

Park-specific management and policies
Belmont Regional Park



6.3 Belmont Regional Park

6.3.1 Legal status

Territorial Authority: Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council

TITLE HELD	EXPLANATION
Wellington Regional Council	<p>Waitangirua Farm¹³ within the park is owned by Wellington Regional Council and was purchased with the assistance of Crown grants from Landcorp Farming Ltd in July 2006, totalling 1,000 hectares. It is primarily managed as farm, by way of a lease. However, it also contains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walkway through the farm under the New Zealand Walkways Act 1990 • Eight areas covenanted to the Minister of Conservation (80 hectares). <p>Wellington Regional Council also owns three areas of land as fee simple, totalling 293 hectares. A small 0.56 hectare block at the end of Cornish Street, Petone, and two larger blocks at Stratton Street. A further 2.12 hectare block is held as a utility reserve for the purpose of a future water reservoir to transfer to Porirua City Council.</p>
Hutt City Council	<p>Owns 1,078 hectares of the park. The majority of these lands are recreation reserve and by agreement (dated 22 November 2004) Hutt City Council transferred its administering body powers and responsibility for management to Greater Wellington. These areas are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kilmister Block (632 hectares) currently leased to Landcorp Farming Limited • Korokoro Valley/Maungaraki recently gazetted scenic reserve • Sweetacres (Normandale Road area) a number of recreation reserves (43 hectares in total) • Speedy's Stream/Belmont Stream (65 hectare block).
Department of Conservation	<p>Owns two recreation reserves: Dry Creek Recreation Reserve (532 hectares) and the Takapu Block (290 hectares) that are controlled and managed by Greater Wellington.</p>
Wellington City Council	<p>Owns 105 hectare parcel (accessed off Horokiwi Road). Proposed to be gazetted as scenic reserve and managed by Greater Wellington</p>
Porirua City Council	<p>Owns 44 hectare parcel (near Takapu Road). To be managed by Greater Wellington by agreement (Section 17 of LGA 2002)</p>

¹³ Porirua City Council also acquired 44.23 hectares of Waitangirua Farm. This land is held as recreation reserve. It is intended that Porirua City Council (PCC) and Greater Wellington will enter into an agreement, whereby Porirua City Council will transfer its administering body powers and responsibility for management to Greater Wellington.

Porirua City Council also owns the eight hectare recreation reserve Cannons Creek Lake Reserve which provides a western entrance to the park, as outlined in a memorandum of understanding between Councils.

Refer to Appendix 2 for legal descriptions of land parcels.

There is also a designation for the Transmission Gully route project¹⁴ which dissects the western section of the park (Cannon's Creek) from the rest of Belmont Park. This has significant implications for the park and its future management. At the time of writing of this plan the New Zealand Transport Agency was gathering information in preparation for the possible future lodging of regulatory consents for the project.

The main gas line, substation and transmission line are also present in the park as existing public utilities.

6.3.2 Background

Belmont Regional Park is located in the hill country between Porirua, the Hutt Valley and Wellington city, encompassing 3,500 hectares, with large sections of the park including ridge-tops visible from Hutt, Porirua and Wellington cities. Characterised by steep hills and valleys, it is the head of several stream catchments which define the park: Duck Creek to the north, Cannons Creek and Takapu Stream to the west, Korokoro Stream to the south, and Speedy's Stream and Belmont Stream to the east. Ancient boulders can be seen on top of the peneplain.

The majority of the park is pasture land, while some of the steeper slopes and gullies are re-vegetating in gorse and native bush. Native vegetation dominates the Korokoro and Dry Creek valleys. Small blocks of radiata pine and macrocarpa are situated at Stratton Street and Korokoro Forks. There are a number of lowland indigenous bush remnants which are some of the few remaining in the southwest of the region. The indigenous habitat of the park provides a "bird corridor" to Wellington city and beyond.

Part of Belmont Regional Park provided a route between Wellington and Porirua harbours for Ngāti Toa Rangātira and the various Wellington based Taranaki iwi who retain mana whenua over these lands. Belmont Regional Park also contains Korokoro Stream known as Te Korokoro o te Mana - the throat of "Te Mana" - meaning the food supply of Te Mana (the stream was an important food supply source).

