

Park-specific management and policies
Queen Elizabeth Park



6.7 Queen Elizabeth Park

6.7.1 Legal status

Title held:	Department of Conservation (Greater Wellington appointed to control and manage)
Legislative status:	Administered under Local Government Act 2002, the whole park is recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977.
Territorial Authority:	Kapiti Coast District Council

The land is held under the Reserves Act 1977 as recreation reserve by the Crown, with Greater Wellington appointed to control and manage.

Refer to Appendix 2 for a legal description of land parcels.

6.7.2 Background

Queen Elizabeth Park²¹ is located on the Kapiti Coast between Paekakariki and Raumati, 40 kilometres north of Wellington city. It sits on the seaward side of the Whareroa Farm (currently managed by the Department of Conservation). The park's 638 hectares are predominately farmland and dunes - one of the Kapiti Coast's last areas where the complete dune system (from beach to the inland dunes) is intact and undeveloped. The eastern length of the park is adjacent to State Highway 1 and is currently farmed.

Queen Elizabeth Park is an area rich in history. Māori lived here for hundreds of years with major settlements at Wainui and Whareroa until the late 19th century. The area was a significant wetland with waterways that were canoed by Māori. The area that is now Queen Elizabeth Park includes several

pa areas occupied by Māori and Ngāti Toa Rangātira who retain mana whenua over the lands.

The history of both Queen Elizabeth and Whareroa is intertwined. European settlers began clearing the forests and draining the wetlands for farming in the mid-1850s. During World War II the park's sandy beach and rural surrounds were an ideal training ground for American troops preparing to fight in the Pacific. From June 1942 to November 1943 a total of 20,000 US Marines were housed at the park in three army camps.

Camp Russell was built near the MacKay's Crossing entrance, Camp Paekakariki on what is now the southern entrance, and Camp MacKay over State Highway 1 on the present day Whareroa Farm. After World War II the land was acquired as a park and named after Queen Elizabeth II. From 1953 the Queen Elizabeth Park Board managed the park and during the 1950-60s recreational facilities were developed, including the motor camp and tramways museum. In 1990 management was passed to Greater Wellington.

Later, other buildings were moved to the MacKay's entrance, including the historic barn and other built structures, which provide a hub for family activity.

Tangata whenua of the area are Ngāti Toa Rangātira. A number of hapu of Te Ati Awa ki Whakarongotai previously lived in the Whareroa area to the north.

The remaining kahikatea bush remnant and wetland areas at the MacKay's Crossing are being gradually restored. The community also is involved with planting and enhancing the now rare coastal habitats. Spinifex, pingao and shore bindweed feature in the foredunes, while the backdunes – which are less vulnerable to sand drift – support *muehlenbeckia*, *taupata*, *harakeke* (flax) and *bracken*. There is a huge variety of birds in the area, both coastal species and those that are at home in the mahoe, *kawakawa* and *kaikomako* trees within the bush remnants.

²¹ The naming of Queen Elizabeth Park occurred after the death of George VI and prior to the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II, hence the omission of "Second" from the name.

Whareroa farm (managed by the Department of Conservation) and Queen Elizabeth Park were managed as one unit by the Lands and Survey Department during the 1950s to 1970s. Management of Queen Elizabeth Park was transferred to Kapiti Coast District Council before being transferred to Greater Wellington in the mid 1990s.

The park is particularly popular during the summer months for picnicking, swimming and beach activities. The park hosts festivals and equestrian events and provides a range of all season cycling opportunities for commuters and recreational cyclists. The Tramways Museum and horse riding attracts people to the MacKay's entrance where the park ranger is based. Facilities are provided at the southern end of the park (Paekakariki), at MacKay's Crossing and at Whareroa on the coast. Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park and other local community groups are actively involved in environmental restoration on the park.

For more information refer to the resource statement documents.

6.7.3 Key park characteristics

Land

- An intact coastal dune system and bush remnant
- Ecological links through Whareroa Farm to Akatarawa Forest Park (sea to mountain connection)
- In-stream values of Whareroa and Wainui streams and associated wetlands catchments
- Farmed rural environment with open space values
- Restoration plantings in wetlands, dune areas and bush remnant.

People

- Recent history of European occupation, early settlement, farming, military camps
- Significant occupation site for local Māori with associated features, including pa and middens
- Historic tramway from MacKay's Crossing to Whareroa Beach
- Wide range of recreational opportunities, including walking, swimming, picnicking, bicycle rides, camping and community events
- Historic and current links through to Whareroa farm (which is managed by Department of Conservation)
- Horse riding and associated events
- Significant sites for community restoration projects
- Coastal setting of a tranquil nature.

6.7.4 Management focus

The focus for Queen Elizabeth Park is to:

1. Preserve the coastal ecosystems, dunes, wetlands and bush remnant
2. Implement a sustainable farm management plan and continue farming operations to manage open space where appropriate
3. Provide family recreational opportunities
4. Make provisions for a heritage precinct and associated visitor attractions
5. Recognise the historical occupation of the area by both European settlers and Māori
6. Re-evaluate future land management of the north-eastern area of the park that may be affected by any expressway development
7. Work with the Department of Conservation to integrate management processes, where appropriate, between Queen Elizabeth Park and Whareroa Farm.

