



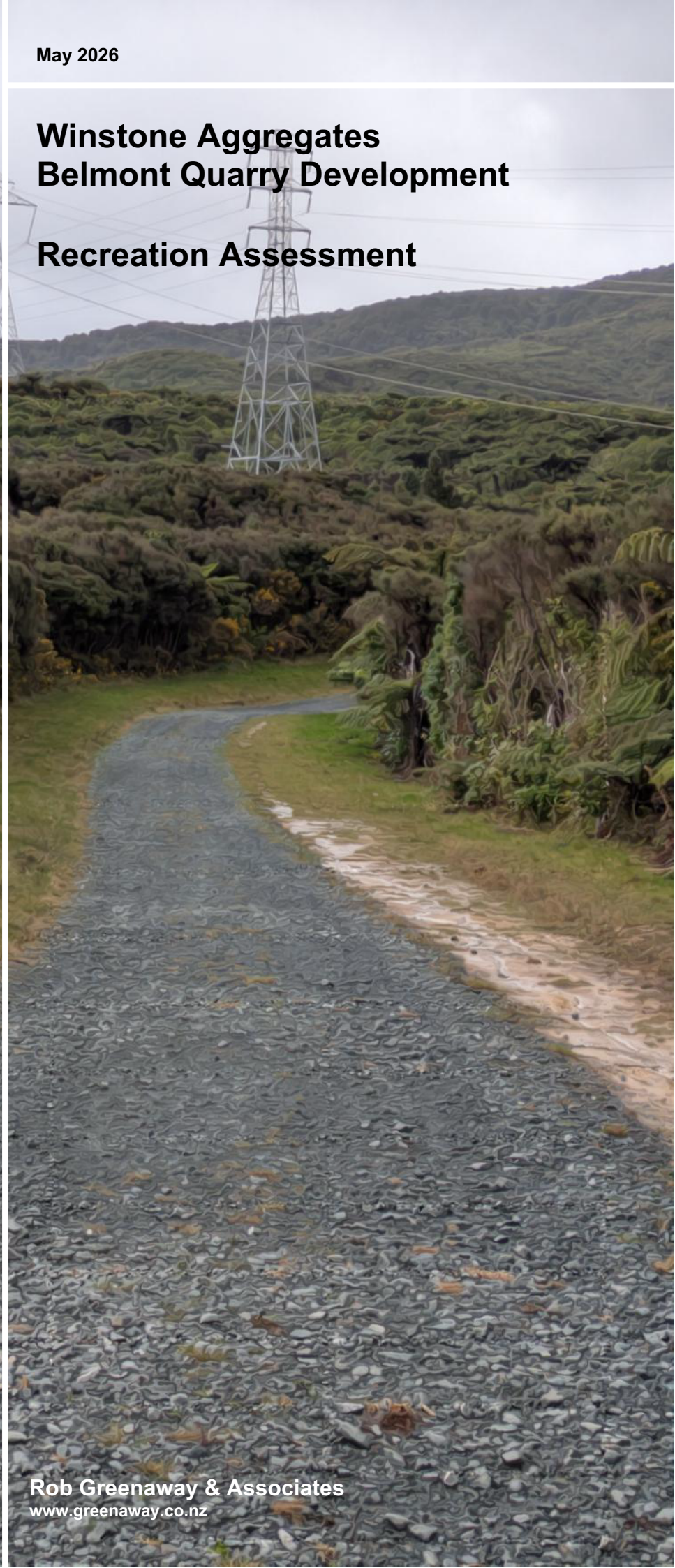
Belmont Quarry Development – Part B

Substantive Application
Appendix B.12 – Recreation Report
Winstone Aggregates

16 August 2026

May 2026

Winstone Aggregates Belmont Quarry Development Recreation Assessment



Winstone Aggregates Belmont Quarry Development Recreation Assessment

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www.greenaway.co.nz**

May 2026
Final

Belmont Quarry Development

Recreation Assessment

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1 Executive Summary

This report assesses the effects on recreation of Winstone Aggregates' (Winstone) proposed construction and operation of 23.86 ha of land adjacent to Belmont Regional Park for an overburden disposal area (OBDA). The construction and operation of the OBDA will be undertaken in ten sequenced stages or 'campaigns' (following preliminary enabling works). Each campaign will last for 6-8 months, and occur every 2-5 years across the 35 year duration of the consent. The final stage will provide for formal closure, revegetation, and rehabilitation of the OBDA area.

This assessment identifies the recreational uses of the potentially affected areas and focuses on the potential noise and landscape effects on them.

1.1 OBDA construction and operation

This assessment relies on the noise and visual effects separately reported on in The Styles Group's acoustics assessment and Boffa Miskell's landscape assessment.

The Styles Group finds that the noise emissions into Belmont Regional Park will not 'exceed a reasonable¹ level'². However, approximately 1.4 km of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track – 33% of its length if Boulder Hill is considered the destination – will be subject, at worst case during part of Stage 1, to noticeable noise effects above the background.

The proposed usual hours of operation of the quarry are:

- Monday - Thursday 7 am - 5 pm
- Friday 7 am - 4 pm
- Saturday 7 am - 12 pm

These periods will coincide with hours of recreational use of the Regional Park, but notably do not include Saturday afternoons and Sundays. At the Regional Park scale, noise effects will be very slight due to the confined nature of the activity, and **Low** at the local track scale for the duration of the consent, considering the limited periods of activity, scale of effect, and long periods of no activity. During part of Stage 1, when works are nearest the Buchanan Road Tramping Track, short-term **Moderate** scale effects could be experienced.

The Boffa Miskell Landscape Assessment indicates the potential for Low to Moderate³ adverse visual effects from available views at 400 metres from the OBDA on the Buchanan Road Tramping Track during Stages 1 through 6 of its operation, and Very low to Low thereafter and on closure⁴. The scale of assessment for visual effects at 950 metres from the OBDA on the Kaitangata Crescent walking track remains Low to Moderate during the life of the project, and Low on closure. These effects will be **Low** for recreation due to the intermittent nature of external views from both the Buchanan Road Tramping Track the Kaitangata Crescent walking track, which are largely within trees or have external views to the OBDA largely obscured by other landforms.

The Landscape Assessment also considers views from Fraser Park 2.3 km from the site, with Neutral visual effects through Stages 1 to 3 and Very low and Low effects thereafter, and Neutral on closure⁵.

At the Regional Park scale, and for the wider Hutt catchment, the effects on recreation values will be negligible.

¹ 'Reasonable' considering "the level, character, timing, frequency, and duration of the noise emissions in the existing environment, including the noise levels and effects authorised by existing consents, those enabled by the relevant permitted standards of the HCDP, and noise from nearby infrastructure."

² Acoustic Assessment for Winstone Aggregate, Styles Group (2026). page 1

³ Level of Effect: Very Low, Low, Low-Moderate, Moderate, Moderate-High, High, Very High

⁴ Landscape Assessment for Winstone Aggregates, Boffa Miskell (2026) Executive Summary

⁵ Landscape Assessment for Winstone Aggregates, Boffa Miskell (2026) Appendix 2: Visual Effects Assessment

1.2 Code of conduct

I confirm that, in my capacity as author of this report, I have read and agree to abide by the Environment Court of New Zealand's Code of Conduct for Expert Witnesses Practice Note 2023. This assessment is based on an extensive review of recreational use of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track by Xyst (Appendix 1), and a site visit and review by the report author (CV in Appendix 2). The author prepared a recreation assessment to support the proposed land exchange between Winstone and the Department of Conservation in December 2025.

2 Introduction

This report is prepared as part of the Belmont Quarry application under the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA) for the development of 23.86 ha of land adjacent to Belmont Regional Park for an overburden disposal area (OBDA), focusing on potential recreation effects on adjacent recreation settings. The two sites of interest are the Buchanan Road Tramping Track and Kaitangata Crescent walking track.

The 'maintenance and enhancement of amenity values' is a section 7 matter under the Resource Management Act, with amenity values defined as (s2):

those natural or physical qualities and characteristics of an area that contribute to people's appreciation of its pleasantness, aesthetic coherence, and cultural and recreational attributes

This assessment considers recreation attributes and the values which support a quality recreation experience.

2.1 Method

This assessment is based on:

- A site visit,
- Discussions with the project team,
- Review of parallel technical reports, specifically:
 - The Acoustic Assessment (Styles Group), and
 - Landscape Effects Assessment (Boffa Miskell)
- Reliance on a comprehensive review of the recreation values of the setting carried out by Xyst and attached to this report as Appendix 1. The key findings of that review are summarised in the following section of this report.
- Review of the final draft conditions of consent and consider that they appropriately reflect the recommendations made in my assessment.

Table 1 identifies the terminology used to describe the potential scales of effect of the Project on recreation opportunities and values, for both construction and operation.

Table 1: Effects assessment terminology	
Level of effect	Summary of effect
Very high	Total loss of, or very major alteration to, the existing baseline conditions, such that the environment post-development will be fundamentally changed. Long-term impacts occur that may be irreversible.
High	Major loss or major alteration to the existing baseline conditions such that the post-development environment will be fundamentally changed compared to the pre-development environment.
Moderate	Material change from existing baseline conditions in the short, medium or long term.
Low	Minor change from existing baseline conditions. Temporary or short-term impacts or long term change will be noticeable but environment will be overall similar to pre-development conditions.
Negligible	Very slight change from the existing baseline conditions. Change not (or barely) discernible.

3 Setting description – recreation values

The recreational use and values of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track are summarised in the Appended review carried by Xyst Ltd. This is based on:

- To quantify use, the temporary installation of a visitor counter on Buchanan Road Tramping Track (9 July 2025 to 9 September 2025), and reference to Strava data,⁶
- User interviews,
- Site visits, and
- Review of GW parks and recreation policies and strategies, and those of DOC and Hutt City Council.

The key findings are:

- An estimate of 18 uses per day for the Buchanan Road Tramping Track (6,570 annually).
- GW's track counters at other locations within Belmont Regional Park give annual use estimates (2024) of, for example, 361,500 at the Hill Road Entrance, 414,100 at the Cornish Street Entrance, and 29,400 at the Dry Creek entrance.⁷
- Walking, running and tramping are the most popular uses of the Tramping Track. Over the period January 2025 to September 2025 a total of 21 organised tramping trips into the Regional Park were scheduled by tramping clubs, and identified online. Of these, two were the Puke Ariki Traverse originating from Dry Creek and one was the Buchanan Road Tramping Track – Dry Creek Loop.
- The Buchanan Road Tramping Track is popular for dog walking (on-lead) given the good access from the Dry Creek entrance; providing a good exercise opportunity in a relatively remote setting compared with other dog walking opportunities in the Hutt Valley which are generally located along the Hutt River or on flat sites.
- The Tramping Track is graded as an advanced mountain biking trail used by cross-country mountain bikers to, in the main, access or descend from Boulder Hill, or for longer routes across Belmont Regional Park or as part of the Dry Creek Loop. The Track is considered difficult because of the elevation gain and sustained climb. The majority of mountain biking activity in the Regional Park occurs at its Stratton Street entrance where there are a series of purpose-built mountain biking trails in proximity to residential areas. Mountain biking on the Tramping Track is reported as far more infrequent than pedestrian activities.
- Horse riding within the Regional Park requires an annual permit, with, at July 2025, 26 issued. GW estimates between 50-100 horse rides per annum using the Dry Creek area. The vast majority of

⁶ Strava is a social media application which uses GPS records from subscribers' smartphones and other devices uploaded to a central database, allowing speed and time comparisons with other cyclists, runners, walkers and trampers (for example), and the monitoring of individual activity or training targets. While the service is popular with professional athletes, its membership is dominated by casual recreation participants. Strava indicated that it had 50 million international users in early 2020 (80% outside the US) with an additional million joining per month, and in 2024 the company reported 120 million users. It is popular amongst regular cyclists and runners, but is also used by a wide variety of other pursuits, such as tramping, rowing, swimming and skiing.