The park's European heritage features include the original main coach road from Wellington, the Korokoro concrete gravity dams¹⁵ built in 1903 – and munitions bunkers from World War II.

Belmont Regional Park's first management plan was established in 1977, with a focus on open space and recreation.

The park offers panoramic hilltop views with many opportunities for walkers, cyclists and horse riders. A number of multisport events occur in the park. The Stratton Street Woolshed is a facility used for education, events and meetings. A number of community groups have interest in the park, including Friends of Belmont, Belmont Area Mountain Bike Association, and others that are involved in forest restoration (Korokoro Environmental Group, Friends of Maara Roa and other individuals).

For more information refer to the resource statement documents.

¹⁴ The 27-kilometre Transmission Gully route is a proposed highway that will run from MacKay's Crossing, just north of Paekakariki, crossing State Highway 58 to the southern reconnection to State Highway 1 near Linden. The project is one component of a package of rail and road options that are intended to address congestion, traffic flow and road safety in the Wellington Region [Source: New Zealand Transport Agency website, April 2010]

¹⁵ The upper dam was built for town water supply and the lower dam for mill operations. (Source: Walls for water, Offer R.E. 1997)

6.3.3 Key park characteristics

Land

- Ecological corridors between Porirua, Lower Hutt and Wellington cities
- Important in-stream and downstream values of Duck Creek, Korokoro Stream, Cannon's Creek, Belmont and Speedy's Streams
- Original forest remnants and regenerating bush (including Cannons Creek Reserve, Korokoro Bush)
- Highly visible landscape surrounding areas, including grassed rolling farmland hilltops with open vistas onto the Hutt Valley and Porirua areas
- Geological features, including block fields, peneplain remnants and solifluction deposits.

People

- Various historical features, including the munitions bunkers, Old Coach Road, water supply infrastructure
- Historical Māori routes
- A sustainable working farm operation, which helps to provide open space experience
- Recreation links between Porirua, Lower Hutt and Wellington cities
- Important mountain biking area for medium to challenging rides
- Significant sites for community restoration projects.

6.3.4 Management focus

The focus for Belmont Regional Park is to:

1. Protect the geological landscape of the boulder block fields
2. Provide extensive open space for outdoor recreation by retaining farming of the open tops
3. Conserve and enhance native forest in the valleys
4. Maintain examples of the historic munitions bunkers

5. Implement a sustainable farm management plan¹⁶
6. Re-evaluate future land management of areas that are separated by the Transmission Gully motorway project from the main park body.

6.3.5 Specific policies

Biodiversity and ecosystems

- a. To have particular regard for the high priority indigenous areas when determining ecosystem protection and enhancement priorities (included in Table 4).

Landscape and geological features

- b. To protect the park's key landscape features and values listed below from inappropriate use and development:
 - Grassed open hill tops (generally above the 250 metre contour)
 - "Fossil gullies" (filled with soil and associated materials from surrounding hills).
- c. To advocate for the protection of the park's key geological features and values listed below from inappropriate use and development:
 - The peneplain remnants of Boulder Hill (442 m), Belmont (456 metres), Cannons Head (390 metres), Belmont Road Trig (382 metres), Round Knob (410 metres), northeast of Hill Road (362 metres) and ITA (362 metres)
 - Remnants of greywacke of Belmont Block Field (part) and Hill Road Block Field (part)
 - The glacial feature of the solifluction debris tongue (Hill Road area)
 - The fault-related features of Korokoro Stream, Dry Creek and Takapu Stream, as well as the notched ridges and spurs along the western hills of Lower Hutt.

¹⁶ Sustainable farm plans are being prepared for each of the major farmed areas in the regional parks. The recommendations of these will assist Greater Wellington to make decisions about what areas remain farmed, what areas should be retired or put into alternative use, or riparian management.

Cultural heritage

- d. To manage the key sites of cultural heritage significance in the park, which include:
- The lower dam in Korokoro Valley
 - The upper reservoir and dam in Korokoro Valley
 - That portion of the Belmont – Pauatahanui Old Coach Road and associated early settler homestead sites within the park
 - The Belmont historic munitions bunkers and associated facilities.

