

# Regional Parks Management Plan Review

Discussion Paper

September 2020



**On front cover: Te Rau Pūriri Regional Park**

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Service and Asset Planning

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## Wāhinga kōrero / Foreword

In February 2020, I was honoured to be invited onto the Mahurangi East Regional Park after Auckland Council purchased ninety-five hectares of land on the Mahurangi Harbour, doubling the size of the regional park. The purchase was made possible through generous donations from philanthropic trusts.

Our network of regional parks protects important examples of Auckland's natural ecosystems and are also treasured for their heritage values. This consultation is an opportunity for people to express what they love about their regional parks, and what they want to see protected, maintained or improved.



Our regional parks hold a special place in the heart of many Aucklanders. They are the places we go to play, learn, care for and connect with nature and our heritage.

Of course the council does not look after these places alone. I acknowledge the mana whenua who are the kaitiaki /guardians for the taonga tuku iho (treasures handed down).

I would like to pay tribute to the awesome mahi from thousands of volunteers over the years who have saved and enhanced many precious places. We could not do it without you.

I must also humbly pay tribute to the enormously generous gifts over the last century to enable the council and its predecessors to acquire the lands that we have in our 41,000 hectares of parkland today. These gifts keep giving, generation after generation.

Our regional parks are collectively managed under the Regional Parks Management Plan. This plan was published in 2010 and is now due for review.

This brings us to an important moment that only happens once each 10 years. We seek your help to shape our priorities and focus for our regional parks for the next decade.

Our world is changing in many ways. Our region continues to grow. The numbers and changing needs of visitors to our parks has never been greater or more diverse. At the same time the climate change will have a profound local impact. We are at a crucial moment in history and our decisions today will have an impact for time to come.

I invite and encourage you to get involved in this review. Please tell us your suggestions. Share your ideas to help us create a plan so that together we can continue to enjoy our parks and keep them healthy for the next generation.

**Councillor Alf Filipaina**

**Chair**

**Parks, Arts, Community and Events Committee**

# 1 Kupu whakataki / Introduction

## Purpose of this discussion paper

This paper introduces our review of Auckland Council’s Regional Parks Management Plan 2010 (RPMP). We seek your feedback, ideas and suggestions on how you would like to see our regional parks protected, used and managed for the next 10 years.

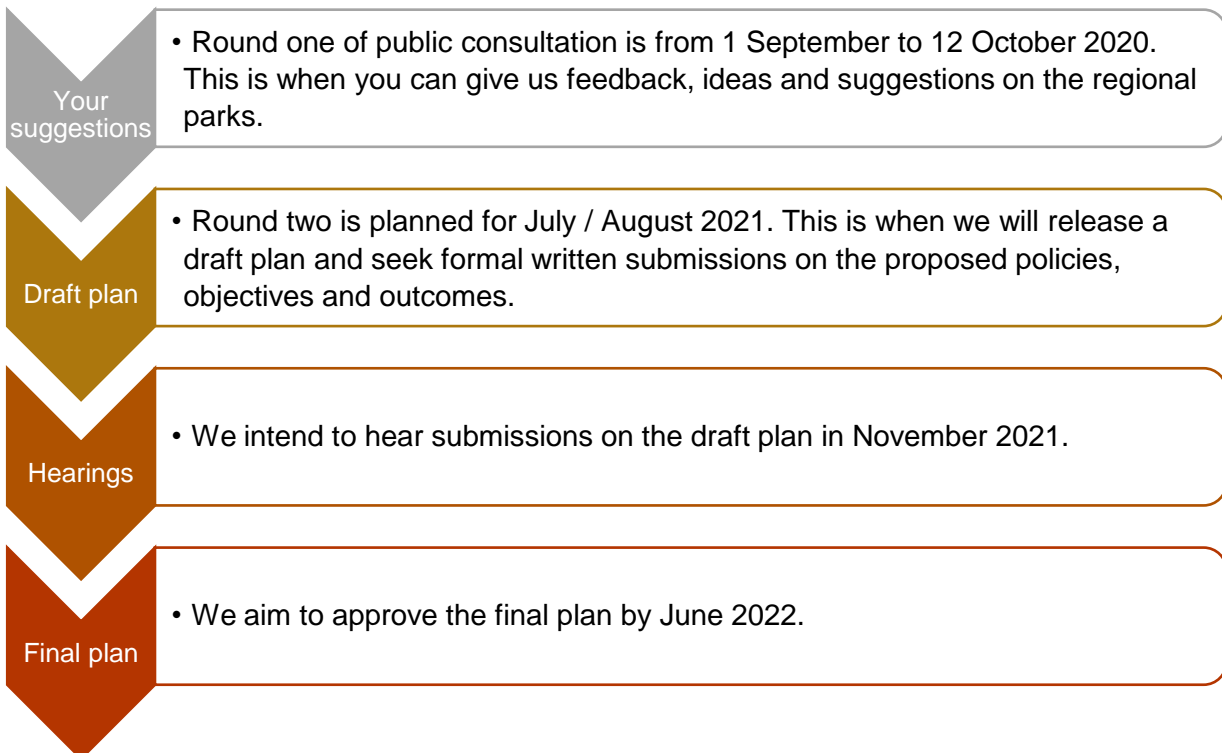
The paper gives you some context on our current regional parks network, what the existing management plan covers, and the statutory framework for the review. We present some topics relevant to regional parks, introduce the new areas of parkland to be included in the RPMP and ask for your views on the proposed use of these parks.

