



Greater Wellington Regional Council

Parks and Forests Concessions Guidelines 2013

1. Introduction

1.1 About this document

Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) Parks and Forests Concession Guidelines 2013 (the Guidelines) are an update of the 2008 guidelines. The Guidelines set out GWRC policy for:

- Charging for applications for concessions in regional parks and forests
- Park user fees.

The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with GWRC Parks Network Plan 2011 and the GWRC Parks, Forests and Reserves Bylaw 2016.

1.2 What is a concession?

A concession is an official authorisation for an individual or group to undertake an activity and/or event on land owned and/or managed by GWRC.

A concession is a formal relationship between the concession holder and GWRC, ensuring that both parties are aware of their obligations.

Concessions include:

- Permits
- Leases
- Licences
- Easements.

Where the term concession is used in these guidelines it includes all of the above forms.

The purpose of the concession system is to ensure that particular activities are carried out in a way that will not detract from the focus of the park and the values contained within. It also helps ensure that their activities do not impinge on other visitors and preferably, enhance the experience of visitors. Having a concession ensures that an event or activity does not clash with arrangements others may have made within a park, and that it also goes ahead with GWRC support.

1.3 What activities require a concession?

Some activities are allowed in regional parks and do not require a concession. These are called ‘allowed activities’ and are set out in section 7.2 of the Parks Network Plan. Allowed activities include largely informal, unstructured activities that are traditionally associated with parks. Refer to the Glossary for more details.

Note that even though an application is not required, allowed activities may still be subject to restrictions in order to protect park values and provide for the health, safety and wellbeing of visitors. Refer to section 7.2.3 of the Parks Network Plan.

‘Managed activities’ require a concession in the form of a permit from GWRC. A fee may be charged for a permit e.g. camping, collection of natural materials etc.

Managed activities are set out in section 7.3 of the Parks Network Plan. Managed activities generally involve temporary allocation of a park area or structure for a specific use.

‘Restricted activities’ also require a concession. This may be in the form of a permit, or a lease, license or easement. A fee is charged for applications to undertake a restricted activity. More detail about restricted activities is set out in section 7.4 of the Parks Network Plan.

Restricted activities require a case by case assessment and may:

- Involve the exclusive use of an area for an extended period of time
- Require the development of permanent structures and buildings
- Include commercial activities
- Be large scale events.

Note that in some instances GWRC will seek out a licensee or lessee for the purposes of land management (usually grazing). While a licence or lease is issued, the application fees outlined in this guideline do not apply as it is considered a necessary part of GWRC’s park management.

The Parks Network Plan also identifies activities that are not permitted in regional parks. These are called ‘prohibited activities’ and are considered inappropriate because of their permanent adverse effects or incompatibility with other activities in a park. Refer to the Glossary for more details.

1.4 Why are fees charged for concessions?

There are various fees that may be charged for concessions:

- An application fee
- A park user fee
- A rental
- A late notice fee.

An **application fee** for restricted activities is charged to cover the administrative costs involved in GWRC processing applications. The application fee reflects the time taken to assess and make a decision. Some events are short in duration with only temporary disturbance and are relatively straight forward to assess. Other activities are more complex and assessment may involve significant officer time and sometimes public consultation. Requiring consent (a concession) for a restricted activity allows GWRC to manage activity levels in parks and forests by minimising the negative impacts on the environment and other users. Regulating these activities ensures that an event or activity is well planned, more successful and any negative effects are minimised. Where an activity has had a previous concession granted, a renewal application fee will apply.

A **park user fee** is charged for managed activities and restricted activities. These are set out in the concessions fee schedule (Appendix 1). The park user fee is charged as these types of activities and events have impacts on the environment and other park users. The park user fee reflects the impacts of the proposed activity, ranger time prior, during or after an activity, and/or private gain from a public asset. There is no park user fee for most allowed activities.

Rentals are charged for leases and licences. The rental is generally set at a market rate and reviewed periodically. Where reliable market information is not readily available, rental reviews may be assessed in accordance with an index based method. Charges for the granting of easements are typically based on a one-off payment, however, in some instances an annual fee may apply. Easements are not generally subject to a review.

