

Before the Fast-track Panel

Under: Fast-track Approvals Act 2024

In the matter of: FTAA-2603-L003 – Belmont Quarry Development – Land Exchange

Statement of advice: Michael Harbrow

Recreation

DOC staff

21 April 2026



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

**Te Kāwanatanga
o Aotearoa**
New Zealand Government

Introduction

1. My full name is Michael Andrew Harbrow.

Instruction

1. I have been requested to provide expert advice on behalf of the Director-General of Conservation for her section 35 land exchange report required to be prepared under the Fast-Track Approvals Act 2024, for the Belmont Quarry project land exchange application.

Qualification and Experience

2. I am a Senior Visitor Advisor for the Department of Conservation working from Whare Kaupapa Atawhai / Conservation House in Wellington. I have a Bachelor of Science in Plant and Microbial Sciences from the University of Canterbury (1998), a Master of Science in Zoology from the University of Canterbury (2001) and a Post Graduate Certificate in Resource Studies with Distinction from Lincoln University (2009). I have seventeen years' experience providing recreation and tourism advice for DOC including ten years' experience as a Visitor Advisor and seven years' experience as a Social Science Advisor.
3. My role in this project to date has included review of both draft and substantive application documents, including the applicant's Recreation Assessment and other supporting information.

Code of conduct

4. Whilst it is acknowledged this is not an Environment Court Proceeding, I confirm that I have read the Code of Conduct for expert witnesses contained in the Environment Court Practice Note 2023. I have complied with the Code of Conduct in the preparation of this advice. Unless I state otherwise, this advice is within my area of expertise, and I have not omitted to consider material facts known to me that might alter or detract from the opinions I express.

Scope of advice and expert opinion

5. My expert advice relates to the following:
 - i. Adequacy of the Applicant's assessment of the recreation values of the land that is proposed for exchange, including identification of any values that have not been assessed or have been insufficiently characterised.
 - ii. The extent to which the proposed land exchange would enhance or diminish the values of the conservation estate, where this pertains to recreational values.
 - iii. The extent of any health and safety obligations and costs that DOC might incur in relation to recreational visitors, as a result of the proposed land exchange.
 - iv. Matters raised by submitters in relation to the recreation values of the land that is proposed to be exchanged.
6. The effects of any future development arising from a further substantive application are not considered in this advice as they are outside the scope of the land exchange application.

Material Considered

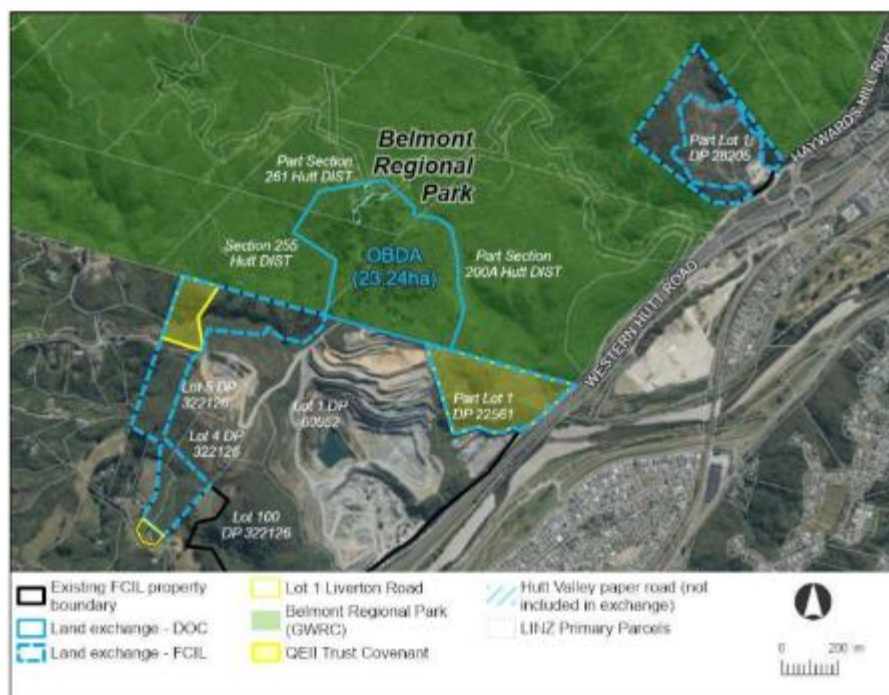
7. In preparing this advice I have reviewed the following documents as part of the land exchange application:
 - a. Recreation Assessment and Recreation Values Report
 - b. Land Exchange Report
 - c. Health and Safety Report
 - d. Geotechnical Report
 - e. Land Contamination Reports
 - f. Flood and Climate Change Risk Assessment
 - g. Landscape Assessment