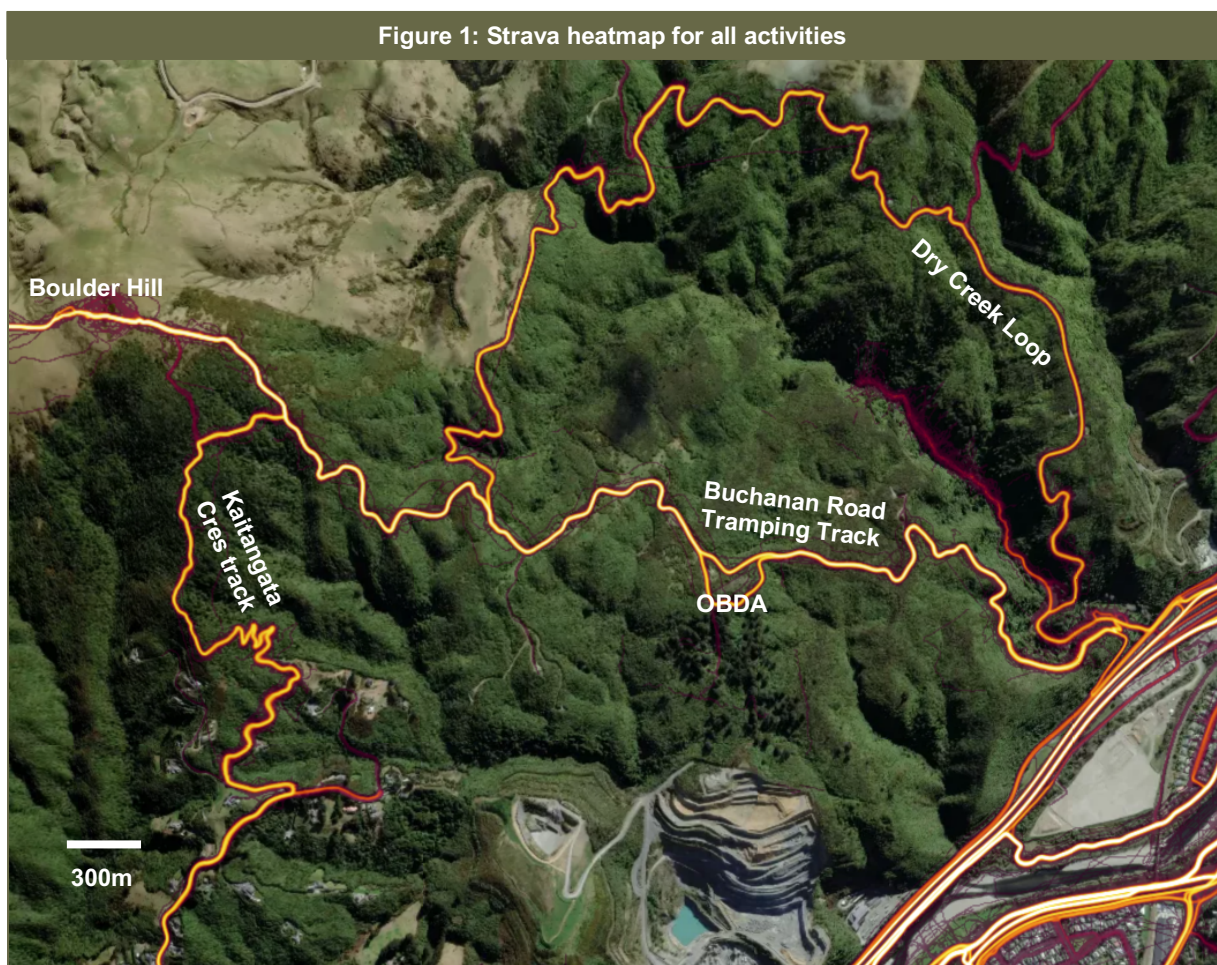
An international comparison between different forms of data-gathering in 2016 showed a range of 1% to 12% of users recording their activity on Strava; and that this is growing. Comparisons between track counter data and Strava records undertaken by the author of this report in Nelson suggest levels of Strava adoption in relatively low-use settings as high as 73% for cyclists and 26% for pedestrians. More accessible tracks appeared to have a lower (but still high) uptake of around 40% for cyclists and 7% for pedestrians. A recent survey by the author of this report in the Wellington Region showed that 60% of runners, 43% of cyclists, 13% of walkers and 10% of dog walkers recorded their activity on Strava. Such response rates would compare favourably to an on-site intercept survey of users in an outdoor setting, particularly since the Strava data are collected over all seasons and all day (an intercept survey would normally only cover relatively short time periods and be confined to specific interception points). Nevertheless, caution needs to be applied to the use of Strava data as they show participation by only Strava members. There will be an inherent bias toward the more competitive and tech-savvy, and some data accumulate from users staying logged in when they are doing other activities, such as driving. Strava is therefore a little like a tag and release programme. Strava essentially tags several thousand active people in an area and monitors where and how they recreate.

⁷ Jeremy Paterson, Western Parks Team Leader, pers comm, Oct 2025, with Rob Greenaway

horse-riding activity occurs from the Park's Hill Road entrance, with rides taking place towards and to Boulder Hill. Dry Creek is more likely to be used by non-club members or visiting riders. Horse riding on the Tramping Track is reported as far more infrequent than mountain biking or pedestrian activities.

- Trail users appreciate the accessibility of the Dry Creek area and the Buchanan Road Tramping Track from residential Hutt Valley. The challenge of the climb to Boulder Hill is a key attraction for regular runners and dog walkers, along with the expansive views.

The Boffa Miskell Landscape Assessment indicates the potential for views of the OBDA site from the walking track leading from Kaitangata Crescent to the Buchanan Road Tramping Track and on to Boulder Hill⁸. The Strava data suggest a comparable level of use between the two tracks (Figure 1). The location of the OBDA is indicated in Figure 1 overlying a currently existing access route that will be on Winstone land and not publicly accessible.



⁸ Landscape Assessment for Winstone Aggregates, Boffa Miskell (2026) Executive Summary

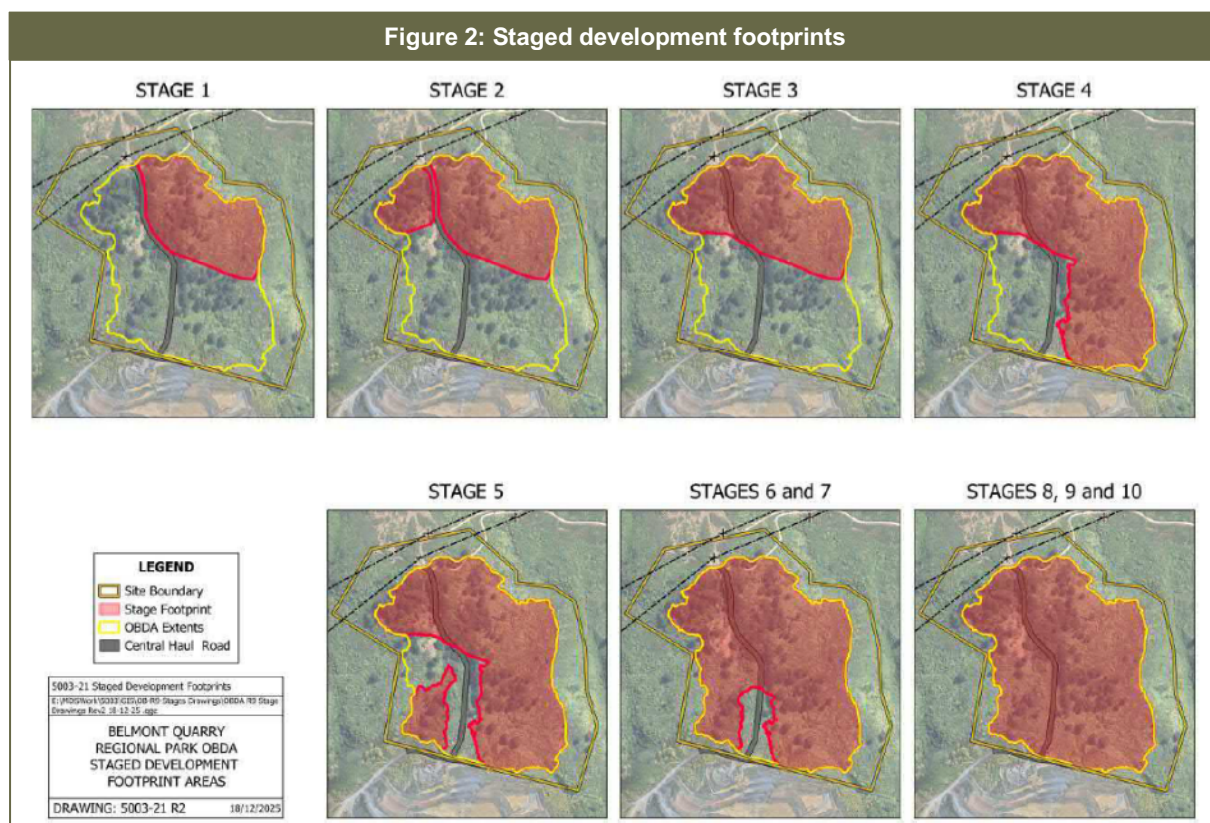
4 Effects assessment

This section reviews the effects of the loss of the proposed OBDA on the recreation values of the Belmont Regional Park, specifically effects on recreation values near the OBDA resulting from its construction and operation (noise and landscape).

The scale of assessment applied is summarised in Table 1 on page 6.

4.1 OBDA construction and operation

The construction and operation of the OBDA will be undertaken in ten sequenced stages or 'campaigns' (following preliminary enabling works) (Figure 2). Each campaign will last for 6-8 months, and campaigns will occur 2-5 years across the 35 year duration of the consent. The final stage will provide for formal closure, revegetation, and rehabilitation of the OBDA area.



Enabling works will be required for each stage. These works include access track construction, construction of temporary controls for erosion, stability, sediment, and subsoil drainage, and vegetation clearance.

There will be no blasting or processing undertaken in the proposed OBDA.

The OBDA will accommodate approximately 2.8 million cubic metres of overburden over approximately 35 years.

Operational effects of the OBDA development are based on noise and landscape effects, reviewed in the respective reports by The Styles Group and Boffa Miskell.

Noise

The proposed hours of operation within the OBDA are:

- Monday - Thursday 7 am - 5 pm
- Friday 7 am - 4 pm
- Saturday 7 am - 12 pm

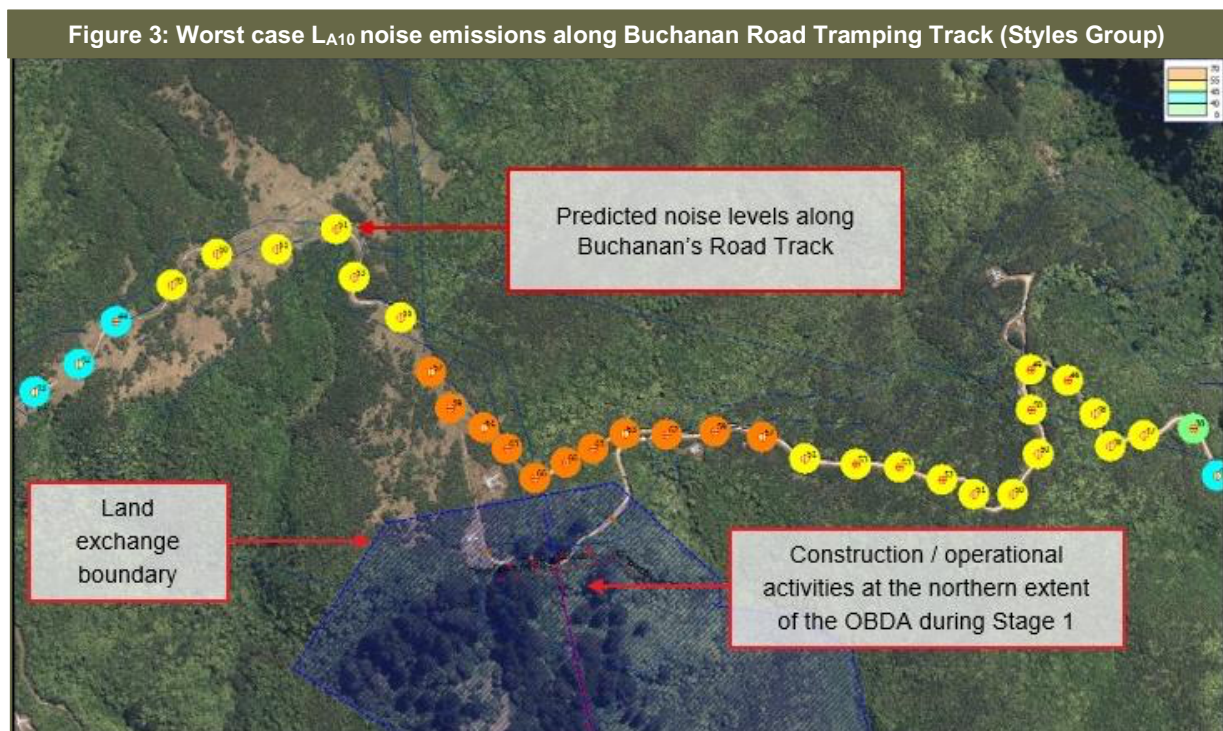
These periods will coincide with hours of recreational use of the Regional Park, but notably do not include Saturday afternoons and Sundays.

The Styles Group, in their Acoustic Assessment, finds:

The highest noise levels on Buchanan's Road Track from the OBDA during Stage 1 will be dominant at the locations marked in Figure 6 [Figure 3 below] with orange, clearly noticeable at the locations marked with yellow, and less noticeable at the locations marked with blue. The highest levels will be 5-10 dB lower during Stages 2 and 3 and significantly lower during all other stages.