Land management

- e. To manage the open hill tops of Belmont through pastoral farming operations with either sheep and/or cattle.
- f. To permit the use of aircraft for farming, management purposes or emergency purposes within the park.
- g. To prohibit the construction of wind farms in Belmont Regional Park.

Explanation: While there has been consideration of wind farm developments in the park, it is not considered an appropriate activity under the current management focus. Any proposals for developments of this kind in a recreation reserve would require a public consultation process and a change to a local purpose reserve.

Visitor services

- h. To manage the following as the main public entrances:
- Cornish Street (Korokoro)
 - Oakleigh Street (Maungaraki)
 - Stratton Street (Normandale)
 - Dry Creek (Haywards)
 - Cannons Creek (Porirua).
- i. To manage the following as secondary park entry areas:
- Normandale Road (Normandale)
 - Kaitangata Crescent (Kelson)
 - Hill Road

- Takapu Road
- Belmont Road (Pauatahanui).

Partnership in parks

- j. To recognise Ngāti Toa Rangatira and the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust's relationship to the park through:
- Identification of the traditional trails through the park
 - Development of relationship to the park through interpretation and other media.
- k. To support a partnership approach to improving the Korokoro Stream catchment through:
- Maintaining water quality of the Korokoro Stream
 - Protecting and enhancing indigenous forest cover and insect and bird life
 - Maintaining and improving the habitat for indigenous fish.
- l. To liaise with, in regards to decision making, the Department of Conservation, Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Wellington City Council and New Zealand Historic Places Trust on the management and use of the land to provide an integrated approach to environmental management programmes and recreational activities.
- m. To support the partnership with the Friends of Belmont, Korokoro Environment Group and Friends of Maara Roa (Cannons Creek) and other formal groups or associations in implementing and meeting the outcomes of this plan.
- n. To ensure that any new partnerships contribute to advocacy, restoration, recreation or education outcomes for Belmont Regional Park.
- o. To adopt a management agreement for the ongoing management of land purchased by adjoining territorial authorities to be included as part of Belmont Regional Park.

Table 4 - Protected and managed natural areas - Belmont Regional Park

GREATER WELLINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AREAS)	DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION ECOSITES	DISTRICT PLAN STATUS	CONSERVATION COVENANT	RESERVE STATUS RESERVES ACT 1977	ECOLOGICAL VALUES (All lowland forest or scrubland on hill country)
1. Korokoro Valley 2. Stratton Street	Korokoro Stream Bush (400 hectares)	SNR 26 Hutt City DP	Department of Conservation	Recreation Reserve *	Rimu-rata/tawa-kohekohe forest remnant Broadleaf regenerating forest, Nikau regeneration Species: Forest gecko, New Zealand pigeon. Freshwater fish: giant kokopu, banded kokopu, inanga, koaro and long finned eel.
3. Speedy's Bush	Speedys Bush (40 hectares)	SNR 49 Hutt City DP		Recreation Reserve *	Pukatea/tawa forest remnant. Broadleaf regenerating forest. Freshwater fish: giant kokopu, banded kokopu, inanga, koaro and long finned eel.
4. Landcorp Remnants	Hill Road Bush (70 hectares)	SNR 63 Hutt City DP	Yes (4 plus 1) Belmont Road (D) 0.37 hectares (E) 0.46 hectares (F) 1.57 hectares (G) 7.45 hectares (H) 23.20 hectares Pursuant Sec 77 Reserves Act 1977		Broadleaf regenerating forest (mahoe, tawa).
5 Kilmister Block Bush	Belmont Saddle Bush (15 hectares)	SNR 2 Hutt City DP		Recreation Reserve *	Broadleaf regenerating forest (rimu, pigeonwood)
	Belmont Road Bush A (5 hectares)	SNR 2 Hutt City DP		Recreation Reserve *	Regenerating broadleaf forest. Coprosma areolata shrubland.