## We welcome your suggestions

Your suggestions to us at the start of this review will help us draft Auckland’s next RPMP. Once we’ve produced a draft, you will then have an opportunity to comment on the draft RPMP.

We welcome comments on any aspect of the current RPMP – from the 19 management principles, to our park classification system, and general management policies. You can also comment on a particular regional park, anything mentioned in this discussion paper, or other matters you think are relevant.

## Timeline and opportunities for feedback





### What does the current plan say?

The RPMP sets out the long-term vision and framework for protecting, using and developing our regional parks. The current plan was prepared by the former Auckland Regional Council and published in August 2010.

Read the current [Regional Parks Management Plan 2010](#)<sup>1</sup>.

### Kōrerotia ōu whakaaro / Have your say

You can provide your suggestions to us in any of these ways:

- Online via [AK Have Your Say](#):
  - comment on any topic you want on the ideas board
  - respond to the questions for any park (or parks) and/or for regional parks in general
  - pin comments on the online map
- Email your suggestions to [regionalparksplanreview@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:regionalparksplanreview@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)
- Post your suggestions to:  
Regional Parks Management Plan Review  
Auckland Council  
Private Bag 92300  
Victoria Street West  
Auckland 1142
- Keep an eye out on [AK Have Your Say](#) for any face-to-face opportunities to provide comments in person.

**The closing date for suggestions is 5pm, Monday 12 October 2020**

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<sup>1</sup> On this webpage besides the 2010 RPMP you can access maps and three variations to the 2010 RPMP: to add Te Muri, change Mahurangi, and to add Taitomo in the Waitākere Ranges.

## 2 Ngā papa whenua o Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland's regional parks

Our regional parks are a unique feature of our city, and they contribute to our quality of life.

Our parks protect many of our natural, cultural and landscape values, including the features that give Auckland its character, and sense of place and identity.

They offer you outdoor recreation – from walking and picnicking to mountain biking and access to water-based activities such as fishing, kayaking, surfing and boating. Most of our parks allow you to stay overnight whether it's basic camping, a campervan, or a traditional kiwi bach or lodge.

Our parks contain examples of important ecosystems and habitats and provide a sanctuary for protecting and restoring threatened species. They protect important cultural sites and features of particular significance to mana whenua who have obligations in their role as kaitiaki to care for these taonga / treasures.

Around 69 per cent of Aucklanders have used a regional park in the past year<sup>2</sup>.

### Regional parks network

Our regional park network dates back to the early 20th century when the Crown acquired public domains and scenic reserves to preserve native bush and provide recreational

areas for Aucklanders. The Auckland Centennial Memorial Park was established in the Waitākere Ranges in 1941 to commemorate the centenary of Auckland City.

Since then, the network has grown through land purchases, transfers of land from other public agencies, and bequests from private individuals and organisations.

Our regional park network of 28 parks covers around 41,000ha of parkland (see the map on the next page). This is equivalent to about 44 per cent of Auckland's public open space.

Our parks keep more than 225 kilometres of our coastline in an undeveloped state<sup>3</sup>. More than 35,000ha is forested. We graze sheep and cattle on 1500ha across 20 parks.