For reference, the worst-case noise emissions from the OBDA are compliant with the relevant operational noise limit of 70 dB LAeq (approximately 67 dB LA10) within Belmont Regional Park under the [Proposed Hutt City District Plan].

Based on the overall noise levels, the existing noise environment, and the limited duration and transient nature of the potential noise effects, we consider that the noise emissions into Belmont Regional Park will not exceed a reasonable level⁹.



The Buchanan Road Tramping Track is 4.14 km long if Boulder Hill is the destination (8.4 km return). The distance with noticeable noise effects (orange and yellow in Figure 3) covers a distance of approximately 1.4 km, or 33% of the total track distance. Although large periods of recreational use time (Saturday afternoons and Sundays, and periods after Stage 1 when noise levels will be lower) are not affected or have lower levels of effect, there will be some material effect on the recreation experience of some track users especially during the early stages of OBDA development.

⁹ Acoustic Assessment for Winstone Aggregate, Styles Group (2026). page 30

At the Regional Park scale, noise effects will be very slight, and while **Moderate** and temporary at the local track scale during part of the Stage 1 siteworks, they will be **Low** for the duration of the consent due to the intermittent nature of the activity, the scale of effect, and the long periods of no activity.

Landscape

The Boffa Miskell Landscape Assessment indicates the potential for Low to Moderate¹⁰ adverse visual effects from available views at 400 metres from the OBDA on the Buchanan Road Tramping Track during Stages 1 through 6 of its operation, and Very low to Low thereafter and on closure¹¹. The scale of assessment for visual effects at 950 metres from the OBDA on the Kaitangata Crescent walking track remain Low to Moderate during the life of the project, and Low on closure. These effects will be **Low** for recreation due to the intermittent nature of external views from both the Buchanan Road Tramping Track the Kaitangata Crescent walking track, which are largely within trees or have external views to the OBDA largely obscured by other landforms.

The Landscape Assessment also considers views from Fraser Park 2.3 km from the site, with Neutral visual effects through Stages 1 to 3 and Very low and Low effects thereafter, and Neutral on closure.

At the Regional Park scale, and for the wider Hutt catchment, the effects on recreation values will be **Negligible**.

¹⁰ Level of Effect: Very Low, Low, Low-Moderate, Moderate, Moderate-High, High, Very High

¹¹ Landscape Assessment for Winstone Aggregates, Boffa Miskell (2026) pg. 21

5 Conclusion

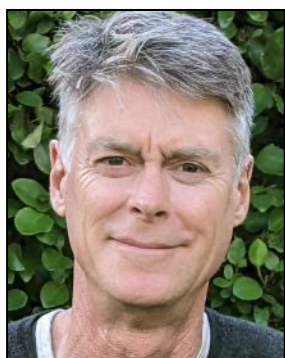
At the Regional Park scale the construction and operation of the OBDA will have negligible effect on park patronage and enjoyment due to the confined scale of effect on sections of track at the Buchanan Road Tramping Track and the Kaitangata Crescent walking track.

At the local track scale, noise effects will result in a temporary and very short-term **Moderate** effect on recreational enjoyment of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track for part of Stage 1, but will have **Low**-scale effects for the duration of the consent. Noise effects will be limited to the hours of operation of the quarry.

Visual effects on the recreational enjoyment of both the Tramping Track and the Kaitangata Crescent walking track will be **Low** for the duration of the consent.

Appendix 1: Xyst recreation values assessment

Appendix 2: Author qualifications and experience



ROB GREENAWAY • CURRICULUM VITAE

Recreation and Tourism Research and Planning

Rob Greenaway has an academic and practical background in recreation, tourism and conservation management. He is experienced in planning and managing for public, community and commercial facilities and services in parks and reserves, and in urban and protected areas.

His strong skills in formal and informal data gathering, research analysis and journalism have been demonstrated in hundreds of project reports, management plans, publications, evidence, submissions and research papers over the past 30 years. Rob has published extensively in New Zealand, Australia and Asia (examples of articles and papers are available on www.greenaway.co.nz).

Core work is recreation and reserve management planning, and comprehensive and robust assessments of effects of large-scale infrastructure proposals. Rob has presented expert evidence at over 120 hearings, with experience in hydro, irrigation, wind, forestry, subdivision, roading, cycleways, mining, marine farming, discharges and coastal and tourism developments.

Work History from 1990	1997 - current:	Director, Rob Greenaway & Associates (R&R Consulting (NZ) Ltd) , Nelson.
	1995 - 1997:	Consultant in Recreation and Tourism, Boffa Miskell Limited , Christchurch.
	1990 - 1995:	Consultant in Recreation and Tourism, Tourism Resource Consultants , Wellington.

SELECTED EXPERIENCE

Assessments of effect and expert witness evidence	Waka Kotahi / NZTA, 2025–current: Impact assessment for Petone to Grenada project, Wellington.
	NZSki, 2025–current: Impact assessment for Remarkables Skifield expansion.
	Graymont Ltd, 2019–current: Quarry expansion and consenting existing operations (with PDP and Enspire).
	Bathurst Resources, 2023–current: Assessments for mining works on Denniston and Stockton Plateaux.
	Santana Minerals, 2024–2026: Effects assessment for Bendigo gold mine proposal.
	Christchurch City Council, 2023–2026: Impact assessments for reconstruction of Akaroa Wharf (with Enviser).
	Port of Tauranga, 2023–2026: Assessment for consenting of harbour dredge activities.
	OceanaGold, 2020–2025: Impact assessment for Waihi North project (with Mitchell Daysh).
	Treetops Adventure, 2022–2024: Concession and consent application for high-ropes course in Hanmer Springs.
	Mowbray family, 2023–2025: Evidence for consent for helicopter activity, Westmere, Auckland.
	Auckland Council, 2024–2025: Open space assessment and evidence for Private Plan Change 94.
	Ravensdown, 2022–2024: Reconsenting Dunedin fertiliser works, recreation assessment.
	Northport, 2020–2023: Effects assessment and evidence for port expansion and reclamation (with Enviser).
	Waka Kotahi and Auckland Transport, 2022–2023: Assessments for NORs for Airport to Botany and North West rapid transit corridors and roading improvements (with Beca).
	100WPS Trust, 2023: Evidence for marina redevelopment near Walter Peak on Lake Wakatipu.
	Watercare, 2022–2023: Central Interceptor works on Point Erin Park, recreation assessment.
	Kāpiti Coast District Council, 2021–2022: Assessment for wastewater treatment options in Waikanae (with Stantec).
	Hurunui District Council, 2021–current: Effects assessment and evidence for a Flyride in Hanmer Springs.
	Wellington Water, 2018–2022: Assessment for wastewater treatment options in Porirua (with Stantec).
	Bayview Maitahi Proposed Plan Change 28, 2022: Evidence for plan change for residential development in Kaka Valley, Nelson.
	Kaikōura District Council, 2022: Effects of Wakatu Quay tourism development proposal (with Enviser).
	Graymont Ltd, 2019–2022: Quarry expansion and consenting existing operations (with PDP).
	Whakatāne District Council, 2021: Assessment of effects for boat harbour development connected to the Whakatāne River (with Sally Gepp Barrister and Waredale).
	Waka Kotahi, 2019–2021: Review of effects and benefits of proposed shared path between Ngauranga and Petone.

Talley's, Clearwater Mussels, Clifford Bay Marine, PALMS Ltd, Marine Farming Association, Aquaculture NZ and Friends of Onapua Bay, 2021: Several sets of evidence relating to Marlborough District Council's Proposed Marlborough Environment Plan for aquaculture (largely with Gascoigne Wicks).

Tasman Asphalt, 2021: Evidence for asphalt plant near the Waimea River (with Sally Gepp Barrister).

King Salmon, 2021: Assessment of effect for offshore Blue Endeavour salmon farm (with Gascoigne Wicks).

Yili Oceania, 2019–2020: Review of effects of proposed ocean outfall for dairy factory near Waimate.

Hutt City Council, 2018–2020: Recreation assessment and evidence for coastal shared path proposal in the Eastern Bays (with Stantec).

Auckland Council, 2020: Effects assessment and evidence for Te Whau shared path.

Ponui Aquaculture Ltd, 2020: Evidence for proposed marine farm, Firth of Thames (with Gascoigne Wicks).

Ohinau Aquaculture Ltd, 2020: Evidence for proposed spat farm in Mercury Bay (with Gascoigne Wicks).

Wellington Water, 2018–2019: Review of options for location of cross-harbour water supply pipeline (with Stantec).

Wellington International Airport Ltd, 2015–2020: Assessment of effect of runway extension and sea defences renewal.

Auckland Council, 2016–2019: Assessment and evidence for Orewa seawall consent application (with T&T).

Simcox Quarry, 2019–2020: Review of effects of quarry trucks on recreation in the road corridor.

Port Gore, 2017: Expert evidence in relation to marine farming, Marlborough Sounds.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, 2017–2018: Assessment for SH3 Mt Messenger roading by-pass.

Lyttelton Port Company, 2013–2018: Review of effects of port deepening project and cruise ship berth development.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, 2017: Assessment for Petone Interchange development.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, 2017: Evidence for Northern Corridor Improvements, Auckland.

Suburban Estates Ltd, 2017: Evidence to QLDC plan review for development by iwi of Sticky Forest in Wanaka.

Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, 2016–2018: Review of Additional Waitemata Harbour Crossing for designation and coastal permit.

Mt Maunganui Dive Club, 2016–2017: Evidence for Rena consent appeal.

Clearwater Mussels Ltd, 2015: Assessment for plan change in Marlborough Sounds for marine farm.

Refining New Zealand, 2014–2017: Review of effects and evidence for Marsden Point port development.

CentrePort, 2014–2017: Review of effects of Wellington port development.

Trans-Tasman Resources, 2013–2015: Review of recreation and tourism effects of iron sand mining proposal off the South Taranaki Coast (with Argo Environmental) and presentation to EPA.

Peninsula Bay Joint Venture, 2016: Evidence for plan change proposal for Wanaka subdivision.

Silver Fern Farms, 2016: Assessment of effect for ocean outfall reconsult.

Harakeke residential development, 2016: Evidence for coastal subdivision in Tasman.

Chin Hill, 2015–2016: Public access review for proposed subdivision near Orewa.

Rena owners and insurer, 2012–15: Review of recreation and tourism effects of wreck removal options.

Auckland Transport, 2015: Assessment of effects on parks for major roading project (Mill Road).

Southland District Council, 2014–2016: Environment Court evidence in relation to the Around the Mountains cycleway proposal.

Fonterra, 2014–15: Review of recreation effects of dairy factory expansion in South Canterbury.

Direction Matiatia, 2014: Expert evidence in relation to a marina proposal on Waiheke Island.

Marlborough District Council, 2012: Expert evidence in relation to salmon farming, Marlborough Sounds.

Buller Coal, 2011–13: Expert evidence in relation to an open cast mine, West Coast.

Nelson Cycle Trails Trust, 2011: Expert evidence in relation to cycleway proposal, Nelson.

South Head Action Group, 2011: Expert evidence in relation to a road stopping, Kaipara.

Port Gore, 2011: Expert evidence in relation to marine farming, Marlborough Sounds.

Fonterra, 2010: Expert evidence for new dairy factory in Darfield.

Moutere Station, 2010: Expert evidence in relation to road stopping proposal, Otago.

Omaha Park Ltd, 2010: Expert evidence for coastal subdivision, Auckland.

Darby Partners Ltd, 2007–10: Presentation of evidence for subdivision at Parkins Bay, Wanaka. Preparation of evidence for Te Arai coastal park development. Review of West Wanaka development.

Port Marlborough NZ, 2010: Survey of current and prospective marina berth holders, recreation assessment of effect for Waikawa marina extension and expert evidence at Council hearing.

Lincoln Land Developments / Ngai Tahu, 2009: Expert evidence in relation to Dairy Block subdivision.

Fiordland Link Experience, 2004–10: Assessment of effects of proposed monorail in conservation area.

Lakes Environmental, 2009: Expert evidence in relation to commercial jet boating on Wilkin River.

Auckland Regional Council, 2009: Bayswater Marina development Environment Court hearing.

Queenstown Airport Corporation, 2009: AEE preparation for gravel extraction on lower Shotover River.

Wairewa Rūnanga, 2006–07: Recreation assessment for proposed Lake Forsyth opening structures.

Landco Ltd, 2007: Presentation of Environment Court evidence for subdivision at Long Bay, North Shore.

Infinity Investments, 2005–06: Expert evidence for two Wanaka subdivisions (Hillend, Peninsula Bay).

Recreation research and planning

Nelson Tasman Cycle Trails Trust, 2026–current: Intercept survey design and analysis.

Department of Conservation, 2025: Review of management options for Molesworth Recreation Reserve.

Tasman District Council, 2023–2024: Recreation value assessment of Tasman and Golden Bays to assist marine aquaculture area planning.

