

...is large and accessible
open space left

ON THE KAPITI COAST?



THE OPEN SPACE GATEWAY idea is to provide special recognition for an area of land at the southern end of the Kapiti Coast so that all of us can enjoy the beauty of this open farm and park country. And our children, and theirs, can enjoy and care for it too.



THE OPEN SPACE GATEWAY zone is just a bright idea, a circle on a map, a suggestion by some local residents about a way to think about our environment and our communities, and work for their future. The 'circle' is centred on Paekakariki village, includes Pukerua Bay to the south, Raumati South to the north, Mt Wainui and the Akatarawa Forest to the east, and extends off-shore to the west. It has at its core the very beautiful and popular Queen Elizabeth Park.





THE IDEA OF THE OPEN SPACE GATEWAY is to create a zone for open space and recreation across the farm and park country at the southern end of the Kapiti Coast. It would take advantage of the lands already in public parks and ensure their values were not compromised by inappropriate development of the surrounding lands.

Pukerua Bay village

Tunapo escarpment

Battle Hill Farm Park

Raumati South village

Queen Elizabeth Park

Mataihuka pathway

Parekakariki

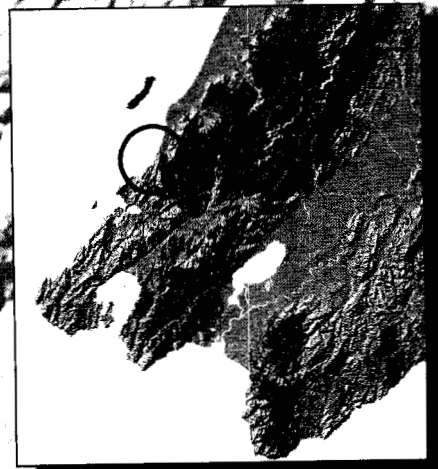
Maungakotukutuku Valley

Whareroa Farm

Akatarawa Forest Park

Mount Wainui

Parekakariki Hill road lookout



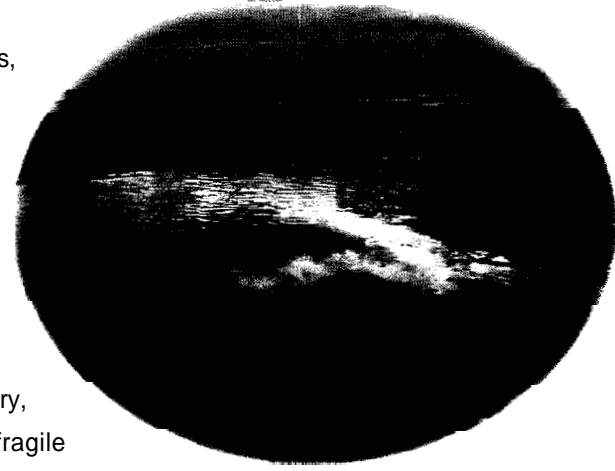
Why do we need to do something now?

This is a beautiful yet fragile area. It includes spectacular landscapes, opportunities for many sorts of recreation, important ecological remnants, and significant cultural and historic sites.

Population growth and accelerating development pressures, especially on coastal and semi-rural sites, puts this all at risk from piecemeal development. The sense of green open spaces could be lost, important ecological linkages could be severed, recreational routes and networks could be jeopardized.

Action is needed to protect the special character of this part of the country, to safeguard this green oasis while making it accessible for recreation. This fragile geology of wetlands, dunes, steep escarpments and unstable valleys cannot sustain intense human development.

Queen Elizabeth Park is already a key site for recreation in the Wellington region; it could be the hub of a much larger recreational network.



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Attractions of the Gateway Open Space Zone

When you look beyond the corridor of fast-food outlets, life-style blocks, and subdivisions which now clutter State Highway 1, you find open space with an astonishing array of features.