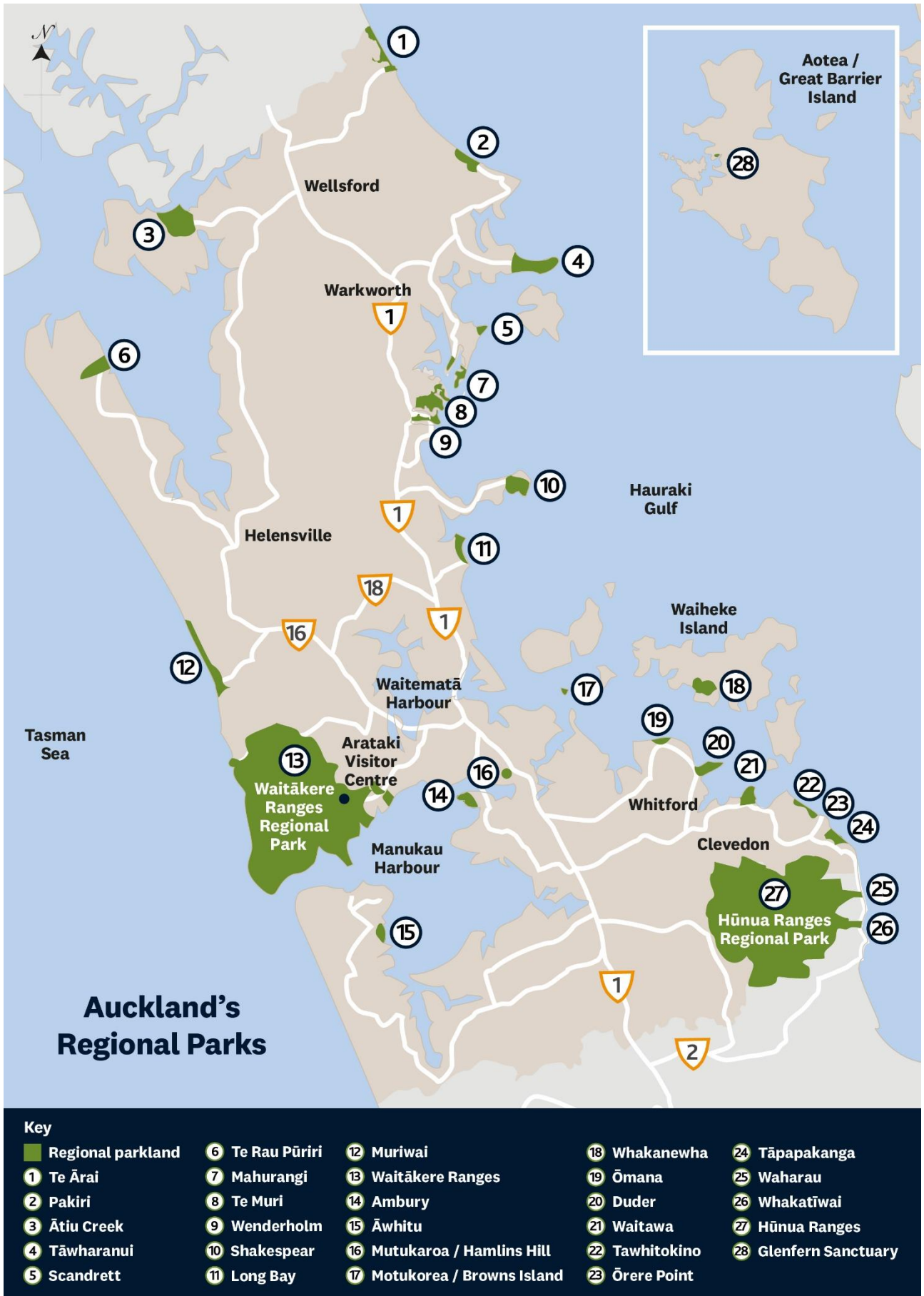
We have a dedicated ranger service in our regional parks that delivers a variety of visitor services across the regional park network and undertakes a range of conservation programmes. The ranger service operates seven days a week and includes an after-hours response capability to ensure safe and enjoyable use by visiting public. The regional parks service is supported by many other council staff who manage and maintain facilities, oversee farming operations, and provide technical advice to help protect the environment and heritage.

<sup>2</sup> Auckland Regional Parks Visitor Survey, June 2019

<sup>3</sup> Figures based on 41,000ha in the network as at 2020. The total land area of Auckland is 494,200ha; the area of public open space is 93,542ha (as at 2018). The area

of coastline (225km) includes the current network and the recent additions, Mahurangi East extension and Motukorea/Browns Island.