Nelson City Council, 2022–2024: Reserve General Policies development drafting.

Koata Ltd and Nelson City Council, 2019–2024: Recreation management planning for private forest.

Christchurch City Council, 2023: Review of options for managing wharf development and use in Akaroa (with Enviser).

Auckland Council, 2022: Review of appeal material for Drury plan change proposal.

Nelson City & Tasman District Councils, 2019–2021: Reserve Management Plan for Saxton Field.

Port Nikau Joint Venture, 2021: Review of reserve development contributions assessment for residential development in Whangarei.

Bathurst Resources, 2019–2023: Visitor survey on Denniston Plateau and recreation access monitoring.

Nelson City Council, 2019: Review of esplanade reserve width requirements for recreation values for all waterways to advise policy in proposed Whakamahere Whakatū Nelson Plan.

Department of Conservation, 2018: Review of visitor management options for Rakau Rangatira project (kauri die-back, Waipoua Forest) (with Boffa Miskell).

Nelson City Council, 2017: Survey of Nelson Marina and boat ramp users

Greater Wellington Regional Council, 2016: Survey of users of the Hutt River Corridor.

Nelson City Council, 2016: Review of Open Space and Recreation Zone provisions for the proposed Whakamahere Whakatū Nelson Plan.

Nelson City Council, 2016: Survey of use of Maitai River ford.

Wellington City Council, 2015: Mount Victoria Masterplan (with Megan Wraight & Associates).

Kaiteriteri Recreation Reserve Board, 2015: Kaiteriteri Recreation Reserve and Kaka Point Historic Reserve Management Plan.

Nelson City Council, 2014–15: Survey of recreational use of Maitai and Roding Rivers.

Christchurch City Council, 2013–14: Survey of recreational and commercial use of 15 marine structures on and around Banks Peninsula.

Tasman District Council, 2012–2014: Regional Open Space Strategy and General Policies.

Meridian Energy, 2012: Survey of recreational use of the Waiau River.

Trustpower, 2007–2011: Surveys of recreational use of the Rangitāiki, Arnold, Wairau and Rakaia Rivers.

Lake Hood, 2007: Survey of Lake Hood residents and visitors (with Tonkin & Taylor).

Christchurch City Council, 2002–07: Visitor surveys for the Port Hills, Spencer Park, Sumner Beach, New Brighton Beach and users of the Avon-Heathcote Estuary.

Clutha River Parkway, 2006: Review of recreation and tourism benefits (with Dr Kay Booth and GHD).

Department of Conservation, 2003–04: National survey to quantify recreation displacement.

Christchurch City Council, 2003: Port Hills Recreation Strategy.

Meridian Energy, Project Aqua, 2001–02: Recreation survey of the Waitaki River and door-to-door survey of Waitaki Valley residents for AEE for recreation and community.

Lochindorb Wind Limited Partnership, 2023–current: Assessment of wind farm effects near Balclutha.

Manawa Energy / Trustpower, 2005–current: Effects assessment work and evidence on four proposed and 11 existing hydro schemes (including Kuratau, Mangahao, Arnold, Coleridge, Wairau, Pātea, Mangahao, Matahina, Motukawa, Mangorei, Beaumont, Wheao, Kaimai and Kaniere). Wind farm impact assessments in Whanganui and Central North Island.

Westpower, 2012–2026: Investigations and evidence for Waitaha River hydro proposal.

Meridian Energy, 2004–2026: Assessments of effect and evidence presentation for seven hydro schemes (including Pūkaki, Waitaki, Mokihinui, Manapouri, Waiau), three wind farms (including Project Hayes) and two irrigation proposals. Review of Waitaki Catchment Water Allocation Regional Plan,

Energy and river-related

preparation and presentation of evidence to Waitaki Water Allocation Board and 2025 re-consenting of Waitaki Scheme.

Lochindorb Wind Limited Partnership, 2023–2025: Assessment of wind farm effects near Balclutha.

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Journalism More than 100 articles published in over 30 magazines and newspapers in Australasia and Asia since 1989. Interviews on over 20 radio stations for outdoor events and outdoor management issues. Instigated and appeared on two Television NZ items for outdoor recreation activities. Authored various publications, including the updated Tongariro National Park Handbook and the Samoa Visitors Bureau 'What to do and see' guide. Several hundred photos published in books and magazines in New Zealand and Asia. Editor of Mary Hobbs' books *Kiwi Tucker for the soul* and *Letters to America*, and story editor for *NZ Outside* (1996-2001).

BACKGROUND

Awarded the Ian Galloway Memorial Cup by the New Zealand Recreation Association in 2004: *To recognise excellence and outstanding personal contribution to the wider parks industry.*

Education *Diploma in Parks and Recreation Management (Distinction)*; Lincoln University 1987.
Postgraduate study in conservation management – 18 months, Lincoln University 1988 – 89.

Professional training and associations Accredited Recreation Professional and Fellow of Recreation Aotearoa.
Project Co-ordinator, National Parks & Reserve NZ Lands and Survey Rangers' Archive, 2023 – current.
See: <https://parkrangersnz.recollectcms.com/>
Chair of Nelson Marina Advisory Committee to the Nelson City Council, 2021 – 2023, Deputy from 2017.
Member of New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment, ex-executive member, 2006 – current.
Member, inaugural Sport NZ Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Recreation Council, 2009 – 2013.
National Executive of Recreation Aotearoa, 2000 – 2005 (member since 1990). Previously Chair and currently member of Recreation Aotearoa Board of Accreditation for member accreditation to professional status.
Member of Cashmere Forest Park Campaign for the Port Hills Park Trust Board, 2005 – 2011.
Member of Board of Management, Styx River Living Laboratory Trust, 2002 – 2006.
Introduction to Māori language, University of Canterbury, 1996.

Selected conference papers and articles *Mapping recreation: A costly dangerous mess?* Recreation Aotearoa National Conference, Queenstown 2016.
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Recreation Values

Belmont Quarry Development

Prepared for Winstone Aggregates by Xyst Limited

19 September 2025

Everything parks, recreation, and community

Tēnā koutou katoa

This report has been prepared for the Winstone Aggregates by Paul Wilson from Xyst.

Revision History

Rev.	Date	Author	Notes
1.0	20/07/2025	Paul Wilson	Working draft for review
2.0	05/08/2025	Paul Wilson	Revised following review
3.0	04/09/2025	Paul Wilson	Revised following review
4.0	19/09/2025	Paul Wilson	Final

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Abbreviations and definitions

AEE	Assessment of Environmental Effects
AMSL	Above mean sea level
BAMBA	Belmont Area Mountain Bike Association
DOC	Department of Conservation
GWRC	Greater Wellington Regional Council
HCC	Hutt City Council
OBDA	Overburden Disposal Area
PIR	Passive Infrared Sensor
TAs	Territorial Authorities
SH	State Highway
YTD	Year to date

INTRODUCTION

1. This report identifies the recreational use of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track and other nearby recreation routes.
2. The assessment is based on:
 - Three site visits to the study area in June, July, August and September 2025 to gain understanding of the setting, access and recreational use of the area;
 - Temporary PIR remote sensor counts of activity on the Buchanan Road Tramping Track obtained from 9 July to 9 September 2025;
 - Review of Strava Metro¹ user data;
 - Literature review; and
 - Interviews with recreational users of the study area and special interest groups.

SITE CONTEXT

3. Belmont Regional Park is located in the hill country between Porirua and the Hutt Valley). The park comprises steep hills and valleys. Belmont Trig (457 metres) is the highest point of the park. Most of the park is pastureland. Some of the steeper slopes and gullies are revegetating in gorse and native bush. Native vegetation clads the Korokoro and Dry Creek Valleys.
4. The park offers wide open spaces and panoramic hilltop views. A range of recreational activities occur in the park, including walking, running, hiking, orienteering, horse riding, mountain biking, picnicking, camping and swimming.
5. On the eastern side of the park, mountain biking activity is centred on the Stratton Street area and horse-riding activity is centred on the Hill Crescent entrance where the Belmont Pony Club is located. Outside of these hubs, mountain biking and horse riding does occur but in significantly lower numbers. The proximity of the park to the major population centres of the Wellington region provides a semi-rural experience for park visitors.
6. The Dry Creek entrance to the park is one of 11 entrances to the park. The Dry Creek entrance is open during daylight hours and contains camping facilities, toilets and park visitor information. It is the trail head for three trails being the Buchanan Road tramping track, Dry Creek loop and Waterfall track.

¹ Strava Metro is a software application that aggregates data from people who track their activity with their phone, GPS or wearable fitness device. It enables the visualisation and analysis of usage of a particular area to estimate likely actual usage. This report includes aggregated and de-identified data from Strava Metro.

RECREATIONAL TRAILS IN THE VICINITY OF THE OBDA

Puke Ariki Traverse/Belmont cross-park route

7. The Puke Ariki traverse (See Figure 1 as highlighted in yellow) is promoted as a “rewarding full-day scenic walk or ride that traverses the length of Belmont Regional Park”². The full traverse takes between 7-8 hours and covers some 21.8km, starting at the Dry Creek Campsite and following the Buchanan Road tramping track, Boulder Hill tramping track, Dress Circle tramping track and Korokoro Stream before arriving at the Cornish Street entrance. It is used by walkers and mountain bikers and is graded as Advanced tramping track or Expert: Grade 5 Mountain biking. The traverse can be travelled in either direction.
8. A relatively unique aspect of the Puke Ariki Traverse is that it can be readily accessed by public transport with the Dry Creek entrance being a 15-minute walk from the Manor Park railway station.
9. The Puke Ariki Traverse is identified by GWRC as a key visitor destination³ and as regional trail within the Wellington region by TRC Tourism (2017)⁴.
10. The Buchanan Road Tramping Track forms part of the Puke Ariki Traverse.

Buchanan Road Tramping Track

11. The Buchanan Road tramping track is an existing recreational shared use track which starts at the Dry Creek car park and campsite (40m AMSL). From the car park, a short 50m section of track connects to a 4WD road formation (authorised vehicle access only). The route then follows the gravelled road formation climbing steadily through some pockets of existing native forest initially and then through regenerating shrub land for a distance of 950m before gaining a ridge line near a transmission line tower at an elevation of approximately 175m AMSL.
12. The route continues along this ridge line along the gravel road for another 480m at approximately 190m AMSL before an intersection is reached near the proposed OBDA boundary. The distance from the Dry Creek car park to this point is 1.7km with a typical walking time of 45 minutes. As the route follows the well graded, gravel road formation it provides good all-weather recreation opportunity of easy to moderate difficulty.

² <https://www.wellingtonnz.com/visit/trails/belmont-regional-park/puke-ariki-haywaRoads-korokoro-traverse>

³ Greater Wellington — Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-2030 p.18

⁴ Wellington Regional Trails for the Future - A strategic framework for trails in the Wellington Region (2017) TRC Tourism Limited

13. From the intersection there are two available routes; The official marked route of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track /Puke Ariki Traverse climbs directly up the slope on a formed, but unsurfaced, 4WD track for 230m before reaching a small plateau at an elevation of 215m AMSL. I refer to this as the “direct route”. This is a formal recreation trail recognised in the management plan and identified on the ground by orange trail markers.
14. The Buchanan Road tramping track is used primarily by walkers (including those walking dogs which are permitted on-lead) and trail runners. Mountain biking activity also occurs though in lower numbers due to the steep gradient of the trail. Horse riding activity also occurs but this use is relatively low compared to other areas of the park.
15. The Buchanan Road tramping track passes within approximately 7m of the proposed OBDA as while a significant portion of the utilities road will be within the proposed OBDA.
16. The Buchanan Road tramping track is the primary access for several walking/running/tramping experiences from the Dry Creek entrance to Belmont Regional Park. These are:
 - i. As a “in and out” route to Boulder Hill
 - ii. As part of the Puke Ariki Traverse from Dry Creek to the Cornish Street Entrance near Petone
 - iii. As part of Dry Creek Loop Track, starting from the Dry Creek Entrance and travelling via the Buchanan Road tramping track to the intersection of the Dry Creek loop and returning to the Dry Creek Entrance
 - iv. As part of a walking /running/tramping journeys linking the Dry Creek Entrance with other parks entrances such as the Kaitangata Crescent Entrance, Belmont Road Entrance or Hill Road Entrance

Other trails

Dry Creek Loop Track

17. The Dry Creek loop is an 8km tramping track starting at the Dry Creek car park. It can be traversed in either direction. In clockwise direction, users follow the Buchanan Road tramping track until a junction below the summit of Boulder Hill. The Dry Creek Loop Track is then followed before descending steeply back to the Dry Creek car park.

Waterfall Route

18. The Waterfall Route is described as a “short safe route for a taste of back country tramping”. It follows Dry Creek through native bush up to a small waterfall.

REGIONAL AND LOCAL STRATEGIES

19. This section considers the regional and local strategies which give direction to resource management for local recreation, public access and conservation values and statutory plans which guide the management of the Belmont Regional Park and DOC land in the Wellington Region.

