation and social opportunities, ecosystem services, contribution to the health and wellbeing of residents, and both direct and indirect economic benefits. The management plan will be used to ensure there is consistent protection and management of the key values and functions of the Outer Green Belt reserves as listed below.



Nature



Landscape and urban edge



Culture and heritage



Recreation and access



Community and identity

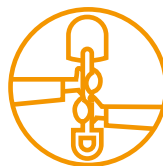


Resilience and city economy





# Plan highlights



## **Complete the Outer Green Belt**

Maximise the recreation, landscape and ecological values of the Outer Green Belt by considering ways to fill the 'gaps' in connectivity.

## **Protect the land under the Reserves Act**

Most of the Outer Green Belt is already scenic reserve but some land needs to be classified or reclassified. A separate consultation document containing site descriptions, assessments and recommendations is available online at [wellington.govt.nz/OGBPlan](http://wellington.govt.nz/OGBPlan)

## **Complete the Skyline Track**

Achieve a continuous ridgetop route from the Porirua boundary to the south coast, clearly sign-posted all the way.

## **Protect and enhance the ecological corridor**

The Outer Green Belt reserves contain much of Wellington's most important biodiversity, including iconic native birds, along with other rare and threatened species.

## **Protect and restore streams**

The Outer Green Belt contains the headwaters of numerous streams. Ensuring vegetation cover at the edges of waterways and excluding sheep and cattle will benefit freshwater quality and aquatic habitats.

## **Weed and pest animal control**

Continue to manage within the wider city programme, prioritising control in areas of high natural value and supporting research and development of biocontrol methods, in particular, of Darwin's barberry.

## **Protect the landscape**

Keep the largely undeveloped character of the Outer Green Belt as a natural setting for the city and for recreation; limiting buildings, structures and earthworks to those required for outdoor recreation or essential utilities and, if possible, to the reserve edges.

## **Trial phasing out grazing**

Grazing is currently used to maintain pasture on the ridgetops north of Makara Road but there have been issues with stock damage and incompatibility with recreational users. Costly additional fencing would be needed to exclude stock from key natural and carbon farming areas. Alternative methods of keeping the ridgetops in open grassland are to be trialled.

## **Provide and promote outdoor recreational opportunities**

Provided they are appropriate to the natural or rural environments of the Outer Green Belt, a wide range of activities can be accommodated and will be encouraged for people's enjoyment, health and wellbeing.

## **Enhance the track network**

Tracks are the main recreational infrastructure on the Outer Green Belt (compared to suburban parks, for instance, where there might be sports fields and club rooms). The track network will be developed according to the Open Space Access Plan 2016 and any additional track proposals will be assessed under specified criteria in consultation with the community.

## **Develop five new main entrances**

There will be ten main entrances (with toilets, drinking water and map boards) at regular intervals along the Outer Green Belt. There are five existing entrances with five new ones proposed.

## **Heritage inventory and interpretation**

Develop an inventory of cultural and heritage sites to help plan their management and tell the interwoven stories of mana whenua, early settlement, city development and nature conservation.

## **Encourage and support community partnership**

The huge rise in volunteering and community partnerships on the Outer Green Belt is invaluable and, by bringing people together, helps communities to be resilient. The Council is committed to ongoing support and encouragement.

## **New rules section**

The 2004 management plan did not have rules. Rules have been introduced to clarify the way decisions will be made and to better manage certain activities through permits or licenses.

## **Monitoring plan**

A monitoring plan is proposed to consistently gather information about the Outer Green Belt, evaluate trends and changes, and inform decisions. Monitoring will potentially include citizen and visitor surveys, ecological surveys and monitoring, track counters and photography.