8. I have undertaken site visits on 3 April and 10 April 2026.

Summary of proposal

9. Winstone Aggregates are seeking a land exchange under section 33 and Schedule 6 of the Fast-track Approvals Act 2024 (FTAA). The proposed exchange would add approximately 34 ha of land owned by parent company Fletcher Concrete and Infrastructure Limited to the conservation estate. Approximately 24 ha of conservation land within the Dry Creek Recreation Reserve, managed as part of Belmont Regional Park, would be transferred to Winstone Aggregates.
10. The land exchange application forms part of the broader Belmont Quarry Development Project, which is listed under Schedule 2 of the FTAA. Following a successful application for land exchange, this project would be advanced through a further substantive application under the FTAA. This would include development of an overburden disposal area (OBDA) on the land gained from Belmont Regional Park which would enable the applicant to extend the life of the adjacent quarry.
11. The applicant is proposing to transfer four parcels of land owned by Fletcher Concrete and Infrastructure Limited, referred to as the “DOC-Get” land, to the conservation estate. These land parcels, comprising the Northern Gully (12.62 ha), Southern Gully (3.94 ha), Firth (9.6ha) and Dry Creek (7.94 ha) blocks, total approximately 34 ha and are adjacent to Belmont Regional Park (Figure 1). They include a mix of forest, scrub, and wetland environments and also some areas previously used for overburden disposal, clean fill or quarrying.
12. In exchange, a single block of approximately 24 ha of conservation land comprising regenerating native forest and areas of mixed grass, scrub and conifers, would be transferred to the applicant. This land is part of the Dry Creek Recreation Reserve owned by DOC and is currently managed by Greater Wellington Regional Council (GW) as part of Belmont Regional Park. It is referred to as the “DOC-Give” land or proposed OBDA.

Figure 1: Overview of proposed land exchange parcels (source: Land Exchange Report, Wikaira Consulting)



Recreational setting

13. Belmont Regional Park is the largest of eight Regional Parks in the Wellington Region. It covers more than 3500 ha of hills, valleys, native bush and farmland between Porirua and the Hutt Valley. The Park is made up of various land parcels owned by DOC, GW and the Hutt, Porirua and Wellington City Councils. Overall management of the park is undertaken by GW.
14. Belmont Regional Park attracts visitors from across the Wellington Region, and is an important recreational site for residents of the local, Lower Hutt area.¹ It is one of the more popular Regional Parks in the network. Twenty one percent of respondents to a 2025 Regional Park satisfaction survey undertaken for GW said that they had visited Belmont Regional Park over the preceding 12 months. This was behind only the Hutt River Trail (41%) and the Queen Elizabeth (31%) and Kaitoke (30%) Regional Parks.²

¹ ten Have, E. & Cox, A. (2020). *Community Survey Regarding Regional Parks and Forests*. Report prepared for Greater Wellington Regional Council by Peter Glen Research.

<https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2023/08/2020-Parks-and-Forest-Research-Report.pdf>

² Greater Wellington (2025). *Regional Parks and River Trails Satisfaction Survey 2025*.

<https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Documents/2025/10/Greater-Wellington-Parks-Survey-Report-2025.pdf>