Department of Conservation

20. The Wellington Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) 2019 describes the conservation values present in Wellington and provides guidance for DOC's work in the form of a vision, objectives, outcomes for places, policies and milestones.
21. The major themes identified in this CMS are engagement with tangata whenua and the community, partnering with others to deliver conservation and restoration of indigenous biodiversity.
22. The CMS anticipates increased population and domestic and international visitation to the Wellington region requiring that the "management, prioritisation, provision and monitoring of recreation opportunities must be carefully considered". (Pt 1. 3.3, P28).
23. The CMS identifies "Icon" and "Gateway"⁵ destinations in the region that are important for increasing participation in recreation. Belmont Regional Park is not identified as an Icon destination, Gateway destination or 'Local Treasure' in the CMS.
24. The plan contains policies (3.3.2) relating to the role of DOC in contributing to a network of visitor opportunities within the Wellington region, and working with other agencies to enhance connectivity and improve access between public open space and trail networks.
25. Policy 3.3.2.5 states the need to "Avoid, or otherwise minimise, adverse effects on the qualities of peace and natural quiet, solitude and remoteness in places where this is an important feature and expectation of the visitor experience".

⁵ 'Icon destinations' are high profile, popular destinations underpinning national and international tourism, and providing memorable visitor experiences in New Zealand. 'Gateway destinations' are places that introduce New Zealanders to the outdoors and allow them to learn about conservation. 'Local Treasures' are vehicle-accessible, locally valued locations providing recreation opportunities for, and growing connections with, nearby communities.

Hutt City Council

Reserves Strategic Directions 2016 – 2026

26. The Reserves Strategic Directions is a framework for managing and enhancing the Hutt City Council (HCC) reserve network across Hutt City over a ten-year period. Its purpose is to guide the acquisition, development, and disposal of reserve land in response to changing demographics, urban intensification, and environmental challenges. The strategy emphasises the importance of reserves in promoting health and wellbeing, protecting natural and cultural heritage, and fostering community engagement.
27. In relation to Belmont Regional Park, the strategy highlights collaborative management efforts with Greater Wellington Regional Council. Belmont Regional Park is recognised for its ecological corridors, native bush, and cultural heritage features such as historic hilltop sites and pa locations. The park plays a vital role in connecting communities and natural areas, with actions focused on improving track networks between Belmont and the valley floor, enhancing ecological corridors, and promoting pest control and native vegetation restoration.
28. Key initiatives for Belmont include developing north-south trail connections through reserves linking hill suburbs, improving track quality and accessibility, and prioritising the retention of flat reserve areas for neighbourhood use. Belmont Regional Park is cited as an example where HCC-owned land within the park is managed by the Regional Council due to its regional significance (however not all of the land within Belmont Regional Park is owned by HCC, some is owned by GWRC, PCC and/or the Crown). This approach underscores the importance of partnerships and strategic planning in maintaining a resilient and inclusive reserve network that benefits both local communities and the wider region.

Greater Wellington Regional Council

Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30

29. There are no recreational opportunities or improvements contemplated by the Toitū Te Whenua/Parks Network Plan for the proposed OBDA area. The emphasis of the Plan in relation to the Dry Creek area in general is the enhancement of the Dry Creek Picnic area (A180), the improvement of accessible trails (A187) and “trail gradient and surface upgrades and realignments to easier standard and to minimise erosion for a wide range of users” (A189). The improvements are all contemplated to occur outside of the OBDA.
30. Continued restoration activity is contemplated in accordance with the Plan’s vision however it is noted that the OBDA is not identified as a priority for restoration in the management plan.
31. The Plan is a composite statutory management plan prepared under the Reserves Act 1977 for eight Regional Parks (including Belmont Regional Park).

32. Public engagement on development of the management plan began in 2018 with the draft reserve management being notified for formal submissions in late June 2020. 390 submissions were received on the draft management plan and the management plan was adopted by GWRC in December 2020.
33. The Plan's **vision** is 'Restoring healthy ecosystems for the benefit of people and nature'. 'He waka eke noa', we're all in this together moving forward.⁶
34. **Core values** are recognised in the Plan.⁷ Those specific to recreation are:

"We provide for a diversity of satisfying and memorable recreation experiences and support full and easy public access to parks"; and

"We value high quality and diverse recreation experiences for health and wellbeing

 - Regional parks are easily accessible and we provide for people of all abilities
 - Park experiences are simple, yet high-quality experiences and are memorable
 - Information about park experiences is readily available and highly useable for visitors
 - Parks feel safe for people to visit and enjoy
 - Spirit of place; the uniqueness is recognised and celebrated
 - We provide storytelling, events and other engagement activities to enable visitors to learn about what is special about places and features within parks
 - We support the economy of parks and beneficial concession/ business activities
 - In the face of ongoing climate change, we plan and manage our facilities for future resilience
 - We support recreation and conservation clubs"
35. The Plan sets out what specific activities are allowed, managed, restricted or prohibited within Belmont Regional Park.
36. Mining, quarrying or mineral exploration activities are prohibited activity in the Belmont Regional Park.⁸
37. Track assessment criteria is included in the Plan for the initial assessment of track and trail changes and new developments⁹. Various criteria such as "strategic fit" and "recreation" are given with a variety of considerations offered however there is no guidance as to the weight to be applied to any consideration. It is noted that new trail proposals and significant changes in trails will require preparation of an AEE.

⁶ p37. Toitū Te Whenua/Parks Network Plan 2020-30

⁷ p38-39 Toitū Te Whenua/Parks Network Plan 2020-30

⁸ p. 202 Toitū Te Whenua/Parks Network Plan 2020-30

⁹ p. 207 Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30

38. The Plan includes Map 7 showing the exiting park conditions (Figure 1 below), Map 8: Belmont Regional Park potential enhancements (Figure 2 below), Map 9: Belmont potential trail enhancements (Figure 3 below) and Map 10: Belmont restoration priorities (Figure 4 below).

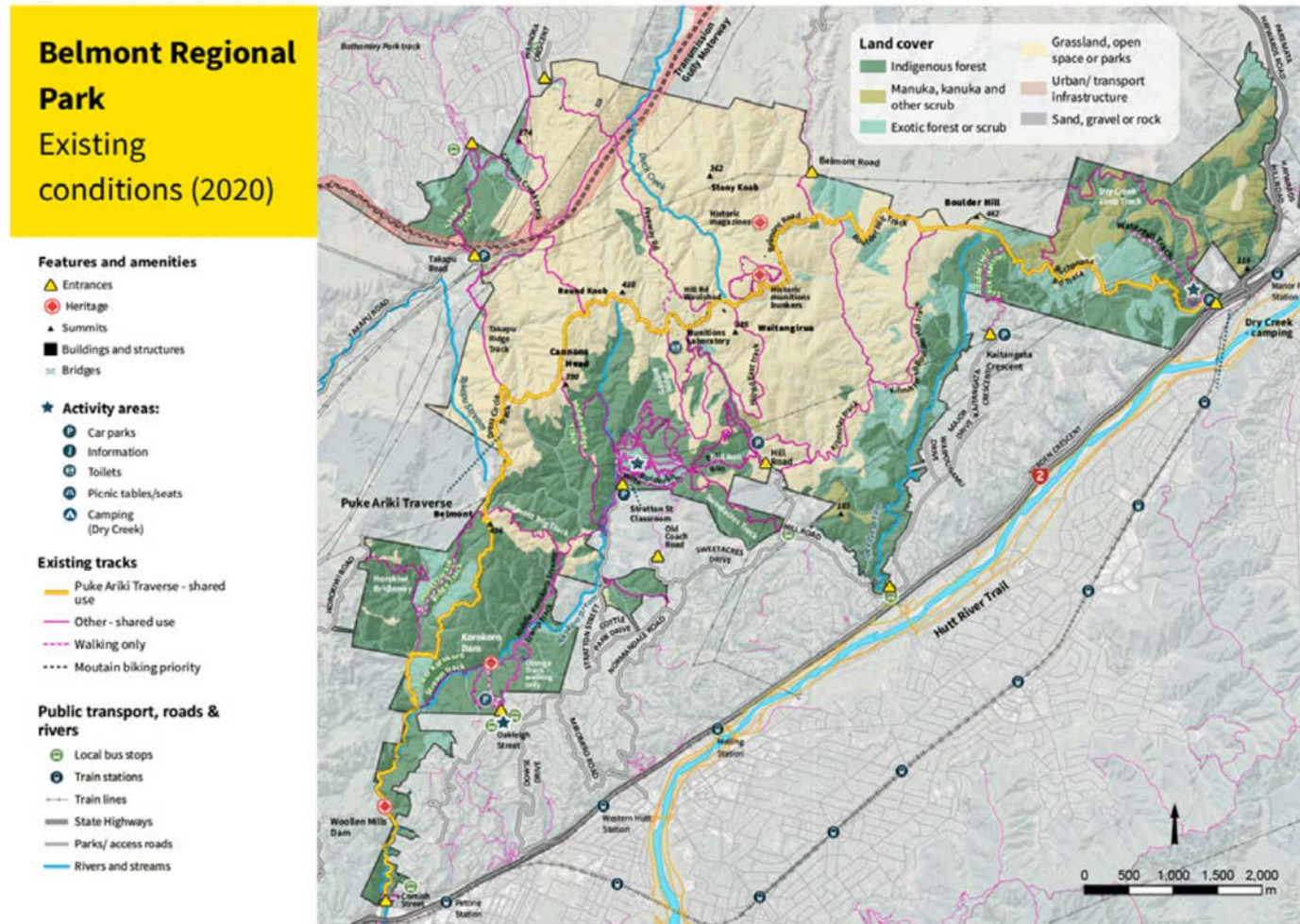


Figure 1 Map 7: Belmont Regional Park existing conditions

Belmont Regional Park Potential enhancements

Key destination

- a. Stratton Street mountain bike hub
- b. Korokoro Valley
- c. Oakleigh Street picnic area
- d. Belmont Taumata
- e. Puke Ariki traverse
- f. Kelson trails and picnic area
- g. Porirua to Hutt Valley & Takapu routes
- h. Hill Road heritage hub
- i. Park buildings and structures
- j. Waitangarua entry hub

Amenity

- A177 North-south connections
- A178 Kelson area bridge
- A181 Kelson area trails

Areas for potential tracks – to be explored through master planning process

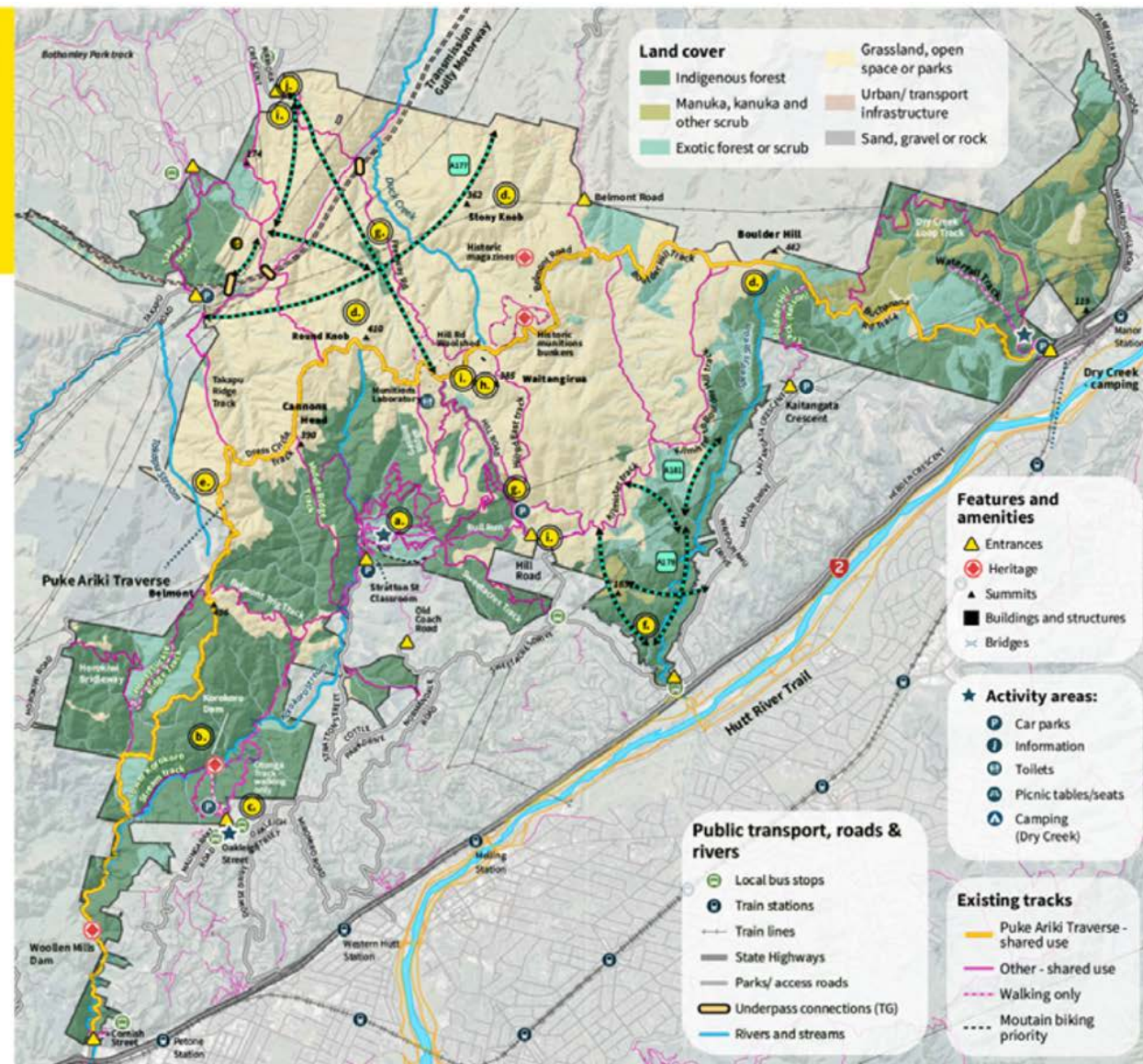
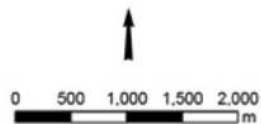


Figure 2 Map 8: Belmont Regional Park potential enhancements

Belmont Regional Park

Potential trail and access enhancements

Trail development identified in key areas of the park (labelled) through the master planning process. Most trails are shown by mountain bike grade, unless walking only.