# Sector overview

## Sector 1: Te Ngahere-o-Tawa / Redwood

### Local communities:

Tawa, Redwood, Ohariu Valley

This sector extends from the Porirua City boundary along the ridge above Linden, Tawa and Redwood. It includes Spicer Forest, the recently acquired Te Ngahere-o-Tawa (former Forest of Tane), the 'airstrip block' forest plantation, Redwood Bush and stream headwaters. Features include regenerating native vegetation, original native forest remnants and forestry plantations. Restoring native forest to the plantation areas will require long-term management whether or not the exotic trees are harvested. Long-awaited opportunities to develop a more connected track network are opening up with recent land acquisition and likely additional reserves as an outcome of the Upper Stebbings Structure Plan.

## Sector 2: Ohariu Ridge

### Local communities:

Redwood, Stebbings Valley, Churton Park, Glenside

This sector follows Ohariu Ridge above Stebbings Valley and Churton Park up to Old Coach Road, where the Skyline Track currently ends. Much of the ridge is in private ownership, with no public access, representing the largest gap in the Outer Green Belt. Until recently existing reserves were small and scattered but are now better connected by new reserve land that will provide access from Churton Park onto the ridge through to Ohariu Valley Road. Much of the existing reserves are in pasture, with vegetation starting to regenerate in the gullies and steeper areas. Long-awaited opportunities to develop a track network are now opening up, with more reserves also likely through the Upper Stebbings Structure Plan.

## Sector 3: Kaukau

### Local communities:

Johnsonville, Broadmeadows, Khandallah, Ngaio, Crofton Downs, Ohariu Valley

Sector three extends along Te Wharangi ridge from Old Coach Road to the Chartwell spur. It is one of Wellington's most prominent skyline ridges, featuring the landmark Mt Kaukau (445 m ht) with its broadcasting tower. It includes extensive forest areas, including Johnsonville and Khandallah Parks; part of a regionally significant key native ecosystem containing threatened plant and animal species. Sector three provides exhilarating recreational experiences with spectacular views on open ridgetops. Mt Kaukau is a popular visitor destination. The Skyline Track, Te Araroa Walkway and Northern Walkway follow the ridgeline. Heritage features include the Ōwhāriu-Thorndon track formerly used by Māori and the nationally significant Old Coach Road.

## Sector 4: Chartwell / Karori Park

### Local communities:

Chartwell, Crofton Downs, Wilton, Northland, Karori

This sector extends along Te Wharangi ridge from Chartwell spur to Makarā Road, and includes Ōtari-Wilton's Bush. It creates a locally prominent skyline, clear of structures, including the rolling Kilmister Tops and landmark Johnston Hill (360 m ht). Extensive forest areas are part of a regionally significant area containing threatened plants and animals. Ōtari-Wilton's Bush is a nationally significant visitor destination for its native forest and botanic garden, and has its own management plan. The Skyline Track follows the ridgeline.

Heritage includes nature conservation history at Ōtari-Wilton's Bush, plus early Māori and farming heritage. Track rationalisation in the hillside areas of Karori Park have been implemented in recent years, to help resolve user conflicts.

## Sector 5: Makarā Peak

### Local communities:

Karori, Makarā

This sector includes Makarā Peak and waste water treatment land down Karori Stream beyond the end of South Karori Road. Makarā Peak (412 m ht) is a rugged landmark and lookout in Karori, gradually becoming reforested through natural regeneration aided by community-led forest restoration. The Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park has been developed in partnership between the Council and Makarā Peak Supporters Group. More than 35-kilometres of cross-country mountain bike priority tracks have been developed and significant further development is planned to achieve the objective of a world-class mountain biking destination.

## Sector 6: Wrights Hill / Zealandia

### Local communities:

Karori, Highbury

This sector includes Wrights Hill and Zealandia, as well as the saddle that crosses from Wrights Hill to Hawkins Hill ridge. The flat-topped summit of Wrights Hill (360 m) is one of the most accessible ridgetop areas in the Outer Green Belt, reached via Wrights Hill Road and various tracks, including a disabled access track. It includes significant World War II heritage features associated with Wrights Hill Fortress with dramatic views across the city and into Zealandia below. Zealandia eco-sanctuary is a nationally significant visitor destination, managed under its own strategy. Most of this sector is covered in regenerating and remnant native forest, which helps protect the headwaters of Kaiwharawhara, Karori and Silver Streams. The track network includes the Skyline Track route, a number of local connector tracks, a downhill mountain bike track and the perimeter track around Zealandia.