Late notice fees are charged for applications received after the specified timeframes:

- Applications for permits must be received at least one month prior to any event or activity (for less than 150 participants)
- For events or activities with more than 150 participants the application must be received at least two months prior
- Leases, licences and easements require at least three months for processing application

Any applications lodged outside of these timeframes will incur an additional late notice fee. This is an additional fee of \$250.

1.5 Fee waivers

GWRC will consider waiving application fees (in full or in part) in certain circumstances. No application fees will be charged:

- For non-commercial events with less than 150 participants
- For schools or for other education-related groups in order to promote awareness of the environmental, cultural and heritage values of parks amongst youth
- Where GWRC initiates a tender or expressions of interest process for a specified activity (and where GWRC is satisfied that the effects of that activity will be minor and/or can be managed with appropriate conditions).

GWRC will also consider waiving fees for:

- Any non-commercial event or activity exclusively associated with children less than 19 years old
- Film activities undertaken by students for educational purposes
- Commercial still photography
- Low-budget filming (in consultation with Film Wellington), refer 1.5.1 below
- Any event or activity raising money primarily for charitable purposes

It is entirely at GWRC discretion if a partial or full fee waiver is granted.

1.6 Filming

GWRC parks have been the backdrop for a number of films and commercials which have helped to promote Wellington as a good film location and contribute to the regional economy. GWRC, in conjunction with Film Wellington and Film NZ, aims to facilitate filming opportunities within parks. To this end GWRC has worked with the film industry to develop a filming protocol which takes into account the need for timely processes and appropriate practices to protect park values.

GWRC currently provides a fee waiver for low-budget films and films undertaken by students for education purposes. Written evidence is required that to demonstrate that the film is of a low budget status.

GWRC recognises that in some cases filming can also be low impact. For example, a shoot that takes less than half a day, with fewer than ten crew/talent, small equipment vehicles, no generators, and no lighting. In such circumstances GWRC will apply the non-commercial activity application fee of \$50. This approach recognises that although commercial in nature, the impact of the filming is minimal, and that the activity will contribute to the expansion of filming in the region.

GWRC will also consider waiving the requirement of a bond for low impact filming. Note that the late notice fee may still apply.

2. Processing applications

2.1 What information is required to be submitted with an application?

GWRC's website contains application forms for permits including online application forms. These application forms include details on the basic information that is required to be submitted with an application. This includes:

- Type of event
- Location
- Numbers of participants expected
- Numbers of spectators, stall holders and organisers expected
- Day and time
- If a fee will be charged for participants
- Anticipated impacts on the park.

Where applicable, additional information may also be required such as:

- A health and safety for events or activities, including filming. (Note, GWRC will consider waiving this requirement for film makers if evidence can be produced of compliance with the Film Wellington code of conduct).
- An audited traffic management plan, in accordance with the New Zealand Transport Agency's Code of Practice for Temporary Traffic Management (COPTTM), when the event will:
 - a) Close off a road to vehicular traffic
 - b) Disrupt vehicular traffic in any way (i.e. stopping or slowing traffic flow for a period of time)
 - c) Block a footpath to pedestrian traffic resulting in pedestrians needing to find an alternative route.

The COPTTM is available at www.nzta.govt.nz/resources/code-temp-traffic-management/

- Written confirmation of current public liability insurance cover
- A business plan
- Proof of non-commercial nature such evidence of not-for-profit status and/or of being a registered charity

For more details about the additional information to be submitted with applications for leases, licenses, and easements for restricted activities see section 7.4.5 of the Parks Network Plan.

2.2 Decisions and conditions

All applications for concessions may be approved, approved with conditions, or declined by GWRC. Conditions for concessions will be set where necessary to protect the park environment, and the health, safety and well-being of other users and to facilitate park operations. Conditions or restrictions may be imposed on permits as per section 7.2.3 of the Parks Network Plan. These may include:

- Group size
- Time of the day and duration of the activity
- Location (ensuring there is no conflict with other users)
- Season or time of year
- Infrastructure conditions (any use of tents, marquees, stages etc)
- Environmental conditions (mitigating any impact on the land, surrounding environment).