15. The same survey indicates that walking and tramping is by far the most popular activity in the Park (72% of respondents who visited Belmont Regional Park). Other activities included leisure/sights/scenery (31%), exercising dog (18%), mountain biking / cycling (16%), social recreation with family (14%), visiting a dam (11%) and running (10%).
16. The Dry Creek entrance to the Park is located 9 km from the Lower Hutt CBD, and 10 km from Upper Hutt. It is accessed from Hebden Crescent a short distance off State Highway 2 and is also close to public transport, being a 15 minute walk from Manor Park Station.
17. Several recreation experiences used by walkers, mountain bikers, horse riders and campers are accessed from the Dry Creek entrance including:
 - a. Vehicle accessible camping at Dry Creek Camping Area
 - b. Dry Creek Waterfall Track – a 2.2 km return walk that follows Dry Creek through native bush up to a small waterfall.
 - c. Dry Creek Loop Track – an 8 km walking and grade 3 mountain bike track that loops around the Dry Creek catchment on 4WD tracks.
 - d. The Buchanan Road Tramping Track – an 8 km return walking and grade 3 mountain bike track on gravel road and 4WD tracks. The track gives access to Boulder Hill and connects with the Puke Ariki Traverse, a 22 km trail crossing Belmont Regional Park from north to south.
18. The Dry Creek Loop Track and Buchanan Road Tramping Track are the only managed tracks that are affected in any way by the land exchange proposal. The applicant's Recreation Assessment provides an estimate of usage for the Buchanan Road Tramping Track, however I consider the basis for this figure to be questionable (see "Areas of disagreement with the applicant's recreation assessment", below). No information is available on use of the Dry Creek Loop Track.
19. Estimated usage of the Dry Creek entrance in 2024 was 29,400 according to figures sourced from GW and provided in the applicant's Recreation Assessment.

By comparison, use of the more popular Hill Road (361,500) and Cornish Street (414,100) entrances to the Park were significantly higher.

Recreation value of the DOC-Give land

20. The DOC-Give land can be accessed via the Buchanan Road Tramping Track. This track climbs up a gravel 4WD road for 1.7 km before splitting into two sections. The northern section continues on a formed track and is marked as the route onward to Boulder Hill, the Puke Ariki Traverse and Dry Creek Loop Track. The southern section continues on as a formed pylon access road, crossing the DOC-Give land, before rejoining the northern section of the track. This southern section is referred to as the Utility Track in the applicant's Recreation Assessment and in this report.
21. The Utility Track has some recreational value as it provides access to opportunities in the DOC-Give land (discussed further below). However, for other park users the track provides a longer detour with no particular points of interest or difference in scenery, and is likely to be used inadvertently by visitors who miss the marked deviation off the gravel road.
22. The area around the Utility Track is also traversed by unformed legal road, but the Utility Track is generally poorly aligned with it. The alignment of the Tramping Track, Utility Track and Legal Road are shown in Figure 2, below. The applicant has advised that development of the OBDA will require stopping of the unformed legal road. The road stopping is not part of the land exchange application so is not considered further in this report.

Figure 2: Buchanan Road Tramping Track, Utility Track and Legal Road (Source: Recreation Assessment, Rob Greenaway & Associates)



23. From the Utility Track, a 4WD track provides flat, easy access further into the DOC-Give land to an area of grassy clearings and scrub among pine and macrocarpa trees. This was previously the site of a farmhouse and associated shelter belts and some remnants of a farm building and fencing can still be seen.
24. Several predator control lines and informal trails extend from this area down through bush that has regenerated in the decades since the area ceased to be farmed. These routes are marked with permatat or flagging tape. I observed these trails to be well used and maintained, with clear ground trails. They allowed for easy travel throughout the block, including to areas of botanical interest and to a small pond on the boundary with the Firth Block. There were very few traps observed on these trails, but regardless of their purpose or predominant use, the extent of the trail network, the ease of access and the length of time they would allow visitors to spend immersed in the bush environment provides a good opportunity for those interested in exploring the area.
25. While the area can be accessed with relative ease and is clearly used and valued by, what is likely to be, a small number of regular users, there is no reliable means of assessing the overall level of use. I do not consider information from Strava to be a useful means of assessing off-track use in this regard (see “Areas of disagreement with the applicant’s recreation assessment”, below).

26. I do not consider the experience within the DOC-Give area to be exceptional as there are numerous opportunities to explore areas off track in a bush setting in the Hutt Valley and in the wider region, both within GW's regional parks network and on land managed by the Department of Conservation. The area also does not provide connectivity to other locations of interest and does not contain significant points of interest that would appeal beyond a niche audience.