6.7.5 Specific policies

Biodiversity and ecosystems

- a. To have particular regard for the high priority indigenous areas and links with Whareroa Farm when determining ecosystem protection and enhancement priorities as listed in Table 8.
- b. To restore the coastal dunes and native forest remnants with plants sourced from the Foxton Ecological District.

Landscape and geological features

- c. To protect the park's key landscape features and values from inappropriate use and development, specifically:
 - The beach from Raumati to Paekakariki
 - The Whareroa dune complex
 - All wetlands and streams
 - The modified landscapes of Whareroa and Wainui pa.
- d. To advocate for the protection of the following significant geological features which contribute to the landscape experience of Queen Elizabeth Park:
 - Kapiti Island
 - Te Ramoroa fan
 - MacKay's Crossing sea cliff.

Cultural heritage

- e. To protect significant cultural heritage values and features relating to Māori, early European settlers, and WWII US Marine occupation.
- f. To recognise the following cultural heritage sites, and to develop and implement conservation plans where applicable:
 - Wainui Pa and Whareroa Pa
 - United States Marine camps
 - Budge House (ranger's residence)
 - MacKay's Crossing Stables (listed as barn – horse stables under the Kapiti Coast District Council District Plan)
 - Tramway Museum.

Land management

- g. To recognise existing legal easements for gas pipelines across the park, work permits will be obtained and notice given at least 72 hours prior to the Natural Gas Corporation (Transmission), with 24 hours prior notice for on-site locations. Two days prior notice for work permits will be given to Gas Direct.
- h. To use the area as a site for Civil Defence emergencies of regional or national significance.
- i. To carry out all activities associated with the disturbance, disposal, removal and recording of World War II Ordnances, in accordance with operating procedures.

Visitor services

- j. To manage MacKay's Crossing and Wellington Road (Paekakariki) as the main park entrances.
- k. To manage the following as secondary entrances:
 - Tilley Road (Paekakariki)
 - The Esplanade, Rainbow Court, and McKenzie Road (Raumati South).
- l. To maintain the following memorials:
Queen Elizabeth Park Board memorial at Wainui Pa
 - The three kahikatea trees planted in 2002 to remember Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother
 - The MacKay's Crossing gates in remembrance of WWII Marines
 - The commemorative plaque at MacKay's Crossing interpretation panels.

Partnership in parks

- m. To consult and/or involve Tangata Whenua in the following:
 - Any Resource Management Act planning matters
 - Commercial proposals within the Queen Elizabeth Park

- The approval process for the use or removal of natural materials for commercial purposes.
- n. To recognise Ngāti Toa Rangatira's relationship to the park through supporting the vesting of the Wainui urupa land, and the joint protection and management of this site.
- o. To recognise Te Ati Awa Ki Whakarongotai to enable them to exercise their role as kaitiaki over sites of significance and in particular Whareroa Pa site in developing:
- A management and maintenance programme for the protection of the site
 - Development of a concept plan including options for restoring or creating a replica of the Whareroa Pa site.
- p. To liaise with, in regards to decision making, Kapiti Coast District Council and the Department of Conservation, on the management and use of the land to provide an integrated approach to environmental management programmes and recreational activities.
- q. To work with Kapiti Coast District Council to develop links and cycle ways that incorporate tracks within Queen Elizabeth Park, where appropriate.
- r. To support the partnership with Friends of Queen Elizabeth Park in meeting the outcomes of this plan.
- s. To ensure that any new partnerships contribute to advocacy, restoration or education outcomes for Queen Elizabeth Park.
- t. To liaise with the Department of Conservation with regards to joint promotion of Whareroa and Queen Elizabeth Park.
- u. To work with Department of Conservation in managing linkages, including conservation, heritage and recreation between Whareroa and Queen Elizabeth Park.

Table 8 - Significant indigenous environmental areas and features - Queen Elizabeth Park