1. Takapu Road connections (A183)
2. East Porirua trail network (A171, 172, 187, 189)
3. Kelson/Hill Rd new connections (A178, 181)
4. Shorter circuits and connections (A189)
5. North Belmont connections (A177, A189)
6. Porirua to Hutt Valley route (A185, A170g)
7. Mountain bike new trails (A188)
8. Bunkers short walk (A170h, A174)

Cycle trails

Proposed (named tracks)

Mountain bike grade

- Easy
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Expert

Existing

Mountain bike grade

- Easy
- Intermediate
- Advanced
- Expert

Areas for potential trails (multiuse)

Walking only

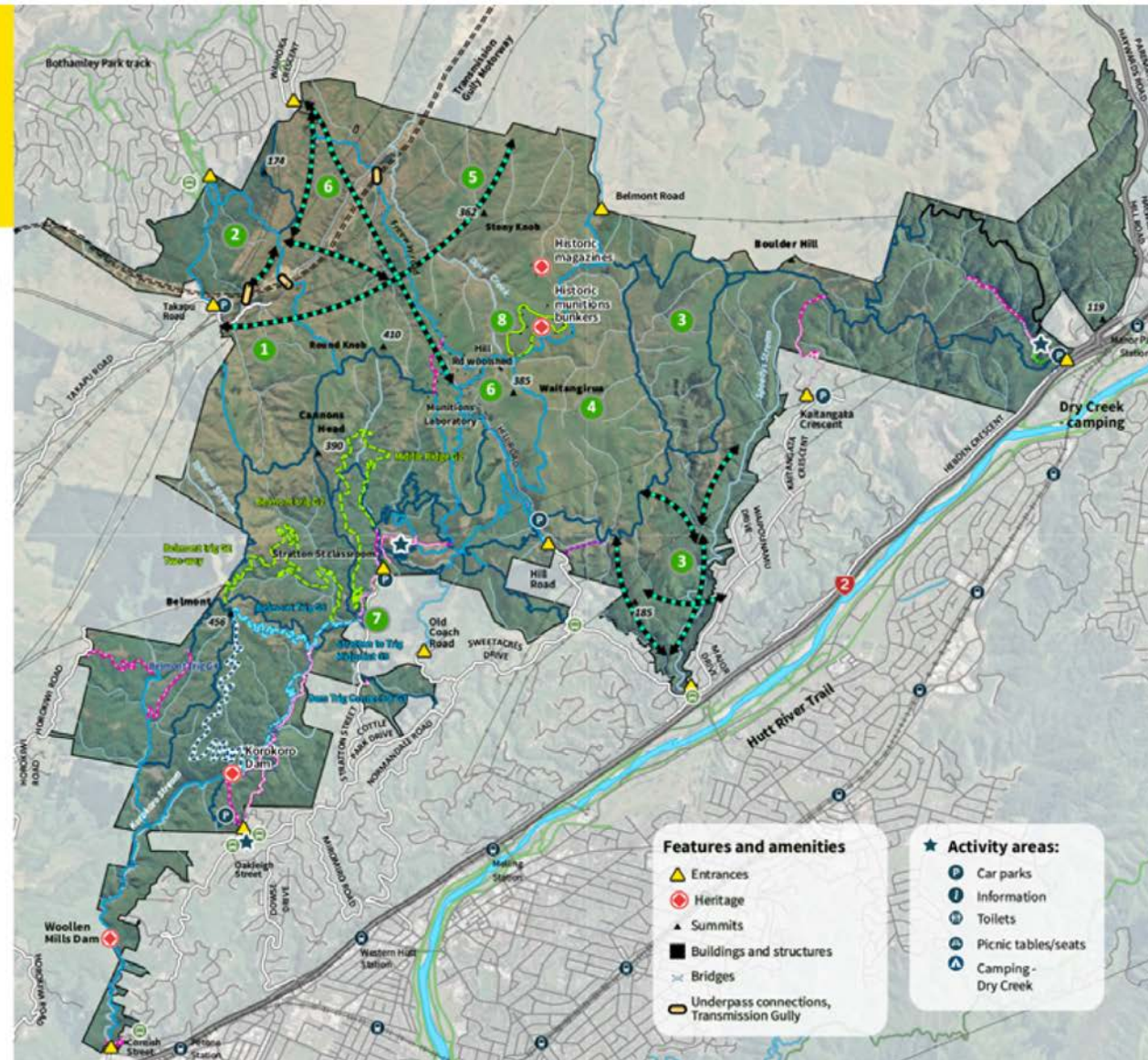
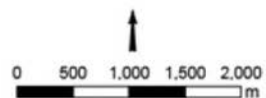


Figure 3 Map 9: Belmont potential trail enhancements

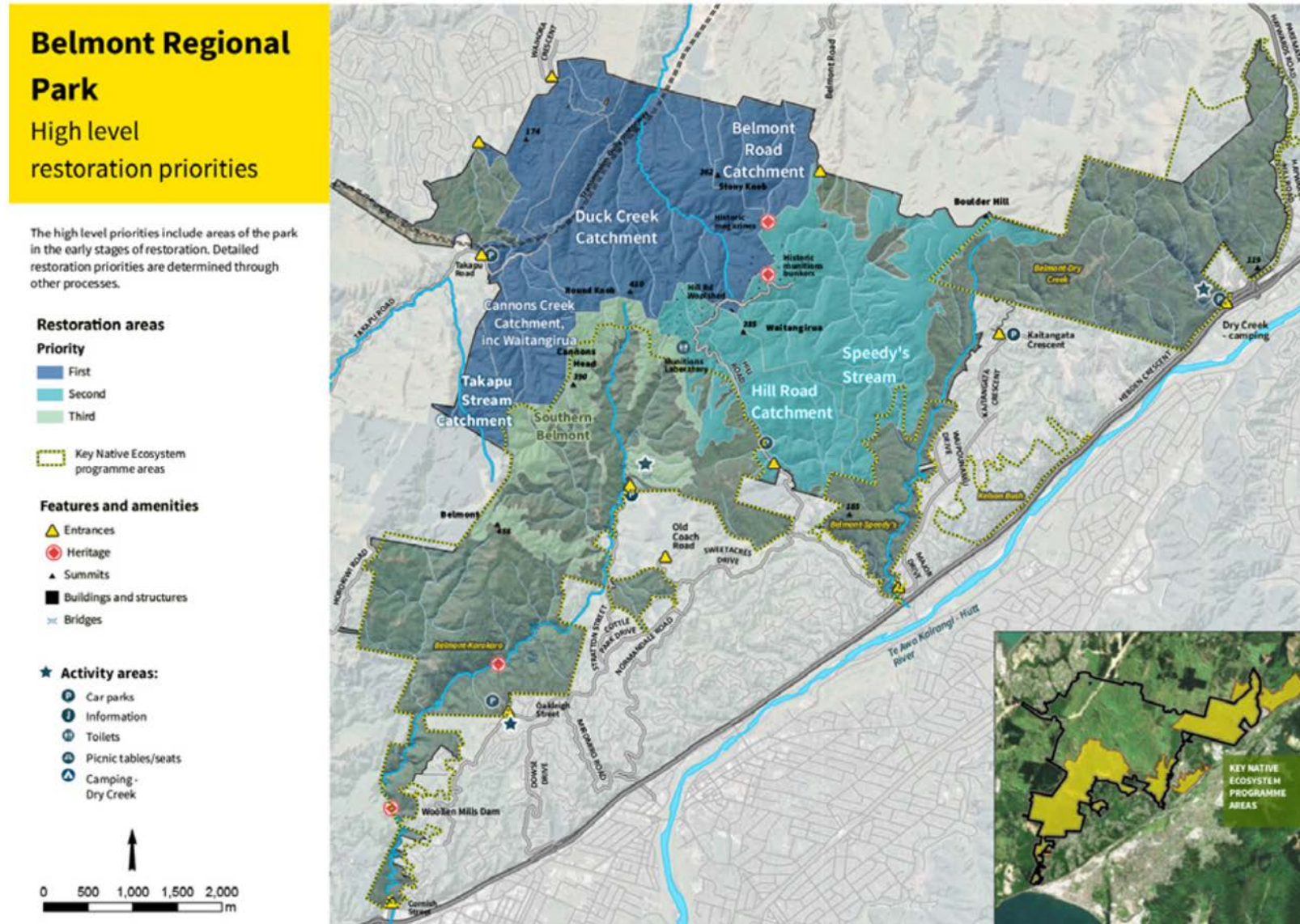


Figure 4 Map 10: Belmont restoration priorities

Other strategies

Wellington Regional Trails Framework

39. This strategy aims to introduce a coordinated approach to planning, developing and managing a regional trails network. Key parties to the Wellington Regional Trails Framework are Greater Wellington Regional Council, Wellington City Council, Hutt City, Upper Hutt City Council, Porirua City Council, Kapiti Coast District Council, Masterton District Council, Carterton District Council and South Wairarapa District Council as well as the Department of Conservation and the Wellington Regional Development Agency.¹⁰
40. The Framework established three classes of trail¹¹:
 - i. Signature Trails such as the Makara Peak Mountain Bike Park, Rimutaka Cycle Trail, Rangituhi/Colonial Knob and the proposed Wairarapa Five Towns Trail, which attract recognition for the region as a trail destination and provide a focal point for residents' activity. They will be showcased through a dedicated website and benefit from increased marketing and promotion and further development of the visitor experience on offer.
 - ii. Regional Trails, such as the Wainuiomata Trail project, **Puke Ariki**, Eastern Hutt Hills, Waikanae River Trail and the proposed Cruickshank Tunnel Trail which form the core of the regional network and provide quality experiences for locals and visitors alike looking for a less "populated" experience.
 - iii. Local Trails, which primarily service local communities looking for recreation options close to home.
41. The strategy notes the Puke Ariki trail (part Buchanan Road tramping track) requires upgraded signage and infrastructure at trailheads plus interpretive signage to create more of an experience.
42. "A survey¹² of trail user groups in the region was undertaken by Tourism Resource Consultants (2017) to inform the development of this strategic framework to provide qualitative information on the use patterns, strengths weaknesses and opportunities of the trails network and the demand for future services. The survey responses indicated that:
 - walking (including tramping) and mountain biking/cycling remain the most popular forms of trail use by existing user groups, followed by horse riding and other uses, including trail running

¹⁰ Wellington Regional Trails for the Future - A strategic framework for trails in the Wellington Region (2017) TRC Tourism Limited

¹¹ p.26 Wellington Regional Trails for the Future

¹² TRC (2017). A survey of user groups associated with the Wellington Region. The survey was not designed to extract quantitative data in a statistically defensible way, but to allow user groups to provide input and qualitative information in a structured way. The survey was distributed to groups from all major use categories including mountain biking, trail running, tramping, walking, cycling, horse riding, dog walking and conservation groups and event organisers. Over 235 responses were received.