GREATER WELLINGTON ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT AREAS)	DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION ECOSITES	DISTRICT PLAN STATUS	CONSERVATION COVENANT	RESERVE STATUS RESERVES ACT 1977	ECOLOGICAL VALUES (All lowland forest or scrubland on hill country)
	Belmont Road Bush B (5 hectares)	SNR 2 Hutt City DP		Recreation Reserve *	Regenerating broadleaf forest. Coprosma areolata shrubland.
6. Boulder Hill Bush	Boulder Hill Bush (200 hectares)	SNR 3 Hutt City DP		Recreation Reserve	Tawa/miro forest remnant Regenerating broadleaf forest. Species: New Zealand pigeon.
7. Dry Creek Bush	Belmont Bush (60 hectares)	SNR 1 Hutt City DP		Recreation Reserve	Pukatea-matai/tawa forest remnant Species: New Zealand pigeon.
	Haywards Shrubland (200 hectares)	SNR 17 Hutt City DP		Recreation Reserve	Regenerating shrubland.
8. Cannon's Creek Bush	Cannons Creek Bush (50 hectares)	SES 12 Porirua City DP	Yes- Cannon's Creek (B) 11.3 hectares	Landscape Protection Area - Porirua City	Tawa-kohekohe forest remnant.
		SES 12 Porirua City DP	Yes- Takapu Road (A) 29.2 hectares	Landscape Protection Area - Porirua City	Regenerating broadleaf forest.
9. Nikau Remnant	Belmont Hills Bush (10 hectares)	Wellington City Council - Not in District Plan	Yes-nr, Round Knob (C) 9 hectares Pursuant Sec 77 Reserves Act 1977		Regenerating broadleaf forest (Nikau, broadleaf).
10. Duck Creek					Rare and threatened native freshwater fish.
11. Boulder Hill remnant					Podocarp remnant with broadleaf.

Abbreviations: *Reservation in process SNR Significant Natural Area SES Significant Ecological Area SSWI Sites of Special Wildlife Interest

6.3.6 Projected changes

Refer to Map 8 (following pages).

- Implement the recommendations outlined within the sustainable farm management plan when completed¹⁷.
- Map known traditional trails through the park, and develop interpretation at appropriate sites.
- Develop walking and biking tracks that link the park's track network to complement, and where possible connect to other open space areas, for instance, the Hutt River Trail, the Eastern Hills and Wellington city's 'Outer Green Belt'.
- Encourage and provide public access tracks and recreational corridors into the park from adjacent land, eg, Lincolnshire Farm, Porirua East and Warspite Avenue, Whitby, Brady Road and Cornish Street.
- Work with community groups to:
 - Identify options for providing mountain biking opportunities in the park
 - Restore ecological areas within the park.
- Develop and implement a conservation plan to preserve examples of the Belmont historic munitions bunkers.
- Work with the New Zealand Transport Agency with regards to the Transmission Gully route and with other agencies to ensure recreational and management access links across the park from Porirua to Hutt City are maintained.
- Improve ecological linkages running along the western (Hutt Valley) side of Belmont and from Korokoro to Cannons Creek.

6.3.7 Park maps

The following pages contain:

- Map 7: Belmont Regional Park in 2010
- Map 8: Belmont Regional Park projected future changes.

For more information

Amenity Lakes Management Plan (Cannons Creek Lake Reserves)

Northern Reserves Management Plan (Wellington City Council, 2008)

Making tracks (Hutt City Council, 2009)

Urban Forest Plan (Hutt City Council, 2009)

Reserve Strategic Directions (HCC, 2001)

Cannons Creek Restoration and Development Plan (WRC, 2001)