In its **geography**, it is the meeting place of mountains, foothills, valleys, wave-cut escarpments, coastal plains, rocky headlands, dunes, sandy beaches, ocean and island. Here the Tararua foothills meet the sea. Paekakariki and Queen Elizabeth Park form the 'thin end of the wedge' of the southern Manawatu Plains.

Within **Queen Elizabeth Park**, there are wild sand-dunes, wetlands, bush remnants, and highly popular seaside meets countryside recreation. The beach between Paekakariki and Raumati South is one of the last stretches of green-flanked sandy beach near the city. The park also offers old trams and the US Marines' WWII campsites. Remains of important pa sites occupy coastal headlands. Rising above the park are the hills of the (Landcorp-owned) **Whareroa Farm**. This provides critical ecological and recreational links to the **Akatarawas** and bush-clad **Mt Wainui**, the area's highest peak; to the south lie the historic and recreational opportunities of **Battle Hill Regional Park**.

A partly-formed web of **walks and tracks** fan out from here. Mataihuka Walkway, with stunning views over Kapiti out to sea and island, runs north along the escarpment. Maungakotukutuku Valley walkway, Akatarawa mountain bike and walkway network, and Akatarawa Four Wheel Drive Adventure Park, are nearby in the east.

To the south west, above the Centennial Highway, is the **Tunapo escarpment**, where the forest remnants are being carefully restored by Nga Uruora. Further along are the headlands, rock pools, and fishing spots of **Pukerua Bay**.

Three **sisterly seaside villages** are strung through this zone: Pukerua Bay, Paekakariki, and Raumati South, which value their small-town ease.

This zone is also a **gateway**. It is an open space gateway to Porirua and Wellington city for those travelling from the north; it is a gateway to Kapiti and the Nature Coast for those from the south. There is a great opportunity for a regional visitor information centre at McKay's Crossing, which could provide information about the park, the open space zone, and Kapiti Island, and showcase the visitor highlights of the whole region.

The Vision Realised

What will be happening when this vision is realised? The beauty and richness of this area will be visible to many more people, and more people will enjoy and cherish it. It will be a respite from the development to the north and south, a green oasis.

Recreation in this area will include activities for a wide range of people — from those on family day trips to those who want a challenging wilderness experience.

- ♥ Whether on foot or a bike, there are routes along the beach and in the mountains, long and short, easy and challenging. They connect the Akatarawas, Queen Elizabeth Park, the Pukerua Bay foreshore, Maungakotukutuku Valley, and Wainui Hill.
- p Volunteer guides will help you find the hidden historical and ecological jewels.
- ♥ Kite flying lessons will lead up to an annual festival with the Japanese team which has travelled here to raise their kites to the sky with our own kite flyers
- ♥ Diving trips will reveal the under-water wilderness of the marine reserve.
- ♥ A tram ride through the park to the Paraparaumu town centre to galleries, cafes and shops.

And for those who want their recreation to be comfy,

- ♥ **A lodge** on the hill, built on ecological principles, with beautiful native gardens, a solar-heated swimming pool, award-winning restaurant whose patio has a view to die for, a wing for backpackers and a wing for those who want fluffy towels and a spa with their room. It's a short walk from here down to the Visitor Centre, perhaps an extended tram ride through Queen Elizabeth Park, or you can arrive here tired from a mountain tramp.

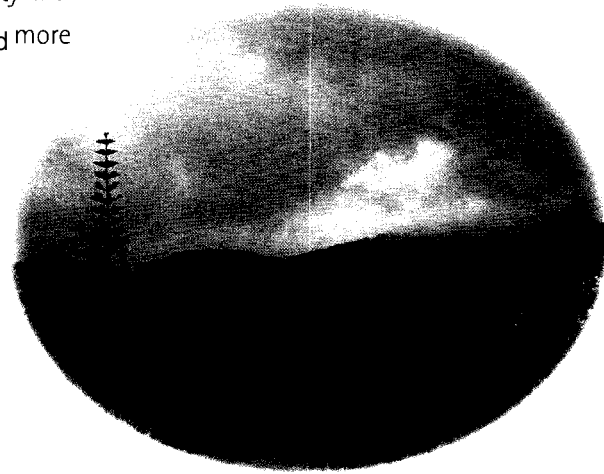
Our native creatures and plants will be protected and accessible.