- trails that provide an experience of 1 to 4 hours remain popular, with shorter experiences of less than 1 hour providing the least interest to those surveyed
 - moderate trail difficulty is the category of trail most in demand across all user groups and all user types
 - there is demand for more horse-friendly trails or trails where horse facilities provide easier access
 - for many of the user groups, having a trail network close to home to use and access natural areas is important for fitness, lifestyle and recreation.
43. The region's trail user groups¹³ considered the following improvements may be needed to the regional trail network:
- improved trail information, including on-site signage and a single source of information on the trails network (with a facility for users to provide feedback on maintenance issues)
 - better trail condition and quality
 - a connected network
 - a greater diversity of trails and activities, with loop options
 - improved access to trails in the Wairarapa area and Wellington's northern suburbs
 - more trails that cater for the region's growing over-55 demographic.
44. User conflict and safety on multi-use trails were significant concerns raised across walkers, bikers and horse riders. Concerns included safety on narrow trails, spooking of horses and lack of clarity about permissible trail uses." ¹⁴

¹³ Based on the user group survey and consultation meetings held at 4 locations throughout the region.

¹⁴ p.20 Wellington Regional Trails for the Future

RECREATIONAL USE

National and regional participation

45. Active NZ Surveys carried out by Sport New Zealand indicate survey participants in the Wellington region are likely to be more active in walking (48.6%) than the national average (45.1%), more active in mountain biking (4.3%) than the national average (4.0%) and slightly less active in running/jogging (25%) compared to the national average of (25.6%).¹⁵

Belmont Regional Park use

46. GWRC has published the findings of its annual visitor surveys of the Regional Park Network from 2018 through 2024. These surveys track how people use the regional parks and what they value about their visits. Over this period, the data collection methods evolved – from phone interviews in 2020–2021 to online panels in 2022–2024 – allowing increasingly detailed, park-specific insights. Despite methodology changes, some clear patterns emerge for Belmont Regional Park: walking remains the most popular activity, mountain biking is a strong secondary use, horse riding is a niche activity, and the park’s natural scenery and trails are consistently cherished by visitors. In tandem, visitor satisfaction has generally improved, supported by incremental park improvements and management focus on visitor experience and environmental stewardship.

Park Usage and Activity Trends (2020–2024)

47. Belmont Regional Park attracts a significant share of regional park-goers, with walking as their primary pursuit. In 2020–2021, roughly one in five Wellington region residents reported visiting Belmont in the past year (around 20–22% of survey respondents). By 2023, about 34% of respondents had visited Belmont in the previous 12 months (GWRC, 2023). Overall, the general trend indicates a growing or at least sustained popularity for Belmont as awareness and participation in regional parks increase.

Walking, Biking, and Horse Riding Patterns

48. Walking/tramping has been the dominant activity in Belmont Regional Park every year. Virtually all visitors engage in some form of walking on the park’s trails.

¹⁵ 2022 2023 Active NZ Survey Sport New Zealand

49. Mountain biking has consistently been the second-most prominent recreation in Belmont Regional Park. The park's extensive trail network (including steep hill tracks) is popular with cyclists. In 2023, mountain biking was explicitly called out as one of the top activities in the park (along with walking and sightseeing). Over time, mountain biking's popularity has remained stable to growing. Earlier reports noted mountain biking or cycling as an important activity region-wide (roughly one-quarter to one-third of park users overall) – a pattern reflected in Belmont Regional Park's usage. By 2022 and 2023, mountain biking usage was strong enough to be listed among the park's four most common activities (GWRC 2023). This indicates that a substantial segment of visitors come to Belmont Regional Park specifically for its biking trails, and that share has been steady or increasing. The park's mix of intermediate and advanced tracks draws many cyclists, though not outnumbering walkers.
50. Horse riding is a much more niche activity at Belmont, practiced by a small minority of visitors. All surveys consistently show horse riding ranks far below walking and biking in usage. In the 2022 and 2023 analyses of Belmont Regional Park, horse riding did not make the "top activities" lists at all (GWRC 2023) implying it has a very low frequency (likely only a few percent of visitors).
51. From 2020 to 2024, the relative popularity of walking, biking, and horse riding in Belmont remained consistent – walking always first, biking second, horse riding distant behind. Overall participation levels appear to be increasing and repeat visitation also appears to be increasing with the 2023 survey showing 45% of Belmont visitors went more than twice that year (GWRC, 2023), higher than previously recorded.

Visitor Demographics and Usage Patterns

52. Broadly, the park surveys indicate that visitors to Belmont Regional Park tend to come from nearby urban areas (especially the Hutt Valley and Porirua) and skew toward established adult age groups rather than the very young. Key observations include:
 - Local Residents and Proximity: Usage by area of residence shows that people living closer to Belmont are far more likely to visit it. For example, a greater percentage of Lower Hutt and Porirua residents (for whom Belmont is relatively nearby) reported visiting Belmont, compared to residents of Wellington City or the Wairarapa. This was evident in all survey years – proximity drives park choice. In the 2020 survey, Belmont had one of the highest visit rates among Hutt Valley respondents (GRWC, 2020) while Wellington City residents, who have to drive further, visited less. This pattern continued through 2023. Essentially, Belmont serves as a "backyard regional park" for the Hutt Valley population, and its user profile reflects that local catchment.
 - Age Distribution: All surveys targeted adults aged 16 and up, and within that broad range, middle-aged adults made up a large share of Belmont's visitors. The data suggest that visitors in their 30s, 40s, and 50s are very active in the park – often families or individuals out for exercise. Younger adults (16–29) were somewhat underrepresented among park users. In fact, the 2023 report noted that respondents under 30 were significantly less likely to have visited regional parks like Belmont than those in their 40s or 60s (GWRC, 2023) This could be due to lifestyle differences or awareness. Over time there was a slight

uptick in youth participation (possibly as outdoor recreation becomes more popular), but older adults remained the core visitors. Meanwhile, senior citizens (70+) use Belmont too, but their numbers are smaller relative to the 30–60 age bracket.

Visitor Values and Perceptions of Belmont Regional Park

53. Over the 2020–2024 period, visitors consistently value Belmont’s natural environment, scenic beauty, and the recreational opportunities (trails and open space) it provides. While different surveys phrased questions differently (some open-ended, some via satisfaction drivers), the core values associated with Belmont show strong continuity, with a slight evolution in the detail of what gets mentioned. In summary they are:
- Natural scenery and landscape
 - Trails and outdoor recreation opportunities
 - Natural features and biodiversity
 - Accessibility and location
 - Tranquillity and space
 - Community and Heritage Values

Overall Satisfaction Levels

54. Visitors to Belmont are overwhelmingly satisfied with their experience. In 2022, 84% of Belmont visitors were satisfied or very satisfied and in 2023, this rose to 87% satisfied. To add context, Belmont’s satisfaction is on par with or slightly above the average for all Wellington regional parks. In 2023, for instance, overall satisfaction (all parks combined) was reported as 85% and Belmont slightly exceeded that (GWRC 2023)

Use of Buchanan tramping track

Estimation of annual use

55. As GWRC does not hold trail use data specific to the Buchanan Road tramping track, an estimate of use has been made via:
- Installation of a temporary PIR sensor installed on the Buchanan Road tramping track near the proposed OBDA area from Xyst on 9 July 2025 to 9 September 2025. The PIR sensor location is shown in Figure 5.
 - Analysis of Strava Metro data for 1 Jan 2024 to 31 December 2024 and 1 August 2025 to 31 August 2025
 - Review of published club tramping/riding trips in the Wellington region

56. The PIR sensor used cannot differentiate between pedestrians, horses, bikes or vehicles and therefore may include non-recreational users such as those subject matter users and consultants associated with this application, GWRC parks management and maintenance staff or other authorised workers accessing the park via Buchanan Road.

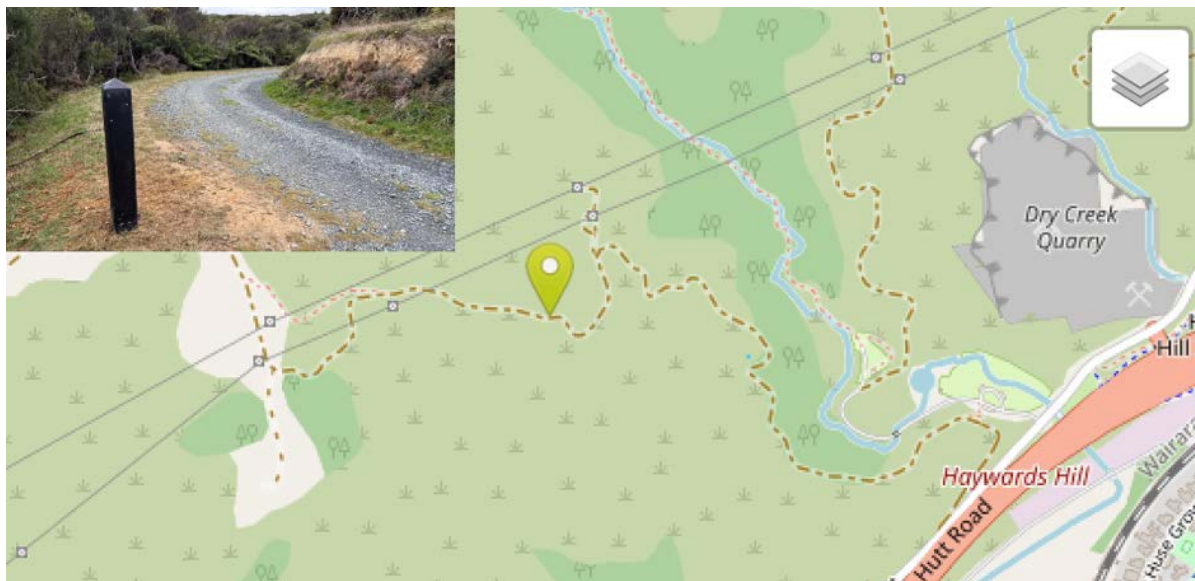


Figure 5 Location of PIR sensor Buchanan Road tramping track July 2025

57. During the period 9 July 2025 to 9 September 2025 the PIR sensor recorded a total of 859 counts giving a daily average of 14 counts.
58. During the month of August (for when comparative data is available) the PIR sensor recorded a total of 414 counts while Strava Metro recorded 85 counts in the location of the PIR sensor. The total number of counts recorded by Strava Metro for this location in the 2024 Calander year was 1375. By applying a multiplier of 4.9, being the difference between the PIR sensor count in August 2025 and the Strava Metro Activity count for the same period, I estimate that the total number of counts for the PIR sensor for a full year would be approximately 6,697 or a daily average of 18 counts.
59. There are several tramping clubs in the Wellington region who organise day trips for members into the Belmont Regional Park. Those with scheduled or published trips on club websites since 2023 are the Tararua Tramping Club, Wellington Tramping and Mountaineering Club, Kamatua Tramping Club, Hutt Valley Tramping Club, Forest & Bird Wellington Regional Tramping Club, Upper Hutt Walking and Tramping Club and Parawai Tramping Club. Over the period of January 2025 to September 2025 a total of 21 organised tramping trips into Belmont Regional Park were scheduled. Of these trips, two were the Puke Ariki Traverse originating from Dry Creek and one was the Buchanan Road tramping track – Dry Creek loop.

Types of recreational users

Hunting

60. The hunting of deer, goats and pigs is prohibited in Belmont Regional Park. There is therefore no authorised recreational hunting within the Belmont Regional Park.

Walking/Running/Tramping

61. Walking/Running and Tramping is the most popular use of the Buchanan Road tramping track



Figure 6 members of the Tararua Tramping Club on the Buchanan Road tramping track - Dry Creek Circuit 9 July 2025

Dog Walking

62. The Buchanan Road tramping track is popular for dog walking (on-lead) given the good access from the Dry Creek entrance. The Buchanan Road tramping track provides a good exercise opportunity in a relatively remote setting compared with other dog walking opportunities in the Hutt Valley which are generally located along the Hutt River or on flat sites.
63. It is noted that the Buchanan Road tramping track is also being used by at least one professional dog walker to exercise groups of dogs on lead¹⁶.

¹⁶ GWRC has confirmed that no licence or concessions have been issued for this activity.

Mountain Bikers

64. Mountain biking is permitted on the Buchanan Road tramping track. The track is graded as an Advanced Mountain biking trail and is used by Cross Country Mountain bikers especially to access or descend from Boulder Hill. The Buchanan Road tramping track is considered a difficult ride because of the elevation gain and sustained climb.
65. The Buchanan Road tramping track is typically used by Mountain bikers as part of longer cross-country routes across Belmont Regional Park or as part of the Dry Creek loop.
66. The majority of mountain biking activity occurs at the Stratton Street Entrance of Belmont Park where there are a series of purpose-built mountain biking trails in proximity to residential areas. The Buchanan Road tramping track is recorded as the 16th most popular mountain biking trail in the Belmont Regional Park between 2013 and 2025 with 34 trips logged by 27 individual users¹⁷. By way of comparison, the most popular mountain biking trail in the park over the same time period is the Wētā trail with 498 trips logged by 111 individual users.
67. No mountain bike riders were observed during field trips to the area.

Horse Riders

68. A GWRC brochure "Horse Riding in Wellington Regional Parks and Forests" (Figure 7) describes the horse-riding opportunities from Dry Creek.