# REGIONAL PARKS OVERVIEW

## REGIONAL PARK NETWORK

 **28** Regional parks  
on **41,000** hectares

## MANA WHENUA CONNECTIONS

**1000+** years  
of Māori connections  
 and associations  
with the whenua

## VISITOR NUMBERS

**6 MILLION**  
PEOPLE  
  
visited regional parks in 2019  
**UP 7%** From the  
previous year

## USE OF PARKS

**69%**  
of Aucklanders  
visited  
a regional  
park in the  
past year 

## MOST POPULAR PARKS

**Muriwai is the busiest park**  
with  
more  
than **1.45 million**  
**visitors a year,**  
followed by **Long Bay,**  
**Shakespear** and **Wenderholm**

## VISITOR SATISFACTION

**95%**   
of visitors are  
satisfied with the overall  
quality of their experience  
at a regional park

## AREA REPLANTED IN NATIVE VEGETATION

**206**   
hectares  
was replanted in native  
vegetation in the last  
**10 years**

## TRACKS UPGRADED

**49 KM**   
**OF TRACK UPGRADES**  
in the last year to protect  
**kauri in the Waitākere Ranges, Hūnua**  
**Ranges and other regional parks**

## VOLUNTEERS

**90,000+**  
 **VOLUNTEER**  
**HOURS**  
on regional parks in 2018/19

## KŌKAKO NUMBERS

**116**   
breeding pairs of kōkako  
In and around  
Hūnua Ranges Regional Park today,  
up from **55** pairs in  
**2014**

## PEST CONTROL

**30,000**  
hectares  
 receive pest control  
each year

## PEST-FREE AREAS

**3** fenced predator-proof  
areas for native wildlife at  
**Tāwharanui,**  
**Shakespear**  
and **Glenfern**  
**Sanctuary**

## BIG EVENTS

**8,000+** people attend  
the 3-day Splore festival at  
Tāpapakanga Regional Park

**30,000+** people visit  
the Ambury Farm Day at  
Ambury Regional Park

## ACCOMMODATION USE

**46,500** nights  
 of accommodation  
on regional parks  
were booked in 2018/19

**+2**   
Mainland site sanctuaries  
in the Waitākere and Hūnua Ranges

**= 5** Safe havens  
contributing to  
national species recovery programmes

## Legislation

We manage our regional parks in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act 2002 or the Reserves Act 1977, depending on how the land has been acquired and held.

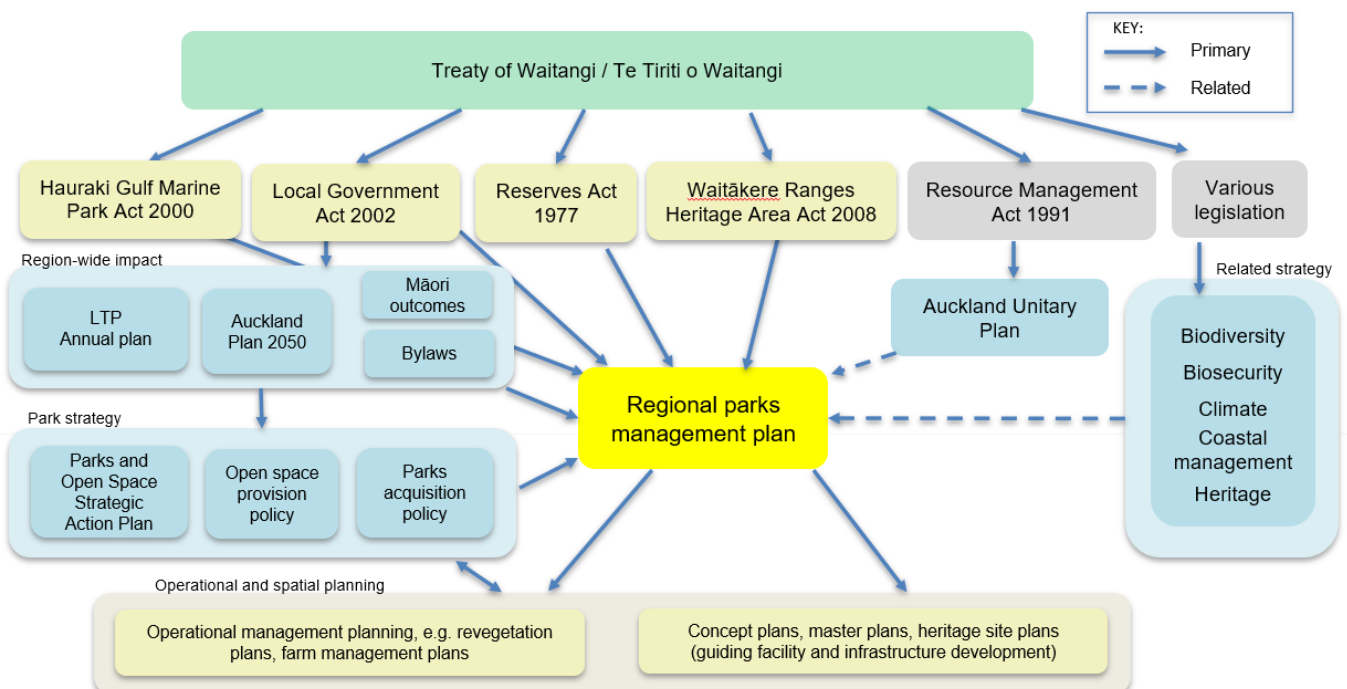
The council must give effect to legislation protecting particular lands of significance. The Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 acknowledges the national significance of the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park and its surrounding area. The Hauraki Gulf Marine Park Act 2000 recognises the international and national significance of the land and natural and historic resources within the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park, which includes Motukorea / Browns Island.