For the types of conditions that may be imposed on concessions for restricted activities see section 7.4.11 of the Parks Network Plan.

For more details about the criteria used to make decisions on applications see section 7.4.7 of the Parks Network Plan.

2.2.1 Bonds

GWRC may require a bond for a concession as part of the approval. The purpose of a bond is to provide additional assurance that the park area will be protected.

A bond is payable at the time of lodging the application for a concession. The bond is generally between \$200 and \$2000, dependent on the level of impact. The bond may be refunded in full or in part at the conclusion of the concession provided GWRC is satisfied that the park area has not been damaged or has been reinstated to its original condition.

For low impact or non-commercial activities GWRC has the discretion to impose a bond of less than \$200.

3. **Application charges for managed and restricted activities**

This section of the Guidelines describes GWRC charges for applications for permits for all managed activities and restricted activities as set out in the concessions fee schedule (Appendix 1).

GWRC will use the concessions system to manage the impacts of managed and restricted activities to maximise community benefit, while avoiding or minimising detrimental impacts.

There are no application fees for permits for managed activities.

For restricted activities that require a permit the application fees are:

- \$175 for commercial activities
- \$50 for non-commercial activities with more than 150 participants, and some low impact filming activity
- \$50 for renewal of a concession (commercial or non-commercial)

The processing fee for a lease, licence or easement is to be charged at an hourly rate of \$110 per hour of officer time actually spent. For the purposes of administration, an initial deposit fee will be collected. This has been calculated based on the average time taken to process particular application types. These initial deposit fees are as follows:

- \$1,400.00 plus GST, for a non-notified application
- \$4,400.00 plus GST, for a notified application. An additional \$2,000 plus GST per half day if a hearing is required

The deposit fee shown above represents the estimated cost to GWRC to process an 'average' concession. Where the processing costs of the application exceed this estimate, additional charges are made for actual and reasonable costs. Where the processing costs of the application are less than the initial deposit fee, a refund will be made.

A renewal of a previous lease, licence or an easement is charge at actual time spent by officers to a maximum of \$1,400 plus GST.

In some instances, where there is not the delegation under the Reserves Act 1977 for GWRC to make a decision, the application for a lease, licence or easement will be referred to the Minister of Conservation. The Department of Conservation will consult with Greater Wellington (as manager of the land) in making a decision. In these instances, all administration fees associated with a concession are charged by the Department of Conservation.

3.1 What do the charges cover?

GWRC charges applicants for the costs incurred when assessing and making decisions on applications for leases, licenses and easements for restricted activities. Charges may include the costs of technical assessment, peer review and basic administration costs. GWRC may also charge travel time associated with site visits. GWRC will consult with iwi when relevant on applications for leases, licenses or easements. There is no charge for this consultation.

3.2 How are the charges applied?

GWRC policy is to charge the actual and reasonable costs for processing an application for leases, licenses and easements. This is calculated at \$110 per hour of staff time plus GST and disbursements.

Before beginning to process an application, we require the initial application charge to be paid. The application fee represents the estimated cost to GWRC of processing an 'average' concession application. Where application processing costs exceed the initial application fee, an additional charge is made for actual and reasonable costs. Where application processing costs are less than the initial application fee, a refund will be made.

GWRC will not begin to process any application for a concession until the initial application fee is paid. Notwithstanding this, we recognise that some preliminary discussion may be necessary before a potential applicant wishes to proceed with an application. The first four hours spent by planning, property and parks staff will be free.

The application charges apply even if the application is declined or withdrawn. Where an application is withdrawn, GWRC will calculate the cost of processing the application up to that point, and make a refund or additional charge as appropriate.