Recreation value of the DOC-Get land

27. Other than an existing 33m right of way where the Dry Creek Loop Track crosses the Dry Creek Block, there is currently no public access to the DOC-Get land and no existing recreational use.
28. Should the land transfer go ahead, access to and within the DOC-Get land would be poor. The land is fragmented, the blocks lack existing tracks and are generally not well connected to conservation land within Belmont Regional Park. This contrasts with the relative ease of access to the DOC-Give land.
29. Access is possible from the Buchanan Road Tramping Track to near the boundary of the Northern Gully Block via an existing pylon access route, but there are no tracks that would facilitate further access into the block. Furthermore, the slopes leading down into the block are steep and heavily vegetated which is likely to limit practical access.
30. The area of the Northern Gully Block immediately adjacent to Belmont Regional Park features more mature Tawa – Kamahi forest that could be attractive to visitors. This area is protected by the smaller of two QEII covenants on the DOC-Get land (2.87 ha). However, other parts of the Northern Gully Block have previously been used for disposal of overburden and subsequently restored and replanted. The block also has a long boundary with Belmont Quarry on its southern and eastern edge and visitors could experience noise and other impacts from the quarry and therefore a significantly less natural setting and reduced quality of experience.
31. The entirety of the Firth Block (9.61 ha) is also covered by an existing QEII Covenant. Transferring this land would allow the public to access the protected

forest, but the Firth Block is steep and distant from existing tracks. It also adjoins the quarry land on two sides, while another side borders the busy State Highway 2. Parts of the Firth Block have been modified by historic quarrying.

32. Public access into the Southern Gully Block would only be available from Belmont Regional Park via the Northern Gully Block. A proposed access to the Southern Gully Block off Liverton Road would be for conservation and maintenance purposes only, with public access expressly excluded. Parts of the block have also been used for overburden disposal in the past and the block is a thin strip bounded by the quarry on one side and lifestyle blocks on the other.
33. The Dry Creek Block is located close to the Dry Creek entrance to Belmont Regional Park, however, a steep, bush-clad ridge separates it from the park (including the campsite and Loop Track), and would limit access. There is potential for access into the top of the block from an old trail near a power pylon on the Dry Creek Loop Track. This trail is visible in historic photographs and still evident on the ground, although currently blocked by beehives. Accessing this location would require either a steep climb from the upper Dry Creek Campsite or a long walk around the Loop Track, which would likely limit interest in visiting this area. The location next to a former quarry and the Holcim Cement Plant is also likely to limit interest from visitors. Parts of the Dry Creek Block have been modified by previous disposal of clean fill.
34. As the right of way for the Dry Creek Loop Track exists currently, transferring ownership of the underlying land to DOC does not add to the recreational values of conservation land in the area. There is no practical access into the wider block from that section of the track due to vegetation and steep terrain.
35. Overall I consider the current recreational value of the DOC-Get land to be low.

Future development of the DOC-Give and DOC-Get land

36. It is appropriate to consider the likelihood of future development of both the DOC-Give and DOC-Get land when assessing its recreational value. The Wellington

Conservation Management Strategy (CMS) 2019³ provides direction for the management of recreation on public conservation lands and waters within the Wellington Region. The DOC-Give land falls within the Wellington-Kapiti Place within the CMS, as would the DOC-Get land if it were transferred to the Department.

37. The CMS does not provide specific direction on the management or development of recreation experiences on the DOC-Give land as the land parcel is relatively small and is managed by GW. Policy 10.3.4.2 of the CMS provides general direction within the Wellington-Kapiti Place that *“when planning for and providing recreation opportunities, both on and off public conservation lands and waters, encourage the participation of PSGEs [Post Settlement Governance Entities], tangata whenua, other conservation partners and user groups when working with local authorities to create a coordinated network of recreation opportunities.”*
38. GW’s Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-2030⁴ provides direction for Belmont Regional Park. Some future improvements are specified for the Dry Creek entrance, and for tracks in the park generally, but the plan does not identify the DOC-Give land as a priority for development or improvement of recreation opportunities. It also does not identify the land as a priority for restoration of the environment that might enhance the recreational experience in the area.
39. It is unlikely that DOC would develop facilities or access on the DOC-Get land under current settings. The Department’s current priority is to renew existing assets with a focus on the most popular places and showcase experiences within the conservation estate. Development of recreational opportunities by other parties is possible, but would be subject to funding and permission being granted under relevant legislation. I am unaware of any specific proposals for development of the DOC-Get land.