The RPMP also needs to reflect the directions set by the Auckland Plan 2050 and align with relevant council policies and strategies.

Relevant plans and strategies include:

- Auckland Unitary Plan
- Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland’s Climate Plan
- Regional Pest Management Plan
- Auckland Council’s Indigenous Biodiversity Strategy
- Parks and Open Spaces Strategic Action Plan
- regional bylaws
- parks-specific operational plans such as development concept plans, revegetation, and farm environmental plans.

## Policy framework influencing the management of regional parks





## The importance of working with Māori to manage regional parks

Te Tiriti o Waitangi / the Treaty of Waitangi (Te Tiriti) governs Auckland Council's commitments to partner to actively protect Māori interests, and deliver improved outcomes for Māori.

Auckland has a rich Māori history extending back more than 1000 years. Many different tribes (iwi and hapū) have lived here and established lasting connections. The region's general desirability led to the Māori name for Auckland: Tāmaki Makaurau – “the land of numerous lovers”.

Auckland Council recognises 19 iwi and hapū representing mana whenua in Auckland. The iwi and hapū maintain ancestral connections and customary authority (mana whenua) over lands encompassing the regional parklands and an interest in park use and management.

The ancestral connections are with different parts of Auckland and often these associations overlap. Several mana whenua

may have important associations with the same regional park.

Under Te Tiriti, the council recognises the special relationship that mana whenua of Tāmaki Makaurau hold with the whenua (land). The review of the RPMP marks an important opportunity for the council to strengthen its relationships with mana whenua in managing regional parks.

The council also acknowledges mataawaka, the wider Māori community resident in Auckland. Māori whose ancestral links may be elsewhere have rights under the Te Tiriti. We invite mataawaka to be actively involved in this review.

The council is committed to improving outcomes for Māori under the Auckland Plan 2050 and is also mindful of the Independent Māori Statutory Board's Schedule of Issues of Significance to Māori in Tāmaki Makaurau and Māori Plan 2017.



**Representatives from Ngāti Paoa and Ngāti Tai ki Tāmaki lead the Waitawa Regional Park Official Opening in 2014**

## Regional Parks Management Plan (RPMP)

The RPMP guides the protection, appropriate use and development of regional parks. It outlines:

- how the council works with mana whenua in managing the parks
- values and how these are to be protected
- management directions for parks
- issues affecting parks and how council addresses those
- guiding principles and considerations for assessing new activities on parks.

The RPMP controls activities on the land within our regional parks network but does not have control over activities in the coastal zone. The RPMP does not cover the coastal area and activities such as shellfish gathering, fishing or boating are not controlled or managed by the RPMP.

Dog access and rules for dogs were consulted on and set through the [Dog Management Bylaw 2019](#) and the council's [Policy on Dogs](#). These rules cover regional parks within the Auckland region and are not set through the RPMP.

### The RPMP is used by a range of groups



#### Māori

The RPMP reflects tikanga / ways to protect the land and acknowledges its history, and guides how council and Māori work as partners



#### Rangers and other council staff

The RPMP sets priorities for park service programme delivery and facilities management



#### Commercial users and concessionaires

The RPMP controls commercial, research and educational activities allowed on parks



#### Volunteers / community groups

The RPMP guides work to help protect park values

#### Visitors

The RPMP sets which visitor activities are allowed and where they are allowed

### Parks are managed according to their class

The RPMP classifies each regional park according to the:

- visitor experience being provided
- overall management focus
- intensity and type of recreational activities
- level of development
- visitor services to be provided.