3.3 How are application charges calculated?

GWRC charges the actual and reasonable costs of processing your application for a lease, license or easement. These are calculated in the following way:

- Staff time is charged on the basis of actual time spent. The charge out rate is \$110.00 per hour plus GST
- This includes the costs of up to one staff member at a hearing. Note that if a staff member is required to provide secretarial assistance to a Hearing Panel their time spent at the hearing will not be charged
- Where GWRC uses a consultant to process an application solely because in-house resources are not available, the charge out rate is \$110.00 per hour plus GST – the same as GWRC staff
- Where GWRC uses a consultant to process an application because specialist expertise is required, the full cost of the consultant is charged
- Where DOC charges are incurred by GWRC as a result of processing or approving an application, the full cost of these DOC charges will be billed to the applicant
- Disbursements such as advertising expenses, photocopying (at 20 cents per A4 page), and hearing costs (other than staff time)

3.4 Notification

Applications for restricted activities will be publicly notified when:

- The term sought exceeds 10 years
- The activity occurs on land held under the Reserves Act and public notification is required under that Act
- It falls under section 138 of the Local Government Act 2002
- In the opinion of GWRC it is in the public interest
- It receives requests for easements that would significantly affect park land and current users
- An application to construct or modify a permanent utility would significantly alter the nature, scale or intensity of the effect on the park.

(From Parks Network Plan section 7.4.4).

The further application fee if a hearing is required is \$2000.00 plus GST per half day.

For a notified application GWRC will provide a detailed cost estimate if requested. This will be updated when necessary. GWRC can also arrange for additional charges to be paid in instalments for applicants who do not want to receive a large account for additional charges at the end of the process.

All other applications for leases, licenses and easements for restricted activities will be processed as non-notified applications.

4. Monitoring of concessions

GWRC will periodically undertake an audit of concessions based on the following criteria:

- The assessment of conditions and proposed mitigation measures in the concessions and the actual impact on GWRC parks caused by the activity
- The pricing schedule for all fees contained within this policy, and if considered necessary revise fees

When renewal applications for concession are received, GWRC will review the performance of the concession holder based on the following:

- The concession has performed well during the duration of the concession and that there has been no complaints, damage or breaches of the concession
- There are no outstanding financial balances with GW
- The scale, frequency, location is the same or has less impact than what is permitted in the existing concession
- The activity will continue to comply with all relevant Council policies, bylaws, management plans and legislation.

Glossary

Allowed activity

An activity that is listed in the Parks Network Plan section 7.2 as an allowed activity. An allowed activity can be carried out in all parks. Allowed activities are largely informal, unstructured activities that are traditionally associated with parks. They have a low impact on park values and other users. The public do not need to book these activities or seek specific approval for them. Restrictions may be placed on allowed activities in order to protect the park environment, the health, safety and well-being of other users and to facilitate park operations (see Parks Network Plan section 7.2.3).

No fees are charged for allowed activities.

The following activities are allowed to be undertaken by individuals or groups for non-commercial purposes:

- Walking, hiking, tramping
- Running
- Picnicking, barbequing
- Informal group games
- Swimming
- Filming or photography for personal, family and non-commercial purposes (where the person undertaking the filming or photography or any of the subjects are not receiving any form of payment or gain for the activity)
- Mountain biking on designated shared trails, with consideration to other users on shared trails
- Dog walking, where responsible dog handling practices are followed at all times
- Horse riding on designated shared trails, with consideration to other users on shared trails
- Fires in designated areas at Battle Hill and Kaitoke Regional Park

For more details refer to section 7.2 of the Parks Network Plan.

Commercial activity

Any activity where the purpose is to operate or promote a business and/or obtain profit or gain from its operations utilising the GWRC parks and forests including conducting a trade, business or occupation on GWRC owned or managed land, or where profit and private benefit are involved.

Concession

A concession is an official authorisation for an individual or group to undertake an activity and/or event on land owned and/or managed by GWRC. A concession is a formal relationship between the concession holder and GWRC, ensuring that both parties are aware of their obligations. Concessions include permits, easements, leases, and licenses.

A concession is as referred to in sections 2, 53 and 59 of the Reserves Act 1977.

Easement

A right of access over or through land and may allow for the installation of pipelines, cables/overhead wires or utility services

Greater Wellington parks and forests

Includes all lands that form the parks network of GWRC and are shown on Map 1 in the Parks Network Plan.