³ Department of Conservation (2019). Wellington Conservation Management Strategy.
<https://www.doc.govt.nz/about-us/our-policies-and-plans/statutory-plans/statutory-plan-publications/conservation-management-strategies/wellington/>

⁴ Greater Wellington (2020). Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan 2020-30.
<https://www.gw.govt.nz/assets/Documents/2022/05/Parks-Network-Plan-2020-30-3.0.pdf>

Health and safety of visitors

40. The recreation value of the DOC-Get land could be reduced if DOC incurred significant costs or obligations to manage the safety of visitors. In this section I discuss the hazards to the public identified in the application and the requirements for management under DOC's Visitor Safety Management Policy.⁵
41. The applicant's Health and Safety Report considers potential obligations as a Person Conducting a Business or Undertaking (PCBU) under the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015. It advises that *"under the land exchange, no additional health and safety risks to Firth Block, Dry Creek, Northern Gully and Southern Gully have been identified other than those arising from the quarry interface. The new quarry boundary extends into the Belmont Regional Park to the Buchanan Track. This will create a new interface between the public (walkers, park users) and quarry operations. Although this is a new interface, no additional risks have been identified beyond those that already exist and are managed by existing site controls. To manage this interface, a combination of fencing, signage, and physical buffers will be implemented."*
42. A proposed draft pre-condition for the land exchange outlined in the Land exchange report, would require the applicant to install 60 m of fencing set back from the Firth Block pit face to address the risk of visitors entering the active quarry in this area. The measures that would be employed in other areas (e.g. Dry Creek Block, proposed OBDA) are not specified beyond the general approach outlined above.
43. Geotechnical reports provided by the applicant discuss two further potential hazards to visitors on the DOC-Get land.
 - a. An area is identified within the Firth Block that has previously been quarried and which is now revegetated with hazards arising from terrain and potential slope instability. The assessment indicates that, while there is localised slope instability, the area is heavily vegetated and largely

⁵ Department of Conservation, Visitor Safety Management Policy. Approved 11 May 2025.

inaccessible and would not be expected to present a significant risk to persons.

- b. There is a former quarry access road within the Dry Creek Block that may include road cuttings < 5m. The assessment concludes that the area is largely inaccessible due to heavy vegetation and that the risk to the public from slopes or cuttings above the road is similar or less than what exists for access roads that are already present within Belmont Regional Park.
- 44. The applicant has also provided natural hazards and contaminated sites reports covering the DOC-Get land and no hazards of this nature have been identified.
- 45. Based on the information provided by the applicant, the proposed land exchange would not be expected to impose significant visitor safety obligations and costs on DOC. This is principally because under DOC's Visitor Safety Policy, the Department will only undertake management of visitor safety within managed visitor sites. These are defined as locations on public conservation lands and waters where:
 - a. Non-commercial visitor infrastructure is provided by DOC or an authorised third party, or:
 - b. Non-commercial visitor infrastructure is provided by DOC or an authorised third party to access it, and/or it is part of the visitor experience being offered. Even if the location that is accessed has no visitor infrastructure or is not on public conservation lands and waters.
- 46. There are no managed facilities on the DOC-Get land, other than the existing Dry Creek Loop Track managed by GW. It is also unlikely that DOC would seek to develop facilities on the land in the future. The DOC-Get land would not be considered a "visitor site" and any visitors venturing off-track on the DOC-Get land would be expected to take full responsibility for their own safety.
- 47. The Buchanan Road Tramping Track is directly adjacent to the proposed OBDA, however, effects arising from this activity are not relevant to the land transfer application and are best considered as part of a future substantive application. The track is also managed by GW as part of Belmont Regional Park and DOC does not manage visitor safety at this location or undertake day-to-day management.