## Sector 7: Te Kopahou

### Local communities:

Brooklyn, Happy Valley, Ōwhiro Bay

Sector seven includes the steep ridges and valleys west of Happy Valley Road to the main ridgeline that runs from Zealandia to the south coast. It adjoins part of Taputeranga Marine Reserve. This rugged, comparatively remote coastal landscape is significant for its rare and threatened native species and ecosystems. It includes much of the Te Rimurapa heritage precinct significant to mana whenua and features historic sites associated with early settlement and World War II. Popular visitor destinations include the shoreline walk to Red Rocks seal colony and the ridgetop Brooklyn wind turbine lookout. There are challenging opportunities to explore the track network. Hawkins Hill, with its landmark radome, is the Outer Green Belt's highest point (495 m ht). A large area is held for refuse disposal purposes but most is not used for that purpose.



Sector 1:  
Te Ngahere-o-Tawa/Redwood

Key actions

- Focus on track and entrance development for better connections up to and along the ridge, including connector routes to reserves and future adventure park in Porirua.
- Horse-riding priority in Spicer Forest; new shared bridle/walking trails planned.
- Harvest airstrip forestry block before 2025; staged removal of Spicer and Te Ngahere-o-Tawa plantations. Restoration to native forest.
- Manage Redwood Bush and other forest remnants as an ecological hub in the northern suburbs for seed sources and wildlife habitat.
- Support community in forest restoration, including establishing a community plant nursery.

Sector 4:  
Chartwell / Karori Park

Key actions

- Trial phasing out grazing, keeping key ridgetop areas open for recreation and views.
- Protect and manage the forests as important habitat along the Outer Green Belt ecological corridor, and protect the Kaiwharawhara Stream catchment.
- Investigate developing a new entrance off Chartwell Drive with long-term potential for alternative use of the woolshed building.
- New up and downhill mountain bike loop track from Karori Park to Makarā Road saddle.
- Investigate safe crossing of Makarā Road saddle for pedestrians and bikers.
- Consult the community about proposed grade 5 mountain bike tracks in pine plantations north of Johnston Hill.
- Mark an alternative route for Skyline Track walkers who wish to bypass Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park, from Karori Park to Wrights Hill.

Sector 6:  
Wrights Hill / Zealandia

Key actions

- Develop a main entrance with toilets and access for less physically able visitors at the Wrights Hill summit carpark.
- Protect and manage Zealandia and Wrights Hill as a hub for restoring wildlife along the Outer Green Belt ecological corridor and across the city.
- Protect and restore forest cover as natural habitat and for catchment management.
- Support the ongoing heritage conservation and interpretation of the WWII features.
- Revegetate a buffer strip on the western edge of Zealandia once private encroachments are removed.

Sector 2:  
Ohariu Ridge

Key actions

- Look for opportunities to connect reserves and/or public access along Ohariu Ridge.
- Landscape development plan for new reserve on ridge above Churton Park, including tracks, future entrance and ecological restoration.
- Pursue extension of Skyline Track north from Old Coach Road to Churton Park via the new property.
- Advocate for more reserves and extended track network from the Upper Stebbings Structure Plan, including potential main ridgetop entrance to Outer Green Belt.
- Engage community in planning and development of expanding reserves.