Lease

Exclusive rights to occupy buildings or a specified area of land. Leases are granted according to the relevant provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 and/or Wellington Regional Water Board Act 1972, and/or Wellington Regional Council (Water Board Functions) Act 2005.

Licence

Allows the right to occupy or work in an area but not necessarily to the exclusion of the public or other licensees. Licences may allow temporary modifications to the land, such as re-locatable buildings, campsites or facilities. Licences are granted according to the relevant provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 and/or Wellington Regional Water Board Act 1972, and/or Wellington Regional Council (Water Board Functions) Act 2005.

Managed activity

Any activity that is listed in the Parks Network Plan section 7.3 as a managed activity. Managed activities are generally undertaken in a specific location and may involve temporary allocation of a park area or structure for a specific use. Approval of a managed activity is by way of permit which is issued by a GWRC park ranger or other authorised GWRC officer. Some permits have application fees, others do not. Refer to the concession fees schedule (Appendix 1).

Managed activities include:

- Camping at designated sites
- Designated picnic areas or specified sites reservations for groups
- Recreational hunting in specified areas
- Usage of key park facilities
- Motorised recreation (club/casual use) in Akatarawa Forest
- Removal of exotic materials, e.g. pine firewood

- Lighting fires outside designated areas
- Conducting research
- Collection of natural materials, e.g. seeds for propagation
- Horse riding at Pakuratahi and Akatarawa Forests, and East Harbour
- Hunting, including carrying a firearm in Akatarawa, East Harbour (northern area), Kaitoke, Pakuratahi
- Paragliding and gliding at designated sites
- Other activities identified in the Parks Network Plan

For more details refer to section 7.3.2 of the Parks Network Plan.

Non-commercial activity

Includes any activity:

- Where a private individual, club or any organisation will not profit or gain from the use of GWRC parks and forests
- A person undertaking the activity or event, or any of the subjects are not receiving any form of payment for the activity
- Where there are less than 30 participants (with the exemption of motorised recreation)
- Subject to standard terms and conditions for use of parks/forests.

Non-notified application

An application for a concession for a restricted activity that is not publicly notified.

Notified application

An application for a concession for a restricted activity that is publicly notified.

Permits

A written authority for entry or to enable an activity or event to be undertaken on a park area for a limited period.

Prohibited activity

Any activity that is listed in section 7.5 of the Parks Network Plan as a prohibited activity. Prohibited activities are not allowed in any park. Prohibited activities are considered inappropriate because of their permanent adverse effects on the environment or that are incompatible with the park characteristics and/or management focus and other approved activities.

Prohibited activities include:

- Mining
- Commercial resource harvesting
- Use of fireworks
- Amplified sound not associated with an approved event
- Spreading of ashes or body parts
- Erection of private dwellings
- Depositing rubbish.

See section 7.5 of the Parks Network Plan for more details.

Restricted activity

Any activity listed in section 7.4 of the Parks Network Plan as a restricted activity. Restricted activities are considered on their individual merits, compatibility and appropriateness to the location. Restricted activities may be non-notified, or notified, and can either be approved, subject to conditions, or declined.

Restricted activities include:

- Commercial activities (including concerts, multisport events, guiding tours, selling food, hiring equipment or offering transport)
- Filming and photography
- Conducting events (e.g. multisport)
- Conducting one-off activities involving site occupation or use
- Building structures or shelters or campsites
- Motorised recreation for special one-off events in designated parks
- Approval of the fill or cut of earthworks (minimum of 10 m³)
- Infrastructure upgrades
- Paragliding at Baring Head
- Other activities identified in the Parks Network Plan as a restricted activity
- See section 7.4 of the Parks Network Plan for more details.

Appendix 1 - Concessions fee schedule

Application fees

Note all fees include GST. Initial application fees, permit fees, and late notice fees are payable at the time of application and are non-refundable. Bonds are also payable at the time of application. All other additional charges will be invoiced.