Areas of disagreement with the applicant's Recreation Assessment

48. I consider the information provided by the applicant on the recreation values of the DOC-Get land and the wider recreation context of Belmont Regional Park to be an accurate representation, however I disagree with some aspects of the assessment relating to the existing use and value of the DOC-Give land.
49. The Recreation Assessment and Recreation Values Review provide an annual estimate of use for the Buchanan Road Tramping Track of 6570, equivalent to 18.3 uses per day. The annual usage figure is calculated using data from a visitor counter that was installed on the track between 9 July and 9 September 2025 and reference to Strava data. It was derived by calculating the ratio of Strava counts for the track for August 2025 to usage recorded on the visitor counter over the same period. This figure (4.9) was then applied as a multiplier to 12 months of visitor counter data.
50. I consider that this approach would only be valid if Strava users and non-Strava users had similar patterns of recreation use and if the true ratio did not differ seasonally (i.e. the ratio calculated in August was similar throughout the year). This is unlikely to be the case as outdoor recreation tends to be seasonal, peaking over summer when there is better weather and more daylight. Strava-use is also skewed towards active sports such as cycling and running along with those tracking performance and progress towards fitness goals. Visitors with other motivations for visiting e.g. walking the dog, spending time with friends and families, appreciating nature and landscapes, relaxation etc would be less likely to use Strava to track their visits.
51. I also disagree with the assessment in the Recreation Values Review that use of the DOC-Give land is insignificant. This statement was based on the author not observing others using the area during their site visits and observing no activity on Strava. I consider that individuals accessing the DOC-Give land for exploration or botanising are unlikely to record visits in Strava. Observations of use during site visits made in winter and early spring are also very unlikely to be representative of activity through the year, particularly the summer months.

52. The Recreation Assessment concludes that the proposed land exchange is one of low value DOC-Get for low value DOC-Give land, and that there is no measurable gain or loss at the Regional Park scale. I disagree with this assessment. I consider that while the recreation value of the DOC-Get land is low, the value of the DOC-Give is higher and therefore the proposed exchange would reduce the recreation value of conservation land. Key factors in my assessment are:
- a. The ease of recreational access both to and within the DOC-Give land compared to the DOC-Get land.
 - b. The extent to which the DOC-Get land has been subject to human modification compared to the DOC-Give.
 - c. The contiguous nature of the DOC-Give land and length of experience that is possible within it, compared to the fragmented nature of the DOC-Get land and the smaller size of the individual blocks.

Matters raised in submissions

53. This report discusses several issues relating to recreational values that have been raised in submissions. These include
- a. The relative lack of public access to the DOC-Get land and the challenges of enabling access (raised by the New Zealand Conservation Authority and Friends of Belmont Regional Park - FoBRP)
 - b. The accuracy of the applicant's assessment of the recreational value and use of the DOC-Get land (FoBRP)
 - c. The use of Stava to assess the level of off-track tramping and exploration (FoBRP)
 - d. The suitability of the DOC-Get land for creating additional recreation opportunities (FoBRP)
54. The New Zealand Conservation Authority and FoBRP have also raised concerns that the proposed OBDA would be visible from other tracks in the Park, including almost half of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track. As this matter relates to the

future development of the land, rather than the land transfer application, it is not appropriate to comment on this issue in this report.

55. The FoBRP submission outlines a number of community aspirations for the DOC-Get land. These include creation of a circular walkway taking regenerating ridges, the pond, wetland and taonga species, and installation of interpretation regarding the farm site and swamp maire. These are noted in my assessment but are considered speculative in the absence of funding and appropriate management agreements.

Overall assessment

56. My overall assessment of the DOG-Give and DOC-Get areas based on the available information is:
 - a. Overall recreation ranking for DOC-Give site: **Low-Medium**
 - b. Overall recreation ranking for DOC-Get sites: **Low**
 - c. Overall recreation assessment for DOC-Get sites (not including QEII covenants): **Low**
57. The values of the DOC-Give and DOC-Get areas are assessed in further detail in Table1, below. The comparative values of each individual block are summarised in Table 2, with a separate assessment provided for areas of the Northern Gully Block with and without the QEII covenant.

Comparative reporting of criteria assessment

Table 1: Recreation values of DOC-Give vs DOC-Get land

Criteria	DOC-Give	DOC-Get
Alignment with strategic objectives/visitor network strategy	Low – DOC’s Wellington Conservation Management Strategy (2019) does not provide specific direction for management of recreation on the DOC-Give land. However, the Department is not seeking to offer visitor experiences in this area as the land is managed by Greater Wellington Regional Council as part of Belmont Regional Park. The DOC-Give land is not identified as an area for development within Greater Wellington’s Toitū Te Whenua Parks Network Plan.	Low – It is unlikely that the Department would seek to offer or develop additional visitor experiences in this area. The DOC-Get land is adjacent to Belmont Regional Park, where recreation opportunities are already provided by Greater Wellington Regional Council. The land is fragmented, difficult to access and would not complement or add anything to existing opportunities in the area. The Department’s current priorities for investment in recreation are on improving experiences aligned to the Future Visitor Network (FVN) and intentions for the Visitor Portfolio (currently under development). A key priority is investing in the most popular places and showcase experiences within the conservation estate and renewal of existing assets, rather than development of new ones.
Social license – for PCL, social license for exchanging away the land, and for the land offered, social license for acquiring the land	Low – there is some community opposition to the land exchange represented by the submission from FoBRP. In relation to recreation values, the submission emphasises the existing use of informal trails and predator control lines and community aspirations for development of tracks along with interpretation relating to the farm site and swamp maire. Loss of these current and future recreation	Low – except for the Firth Block, I am unaware of any public demand for the DOC-Get land to be brought into the conservation estate for public access or the development of recreation opportunities. The FoBRP submission states that it would be good to enable more public access to the Firth Block, but notes that this impractical due to the steepness of the terrain.