- ♥ The escarpment will re-assume its mantle of native plants (with help from Nga Uruora).
- ♥ Trips to the extraordinary Kapiti Island sanctuary will leave visitors in awe.
- ♥ The wetlands and bush remnants in Queen Elizabeth Park will be marked on maps and tracks to them will be signposted.
- ♥ The bush in the hills will call some — the Akatarawas, Wainui, and the Maungakotukutuku Valley — and the tide pools of Pukerua Bay will delight others.

Our history can be glimpsed, with information to bring alive the

- ♥ World War II sites in Whareroa and in QE Park,
- ♥ Battle Hill, and
- p Local pa sites.

A Visitor Centre near a new railway station at McKay's Crossing will provide a place to gather, a place to begin, a place to learn. It will help people find out about all that's on offer here (as well as further afield, in Wellington or Porirua). There are enticing displays about the area's complex history, telescopes trained on Kapiti Island as well as live video and bird call relayed from the Island.



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Getting There From Here

We think this is an idea worth working for, but it *will* take work. First there need to be discussions about this proposal and other ideas for how we protect these open spaces and increase the opportunities for people to enjoy them.

To move from subdivision sprawl, lifestyle blocks, and fast-food corridors to a secure breathing space of green and open space with protected spaces and recreation we need to:

- ♥ Add to this first sketch of a vision
- ♥ Build up support by linking with others interested in these lands and aims
- ♥ Make sure that decision-makers know about that support
- ♥ Secure lasting protection for recreation and environmental values here, including in the key block of Whareroa and in the re-drafting of the QE Park management plan.

Making this a reality is particularly challenging because the human landscape is complex: there are three district councils, one regional council, the Department of Conservation, iwi, community boards, private landowners, Transit NZ and Transfund, plus a host of environmental, recreation, business, and community groups.

While much of the land is publicly owned, private landowners are central to the concept — the zone is not just a park. It is a working landscape where open spaces are retained and recreation is fostered. Private landowners, working with councils and the QEII Trust, would be encouraged not only to protect environmental values, but to enjoy the business benefits of the zone.

Join Us In Imagining An Open Space Future

This proposal has come from a small group of local residents who discovered that we share an enthusiasm for the beauties of this area, and excitement at the possibilities for its future.

Please contact us at:

openspacegateway@hotmail.com
PO. Box 2177, Raumati Beach, 6450, Kapiti Coast
If you'd like to talk to someone, ring Leon or Rachel at 04-905-3045,
or Keith at 04-905-9007

If you would like to be kept informed about progress, please give us your postal or email address.



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The proposal will grow more texture and shape with the thoughts of others who care about this area and want to see it bloom. We want to know:

1. What do you really like within this area/zone

4. What are your thoughts and ideas on this concept?

Horizontal lines for writing answers to questions 1 and 4.

2. What things don't you like and don't wish to see happen within this area/zone

5. What are your ideas for a name for this area/zone

Horizontal lines for writing answers to questions 2 and 5.

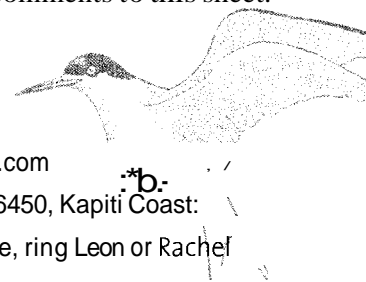
3. What would you like to see here in the future?

Feel free to attach further comments to this sheet.

Horizontal lines for writing answers to question 3.

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PLEASE FILL THIS IN AND RETURN IT TO US!