Permit for managed activities and specified restricted activities, application fee	Commercial activities - \$175.00 Non-commercial activities with over 150 participants - \$50.00
Low impact filming	\$50.00
Restricted activity – initial fee (deposit) for non-notified	\$1,610.00 (\$1,400 plus GST)
Restricted activity – initial fixed fee (deposit) for notified	\$5060.00 (\$4,400.00 plus GST)
Additional officer time	\$126.50 (\$110.00 plus GST) per hour
Hearing time	\$2300.00 (\$2000.00 plus GST) per half day
Consultants	Charged at actual cost
DOC charges	Charged at actual cost
Renewals (leases, licences, easements)	\$126.50 (\$110.00 plus GST) per hour
Renewals (permits only)	\$50.00
Late notice fee	\$250.00
Applications involving GWRC and other agencies (e.g. DOC or WCC land)	Pro rata fee according to the proposed use of other public lands
Bonds	\$200.00 minimum to \$2000.00, dependent on level of impact

Park user fees

Note that a full day is more than 4 hours duration. A half day is less than 4 hours duration.

Ranger assistance costs (above normal duties, at the discretion of the ranger)	\$50 per hour for ranger time \$80 per hour for ranger time and vehicle
Commercial activities (e.g. mountain biking tours)	\$5 per participant – full day \$2.50 per participant – half day
Non-commercial activities/tours of more than 150 participants	\$5 per participant – full day \$2.50 per participant – half day
Festivals/events	10% of gross receipts of the festival/event and any associated mobile traders. Minimum \$500

Firewood collection (non-commercial)	\$50 (per weekend)
Commercial passenger vehicle conveyance	\$2 per person
Horse riding – events and trekking (more than 30 horses and people)	Events \$5 per person Rally/practice \$3 per person
Motorbike and trail bike (commercial)	\$15 per bike – full day \$10 per bike – half day
Motorbike and trail bike permit (non-commercial)	\$20 for a 12 month permit
4WDs/motorised vehicles (commercial)	\$40 per vehicle – full day \$25 per vehicle – half day
4WDs/motorised vehicles (non-commercial club events)	\$15 per vehicle – full day
Picnic areas or space reservations for groups	\$20 per group minimum, up to 20 people \$1 per person for groups of 20+ people \$500 weekend flat rate (Fri-Sun) for marquees (Note there is no booking fee but you must book a space with the ranger.)
Park facilities Ken Gray Education Centre Stratton Street barn	\$50 booking fee (bond may be required)
Weddings Ceremony only Ceremony and function	\$200 \$500 (plus bond at ranger's discretion)
Filming/photography Advertising commercials Television (other than news/current affairs) News/current affairs Conservation/educational/recreation promotion Still photography	\$400 per day \$400 per day Nil fee \$400 per day or nil fee for non-commercial \$300 per day
Feature films Full day Half day Two hours More than 10 days	\$400 \$250 \$200 Rates to be negotiated at discretion of Manager, Parks
Low budget films	

Films undertaken by students for education purposes Preparation and cleanup costs	Activity fee waiver at discretion of Manager, Parks To be negotiated depending on size and nature of filming.
Schools	Free access to first two hours of ranger time and then \$30 per hour after that. Vehicle costs (if needed) to apply after first two hours
Special interest groups (E.g. Forest and Bird, historic societies, conservation groups, botany clubs, universities. This does not apply to formal research programmes.)	Free access First two hours free with ranger \$50 per hour ranger time after first two hours Vehicle costs may apply
Mobile traders (e.g. coffee cart, hotdog stand, bike shop stand)	A minimum per session charge of \$10 casual use or for occupation less than a 12 month period, to be negotiated at discretion of Manager, Parks. For a 12 month period or more – a minimum of \$100, to be negotiated at discretion of Manager, Parks.
High-impact collecting and research permit	\$100
Beehives	Fees to be negotiated at discretion of Manager, Parks
Camping permit	Unpowered sites \$6 per adult per night \$3 per child per night under 16 years old. If unsupervised, particularly 14-16 year old, adult rates apply) Powered sites \$12 per adult per night \$6 per child per night under 16 years old.
Hunting permit	Nil fee
Independent groups	Free access \$50 per hour ranger guide if requested.