	opportunities is expected to result in lower social license for the land exchange.	
Rarity of experience within the region	Low - there are many opportunities to access similar experiences in the wider region.	Low – there are many opportunities to access similar experiences in the wider region.
Use level (for PCL)/anticipated use level (for land offered)	Low – Although there is no reliable estimate of overall use of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track, the Utility Track is used by a significant proportion of visitors who (probably inadvertently) follow the gravel road rather than the marked trail when walking to or from Boulder Hill or walking the Dry Creek Loop Track. The use of the Utility Track is not representative of the wider use of the DOC-Give land, which is likely limited to a small number of visitors engaging in exploration and botanising.	Low – there is existing use on a short section of the Loop Track within the Dry Creek Block, but this is over an existing Right of Way and is unaffected by the land exchange. Vegetation, steep terrain and a lack of access to and within the DOC-Get land is likely to significantly limit future use. Parts of the DOC-Get land have also been modified by previous overburden disposal, clean fill or quarrying and / or could be impacted by activities within the adjacent Belmont Quarry and Holcim Cement Plant. There to be limited interest in visiting these areas when there are more natural / easily accessible opportunities in the area.
Level of access (e.g. tracks)	Medium – Access into the DOC-Give land is straight forward requiring a 1.7 km walk from the Dry Creek carpark along the gravel road formation of the Buchanan Road Tramping Track. From there access into the block is obtained via the utility track and a flat section of 4WD track. Predator control lines and informal trails marked and maintained through the bush allow relatively easy navigation throughout the block, including to the pond and sites of botanical interest.	Low – Public access to and within the Firth Block would be difficult as a result of vegetation, terrain and a lack of tracks. Access is possible to near the edge of the Northern Gully Block via the Buchanan Road Tramping Track and a pylon access route, but onward access through the block would be similarly difficult. The Dry Creek Block includes 33m of the existing Dry Creek Loop Track where access is already enabled by a Right of Way over the land. This access would not materially change as a result of the land exchange. Access into a different part of the Dry Creek

		Block would be possible from another section of the Loop Track, near a power pylon where an old trail is discernible through gorse and scrub. However, access up to this point from the Dry Creek carpark and upper campsite is very steep.
Natural hazard/climate risk	Low – no known natural hazard or climate risk relevant to recreation values.	Low – no known natural hazard or climate risk relevant to recreation values.
How do any heritage or biodiversity values affect the visitor experience (for land offered, how might heritage or biodiversity values affect the visitor experience?)	Low - medium – the site of an old farmhouse including remains of a farm building, fencing and shelter belt are easily accessible from the Buchanan Road Tramping Track via the Utility Track and 4WD track and provides a point of interest for visitors. Away from this immediate area, the land drops away into regenerated bush and the experience is of a substantially natural setting.	Low – there are no known heritage values that would be of interest to visitors. There are two areas protected by QEII covenants that may offer a more natural experience than the other areas of the DOC-Get land. However, there is nothing to indicate that these blocks have significance either regionally or in the context of the natural values already present within the Dry Creek area and the presence of the covenants has only minor impact on the overall assessment of recreation values. In contrast, all of the blocks have areas that have been modified by overburden disposal, clean fill or quarrying. Other areas are adjacent to the active quarry and Holcim Concrete Plant. This is likely to have a greater impact on the recreation experience in the DOC-Get land as it significantly reduces the opportunity for immersion in a natural setting.

Table 2: Assessment of recreational values of individual land parcels

[illegible]

Northern Gully (non- QEII)	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low
Southern Gully	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low	Low