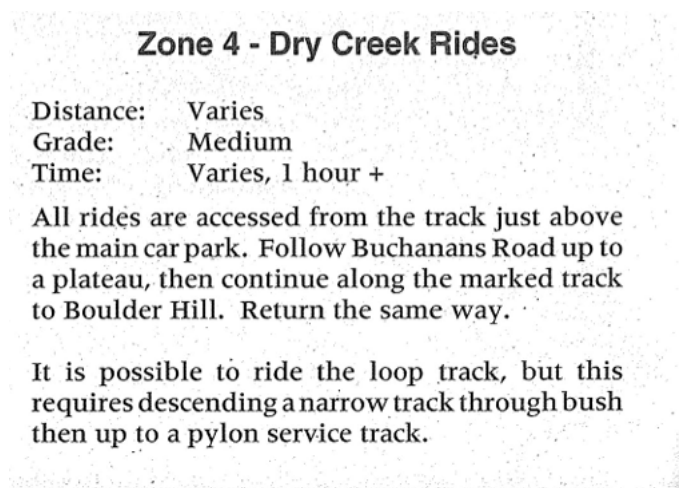


Figure 7 Description of horse riding opportunities from publication "Horse Riding in Wellington Regional Parks and Forests"

69. Horse riding within Belmont Regional Park requires an annual permit. As of July 2025, there were 26 horse riding permits issued for Belmont Regional Park.

¹⁷ Trailforks.com trip log data reviewed 16 July 2025. Trailforks.com is a popular application for mountain bikers to record and share trail riding activity.

70. GWRC¹⁸ estimates there are between 50-100 horse rides taking place per annum using the Dry Creek area. Dry Creek is considered a secondary hub for horse riding activity as there are other more accessible sites and better horse-riding opportunities within the park such as at the Hill Road entrance where the Belmont Pony Club is located or the Stratton Street entrance.
71. An interview with a member of the Belmont Pony Club confirmed that the vast majority of horse-riding activity occurs from the Hill Road entrance with rides taking place towards and to Boulder Hill. Dry Creek is more likely to be used by non-club members or visiting riders. No horse riders were observed during field trips to the area.

USER AND STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS

72. Informal Interviews took place in July 2025 with four groups of trail users identified during site visits, as well as four organisations that utilise the park, especially the Dry Creek area. The intent of the interviews was to understand the type and frequency of use, the origin of visitors, if users stayed on trail or explored off-trail and the attributes of the park that were important to users. While the number of interviews is limited given the seasonal use of the park, the views gained were consistent with the evidence obtained via the literature review. Table 1 provides a summary of the interviews undertaken by Xyst.

Table 1 Interviews undertaken

User/User Group	Contact	Date	Key Comments
Belmont Area Mountain Biking Association (BAMBA)	Michael Parsons (President)	16 July 2025	- Most of club members based in Korokoro area and most mountain biking activity is centred here. - Personal use of Dry Creek area limited to a few times a year - Opportunities to expand riding in the park, especially in the area of traverse/endurance riding - Also opportunities for improving kid friendly trails
Belmont Pony Club	Cora McCauley	20 July 2025	Club activity is centred on Hill Road entrance with rides as far as Boulder Hill from Hill Road

¹⁸ Pers comm Jeremy Paterson, Western Parks Team Leader, GWRC July 2025

			• Notes absence of sudden noise and dust as important factor for safe horse riding. • Infrequent horse riding activity at Dry Creek is more likely to be non-members
Tararua Tramping Club (Member)	Marg Pearce	10 July 2025	• Typically visits Belmont Regional Park every three weeks • Leader of recent club trip on Dry Creek Loop • Typically walks trails from Cannons Creek entrance • Values sweeping views and walking variety of trails form different directions • Does not go off track in Belmont because of stock
Upper Hutt Walking and Tramping Club (Member)	Linda Fowler	21 July 2025	• Recent trip leader for Dry Creek Loop Track • Club undertakes trips in area a few times a year • Values accessibility
Trail Runner	Anonymous	9 July 2025	• Regular trail runner • Lives locally and typically runs to Boulder Hill return • Values good access, wide trail and remoteness
Dog Walkers (2)	Anonymous	10 July 2025	• Regular local dog walkers • Value easy access and good workout for dogs and walkers
Dog Walker (1)	Anonymous	6 August 2025	• Regular local dog walker • Good exercise and rural nature valued • Walks to Boulder Hill return
Dog Walker (1)	Anonymous	6 August 2025	• Regular local dog walker

			• Values rural setting and good exercise. • Walks to Boulder Hill and occasionally Dry Creek loop
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73. The interviews, literature review and observations support the conclusion that primary activity on the Buchanan Road Tramping Track is walking (including dog walking) and running. Mountain biking does occur but to a far lesser degree. Horse-riding activity does occur but in very low numbers. The main destination is Boulder Hill via the Buchanan Road tramping track returning via the same route with a lesser number of walkers returning to the Dry Creek carpark via the Dry Creek loop track. No significant off-trail use taking place by walkers and runners or horse riders. Mountain biking activity is limited to riders with advanced skills and high levels of fitness due to the steep gradient of the track.

Origin

74. Regular users are likely to reside in the Hutt Valley with infrequent visitors coming from the greater Wellington region.

Key Activity Areas

75. The key activity area for mountain biking is the Stratton Street entrance whereas the key activity area for horse riding is the Hill Street entrance where the Belmont Pony Club is located.

Values

76. Trail users appreciate the accessibility of the Dry Creek area and Buchanan Road tramping to the residential areas in the Hutt Valley. The challenge of the climb to Boulder Hill is a key reason for visits by regular runners and dog walkers. The ready access from urban setting to a rural landscape setting is a key attraction as is the views obtained of the Wellington harbour and 360 views obtained once boulder hill is reached.

Things which prevent recreation

77. Exposure to wind was cited as the most frequent thing that prevented recreation in the area. Users noted that relatively calm condition in the Hutt Valley did not translate to a calm conditions on the exposed hills and ridges of the park.
78. While horse riding activity is largely centred on the Hill Road entrance and is remote from quarrying activity, the interviewee noted that the absence of sudden noise and dust was an important factor for safe horse riding.

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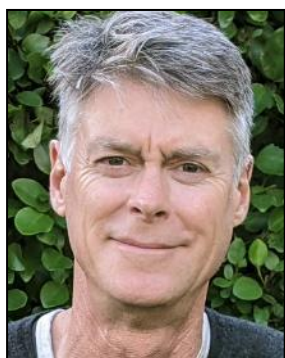
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Appendix 2: Author qualifications and experience



ROB GREENAWAY • CURRICULUM VITAE

Recreation and Tourism Research and Planning

Rob Greenaway has an academic and practical background in recreation, tourism and conservation management. He is experienced in planning and managing for public, community and commercial facilities and services in parks and reserves, and in urban and protected areas.

His strong skills in formal and informal data gathering, research analysis and journalism have been demonstrated in hundreds of project reports, management plans, publications, evidence, submissions and research papers over the past 30 years. Rob has published extensively in New Zealand, Australia and Asia (examples of articles and papers are available on www.greenaway.co.nz).

Core work is recreation and reserve management planning, and comprehensive and robust assessments of effects of large-scale infrastructure proposals. Rob has presented expert evidence at over 120 hearings, with experience in hydro, irrigation, wind, forestry, subdivision, roading, cycleways, mining, marine farming, discharges and coastal and tourism developments.

Work History from 1990	1997 - current:	Director, Rob Greenaway & Associates (R&R Consulting (NZ) Ltd) , Nelson.
	1995 - 1997:	Consultant in Recreation and Tourism, Boffa Miskell Limited , Christchurch.
	1990 - 1995:	Consultant in Recreation and Tourism, Tourism Resource Consultants , Wellington.

SELECTED EXPERIENCE

Assessments of effect and expert witness evidence	Waka Kotahi / NZTA, 2025–current: Impact assessment for Petone to Grenada project, Wellington.
	NZSki, 2025–current: Impact assessment for Remarkables Skifield expansion.
	Graymont Ltd, 2019–current: Quarry expansion and reconsenting existing operations (with PDP and Enspire).
	Bathurst Resources, 2023–current: Assessments for mining works on Denniston and Stockton Plateaux.
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Norske Skogg, Tasman JV, 2010: Expert evidence for mill discharge on Tarawera River.

MainPower, 2008–11: Mount Cass wind farm consent application recreation assessment and evidence.

Lincoln University, 2009–10: *A Significance Assessment Method for River Values*, peer review of main report and activity-specific reports.

Fish & Game Council, Canterbury, 2009: Hurunui River Water Conservation Order evidence.

Environment Canterbury, 2005–06: Visitor survey for lower Waimakariri River.

Central Plains Water Trust, 2006: Recreation development planning for proposed irrigation scheme (with Steve Gurney and GHD).

King Country Energy, 2005: Expert evidence for proposed Mokau River hydro scheme.

Bay of Plenty Energy, 2005: Assessment of effects for proposed upper Kaituna River hydro scheme.

Contact Energy, 2005: Expert evidence for Clyde and Roxburgh hydro scheme re-consenting.

Hurunui Community Water Scheme, 2004: Assessment of effects for preliminary irrigation proposal.

Environment Canterbury, 2000–01: Recreation survey of the Hurunui River and assessment of significance.

Ministry for the Environment, 1998. Recreation section of *Flow guidelines for instream values* river management guide.

ECNZ, 1998. Recreation research for resource consents for Tongariro Power Diversion Scheme (with Kay Booth & Boffa Miskell Ltd).

Journalism More than 100 articles published in over 30 magazines and newspapers in Australasia and Asia since 1989. Interviews on over 20 radio stations for outdoor events and outdoor management issues. Instigated and appeared on two Television NZ items for outdoor recreation activities. Authored various publications, including the updated Tongariro National Park Handbook and the Samoa Visitors Bureau 'What to do and see' guide. Several hundred photos published in books and magazines in New Zealand and Asia. Editor of Mary Hobbs' books *Kiwi Tucker for the soul* and *Letters to America*, and story editor for *NZ Outside* (1996-2001).

BACKGROUND

Awarded the Ian Galloway Memorial Cup by the New Zealand Recreation Association in 2004: *To recognise excellence and outstanding personal contribution to the wider parks industry.*

Education *Diploma in Parks and Recreation Management (Distinction)*; Lincoln University 1987.
Postgraduate study in conservation management – 18 months, Lincoln University 1988 – 89.

Professional training and associations Accredited Recreation Professional and Fellow of Recreation Aotearoa.
Project Co-ordinator, National Parks & Reserve NZ Lands and Survey Rangers' Archive, 2023 – current.
See: <https://parkrangersnz.recollectcms.com/>
Chair of Nelson Marina Advisory Committee to the Nelson City Council, 2021 – 2023, Deputy from 2017.
Member of New Zealand Association for Impact Assessment, ex-executive member, 2006 – current.
Member, inaugural Sport NZ Sir Edmund Hillary Outdoor Recreation Council, 2009 – 2013.
National Executive of Recreation Aotearoa, 2000 – 2005 (member since 1990). Previously Chair and currently member of Recreation Aotearoa Board of Accreditation for member accreditation to professional status.
Member of Cashmere Forest Park Campaign for the Port Hills Park Trust Board, 2005 – 2011.
Member of Board of Management, Styx River Living Laboratory Trust, 2002 – 2006.
Introduction to Māori language, University of Canterbury, 1996.

Selected conference papers and articles *Mapping recreation: A costly dangerous mess?* Recreation Aotearoa National Conference, Queenstown 2016.
Assessing recreation in coastal plans – a case study of the Lyttelton Port Recovery Plan. NZ Association for Impact Assessment annual conference, Lincoln University 2016.
Keynote speaker. NZRA Coastal Recreation Seminar, Wellington 2014.
Christchurch 2025. Lincoln Planning Review. Vol 3. No 1. 2011.
The RMA and Recreation. Thinking Recreation – Recreation Aotearoa National Conference, Nelson 2011.
Recreation and tourism impact assessments: Rivers. Resource Management Law Association national conference, Christchurch 2010.
The effects of rural change on recreation and tourism, and vice versa. NZ Association for Impact Assessment annual conference, Papamoa 2009.
Recreation impacts: Coastal and lake-front environments. NZ Association for Impact Assessment annual conference, Nelson 2008.
An exploration of recreation displacement in New Zealand. Annals of Leisure Research, Volume 10 (2007).
Impact assessments for recreation. NZ Association for Impact Assessment annual conference, Dunedin 2006.
Measuring the significance of multi-use outdoor recreation resources: A comparative analysis of three sites in New Zealand. Annals of Leisure Research, Volume 5, 2002.
Visitor profiling: To what degree are users of open space dedicated, loyal, frequent, alternative and local, and in conflict? Recreation Aotearoa National Conference, Hamilton, 2002
Using Market Segmentation Analyses to monitor trends in recreation. Recreation Aotearoa National Conference, 2001