AREA	DESCRIPTION	REASONS FOR SIGNIFICANCE
Coastal and Inland Dunes	<p>Unmodified regenerating coastal foredunes adjacent to beach</p> <p>Consolidated inland foredunes</p>	<p>The dunes in the park are examples of a once far more extensive system, containing valuable representation of geological, vegetative and faunal data of the area.</p> <p>Listed in Kapiti Coast District Council District Plan as site of ecological and geological significance).</p> <p>Plant communities listed in Regional Plant Strategy (Department of Conservation) as being "of considerable conservation concern".</p>
<p>Wetlands: MacKay's Crossing</p> <p>Poplar Avenue</p> <p>Wainui wetland</p>	<p>All wetlands</p> <p>Cluster of approximately 20 hectares of ponding wetlands in an ephemeral wetland system</p> <p>Wetland, fenced and regenerating in the northern end of the park</p> <p>Small recently rehabilitated wetland adjacent to Wainui Stream in the south of the park</p>	<p>Provides habitat for birds, fish, frogs, invertebrate and wetland plant communities. (Mentioned in <i>Greater Wellington Wetland Action Plan</i> as sites for future consideration.)</p>
<p>Streams: Wainui</p> <p>Whareroa</p>	<p>Flows through southern end of the park, reasonably unmodified with little erosion and high water flow</p> <p>Flows through the northern end of the park, highly modified catchment, meanders at river mouth through native coastal vegetation</p>	<p>Wainui and Whareoa streams both provide significant habitat for freshwater fish and invertebrates and in particular giant kokopu, long-finned eel and koura (listed as "gradual decline" in the New Zealand Threat Classification System).</p> <p>Provides spawning ground for inanga at river mouth.</p>
Kahikatea remnant forest	Approximately 1 hectare of kahikatea remnant adjacent to wetlands in the MacKay's Crossing wetland system	<p>Extremely rare kahikatea forest remnant (one of two remnants that remain on the Kapiti Coast). The remnant is dominated by kahikatea and pukatea, with some tawa, swamp maire and matai.</p> <p>Listed in Kapiti Coast District Council District Plan as site of ecological significance.</p>

6.7.6 Projected changes

Refer to Map 17 (following pages).

- Undertake ecological restoration in conjunction with community groups at the following locations:
 - Poplar Avenue wetlands (Raumati South) and Whareroa Stream
 - The coastal dune formation along the length of the park for erosion control and to restore habitat
 - Forest remnant extension/wetland restoration.
- Provide for managed shoreline retreat.
- Develop walking and cycling links to Whareroa Farm in conjunction with the Department of Conservation.
- Develop and implement the recommendations of the sustainable farm management plan, including investigating potential for wetland reversion to the north of MacKay's Crossing visitors' area.
- Develop Wainui, Whareroa and particularly MacKay's as the main focal points for visitor activity.
- Make provision for a heritage precinct which contains facilities and activities that are family friendly and focused on heritage.
- Develop a secondary entrance at Poplar Avenue.
- Investigate neighbourhood park for local use at Paekakariki in conjunction with Kapiti Coast District Council.
- Work with community groups and other agencies to implement a cycle plan to link Raumati South and Paekakariki, providing better opportunities both for commuter and family friendly recreational cycling.
- Identify and develop access links for non-motorised recreation to Whareroa Farm (Department of Conservation) and Akatarawa Forest.
- Name the new shared tracks in the park: Yankee Trail, and Te Ara O Tipapa (refer to future changes park map).

- Work with the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) and other agencies to maximise recreational opportunities from any proposed roading developments by NZTA.

6.7.7 Park maps

The following pages contain:

- Map 16: Queen Elizabeth Park in 2010
- Map 17: Queen Elizabeth Park projected future changes.

For more information

Wetlands Action Plan (Greater Wellington, 2003)

Pest Plant Control Plan for Queen Elizabeth Park

Kapiti Coast: Choosing Futures (Kapiti Coast District Council, 2006)

Queen Elizabeth Regional Park Resource Statement (Greater Wellington, 2007)

Wellington Regional Civil Defence Emergency Management Group Plan

Parks and Forests Standard Operating Procedures – Earthworks and Buried Ordnance in Queen Elizabeth Park

Queen Elizabeth Park Cycling Concept Plan (The Kennett Brothers, 2008)

Restoration and Re-vegetation sites in Queen Elizabeth Regional Park (Susan Forbes, Kotuku Consulting, 2005)

Five Year restoration plan for QE Park foredunes (Harley & Bergin 2010)

Contaminated sites assessment (Montgomery Watson, 2001)

Mackays Crossing Wetlands: hydrogeological study and evaluation of wetlands restoration proposal (Phreatos Groundwater Consulting, 2001)

Poplar Avenue wetland revegetation plan: Raumati South (Wildland Consultants 2009)

Restoration and Revegetation Sites in QEP (Carson, 2009)

QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK in 2010



QUEEN ELIZABETH PARK - Projected future changes

To be read in conjunction with 2010 map



Ecology

- ① Forest Remnant extension / wetland restoration
- ② Poplar St wetland revegetation
- ③ Coastal dunes revegetation Raumati, Whareroa Stream, Paekakariki, Wainui
- ④ Whareroa Stream riparian revegetation
- ⑤ Managed retreat of shoreline



Recreation

- A Develop cycleway linking Paekakariki and Raumati
 - B Potential neighbourhood park
 - C "Yankee Trail" as new name for track
 - D "Te Ara o Tipapa" as new name for walking track
 - E Minor entrance on Poplar Ave
- Intended recreation link
- Advocate recreation improvement with other management authorities
- NZTA options for Mackays - Peka Peka expressway *

Heritage Projects

- ① Heritage / Nature interpretation at Wainui Pa, Whareroa Pa, Mackays Crossing, Raumati South
- ② Potential heritage precinct

* GW will work with New Zealand Transport Agency on finalising options for the expressway