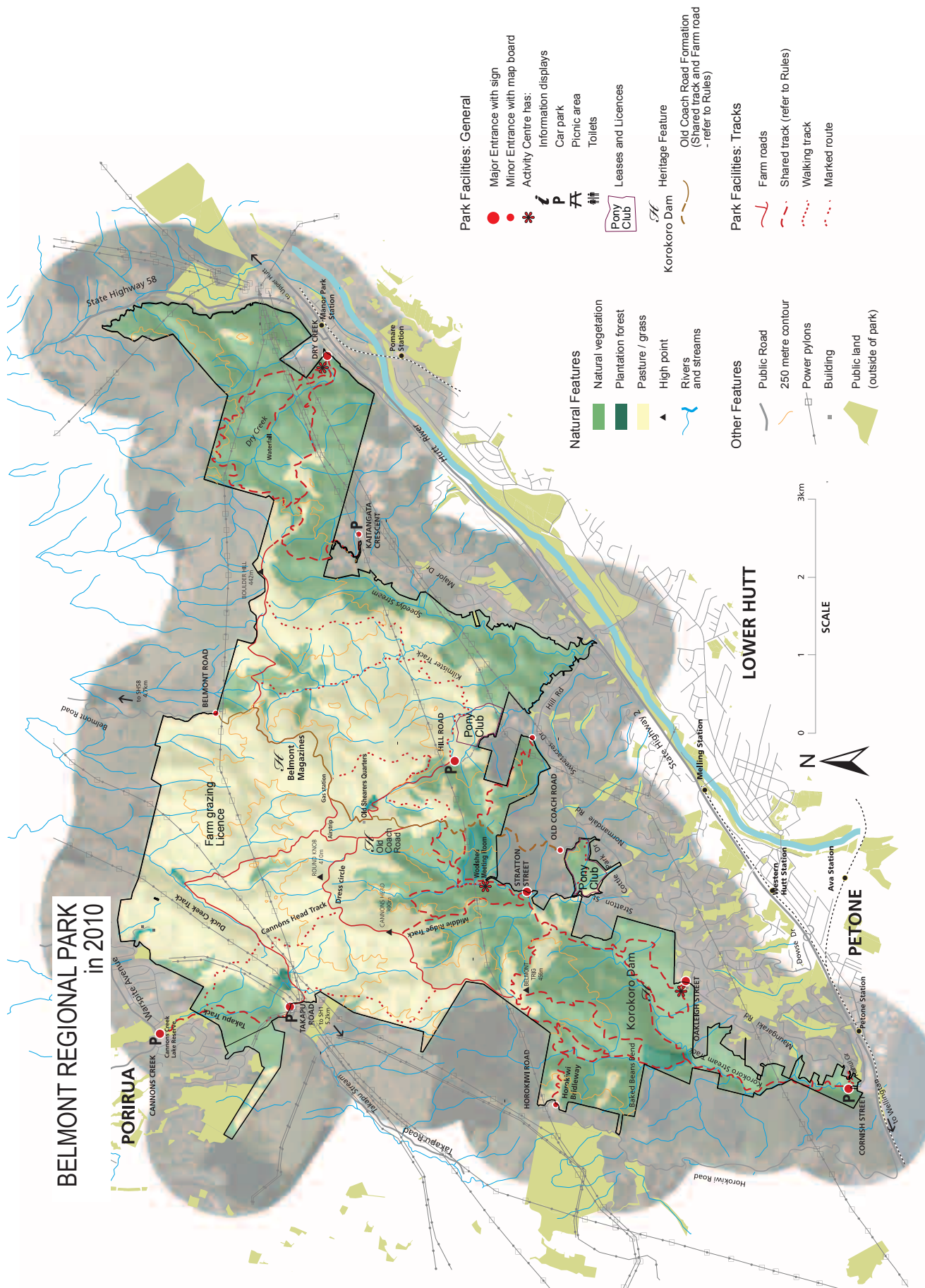
Landscape Concept Development: Dry Creek (Boffa Miskell, 2004)

Concept Design: Korokoro Dam Lookout (GWRC, 2004)

Belmont Magazines, Heritage Assessment (2 volumes) (Bowman, 2006)

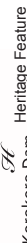
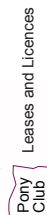
¹⁷ The sustainable farm management plan will assist Greater Wellington when making decisions about the farmland within the park (including the Waitangirua Farm) to identify productive farmland and retire other areas such as gullies for soil conservation and sediment control, as well as for carbon sequestration.

BELMONT REGIONAL PARK in 2010



Park Facilities: General

- Major Entrance with sign
- Minor Entrance with map board
- Activity Centre has:
- Information displays
- Car park
- Picnic area
- Toilets



Korokoro Dam
Old Coach Road Formation
(Shared track and Farm road
- refer to Rules)

Other Features

- Natural Features
- Natural vegetation
- Plantation forest
- Pasture / grass
- High point
- Rivers and streams
- Public Road
- 250 metre contour
- Power pylons
- Building
- Public land (outside of park)

Park Facilities: Tracks

- Farm roads
- Shared track (refer to Rules)
- Walking track
- Marked route



BELMONT REGIONAL PARK -
projected future changes