Sector 5:  
Makarā Peak

Key actions

- Continue to implement the Makarā Peak Mountain Bike Park master plan in order to create a world-class mountain biking destination.
- Clearly signpost a safe shared Skyline Track route through the mountain bike and across to Wrights Hill.
- Upgrade and expand the main mountain bike park entrance on South Kaori Road.
- Investigate options for toilets and water supply on Makara Peak.
- Ensure the status and code of behaviour around bike-priority tracks is well explained in signage and way-finding.
- Classify the waste water land not needed for waste water infrastructure as scenic reserve.
- Investigate safe crossing of Makarā Road saddle for pedestrians and bikers.

Sector 3:  
Kaukau

Key actions

- Trial phasing out grazing while keeping the ridgetops open for recreation and views.
- Protect and manage the forests as important habitat along the Outer Green Belt ecological corridor, and protect the Kaiwharawhara Stream catchment.
- Work with Mt Kaukau summit landowner, Kordia, to co-ordinate summit management and protection, and investigate proposed development of new summit toilet and drinking water facilities.
- New local connector/loop tracks on south flanks of Mt Kaukau, around new Silverstream subdivision, and to Rifle Range Road.
- Investigate potential entrance at McLintock Street North.
- Explore ways to better protect Old Coach Road from grazing damage.

Sector 1:  
Te Ngahere-o-Tawa  
/Redwood

Either A,  
B,  
or C.

Sector 2:  
Ohariu Ridge

Either A,  
or B.

Sector 3:  
Kaukau

Sector 4:  
Chartwell/  
Karori Park

Sector 5:  
Makarā Peak

Sector 6:  
Wrights Hill/  
Zealandia

Sector 7:  
Te Kopahou

Sector 7:  
Te Kopahou

Key actions

- Protect unclassified land south of the land fill area as scenic reserve.
- Prioritise weed and pest animal control to protect significant natural values.
- Prioritise research to inform how best to protect and restore the vulnerable ecology.
- Consult the community about future track requirements and potential development.
- Review the management of the coastal road, taking into account different user group interests and the effects of climate change.
- Manage Hawkins Hill Road with those who have legal rights of way to benefit public use.
- Develop a main entrance with toilets at the Brooklyn wind turbine, and explore potential improved parking at the bottom of the Tip Track.
- Investigate potential for a coastal walkway route beyond this sector to Makara, in partnership with landowners.
- Review progress on restoring former Owhiro Quarry site and its stability.
- Protect and interpret the rich cultural and historic heritage in this sector.
- Protect and restore native vegetation to the buffer strip around the Southern Landfill.

Have your say

We're reviewing the 2004 Outer Green Belt Management Plan to bring it up to date. The new draft plan has been updated in its direction and policies. It will guide the operational management of the Outer Green Belt reserves for the next 10 years.

**Plan structure**  
The plan is structured in six parts plus appendices.

**Part 1** outlines the plan's purpose, scope and structure; its role within the Wellington City Council's work; funding and reporting; and the Council's relationship with mana whenua in managing the Outer Green Belt.

**Part 2** presents an overall vision for the Outer Green Belt and sets out five guiding principles to underpin management and decision-making.

**Part 3** describes the key values of the Outer Green Belt.

**Part 4** provides the general objectives and policies that can be applied to all the reserves in the Outer Green Belt under seven themes: nature, landscape and land use, recreation and access, culture and heritage, community and identity, and implementation and monitoring.

**Part 5** contains rules for use and development.

**Part 6** provides more detailed information about the seven management sectors, together with potential actions.

**How to give your feedback**  
We'd like to receive your comments and ideas about:

- the Outer Green Belt as a whole
- any areas of the Outer Green Belt of particular interest to you
- proposed reserve classifications (Appendix III in the draft plan).

Copies of the draft plan and a detailed reserves classification proposal are available from your local library, community centre or the Wellington City Council Service Centre.

You can comment on the draft plan by completing a submission form:

**Online:** [wellington.govt.nz/OGBplan](https://wellington.govt.nz/OGBplan)  
**Email:** [outergreenbelt@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:outergreenbelt@wcc.govt.nz)  
**Post:** PO Box 2199, Wellington 6140

Tell us what  
you think