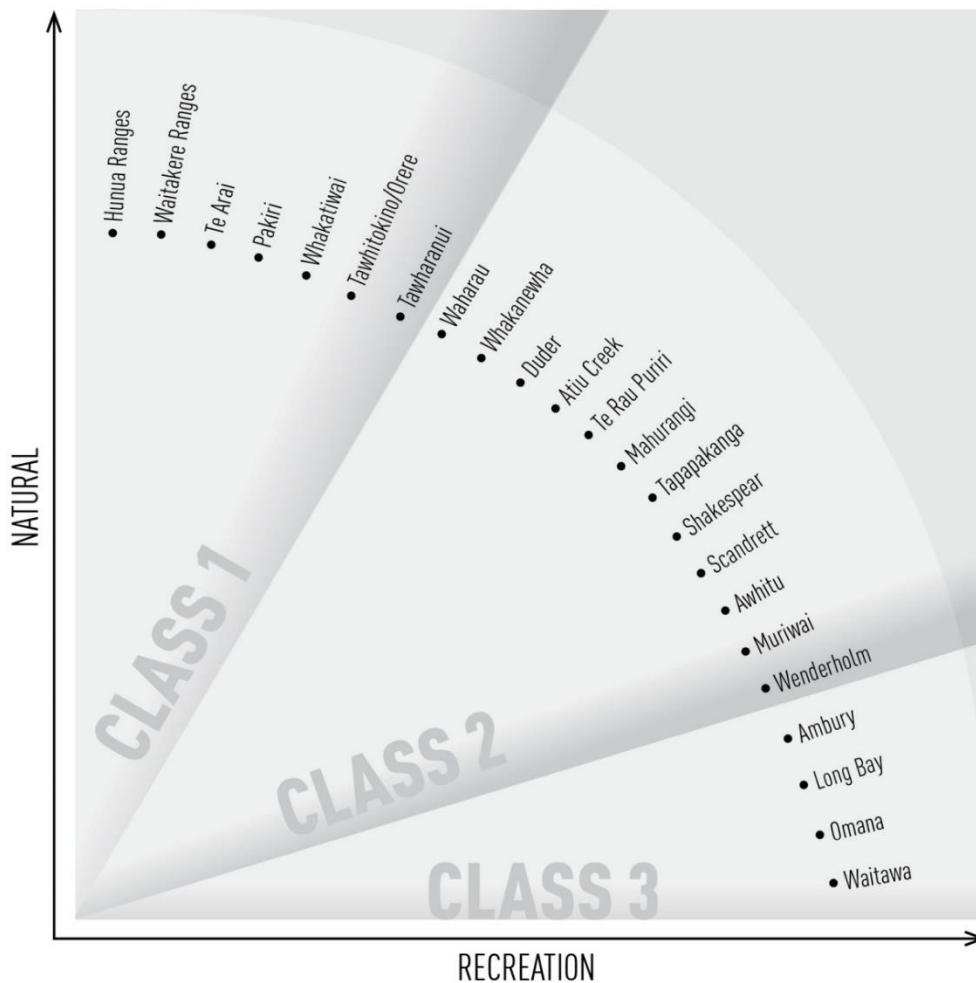
The three classes are<sup>4</sup>:

- Class 1 – these parks focus on protecting natural values and offering a wilderness experience, allowing only low levels of use and development to minimise the effects of visitor activity.

- Class 2 – these parks provide for moderate levels of activity and high levels of protection in sensitive locations.
- Class 3 – these parks provide for more intensive levels of recreation.

This system enables each park to provide recreation opportunities based on its particular natural, landscape, mana whenua and cultural values, and on each park’s capacity to absorb the activity without threatening these values or the quality of visitor experience.

This diagram<sup>5</sup> shows the class for each park.



<sup>4</sup> This classification system sits outside the Reserves Act 1977 requirements.

<sup>5</sup> From the 2010 RPMP, section 7.1.2 (page 26).



Te Muri Regional Park (added after 2010) is in Class 2. We propose these classes for the parks and larger parkland areas being added via this review:

- Glenfern Sanctuary: Class 2
- Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill: Class 2
- Motukorea / Browns Island: Class 1
- With its anticipated future extension to the south, the extended Te Ārai: Class 2.
- Mahurangi East extension: Class 2.

The RPMP sets rules and guidance for each regional park based on the class it is placed into. More detail on the park classification system is in section 7.1 of the RPMP, reproduced in Appendix A.

### General management zones

Areas within each park are designated general management zones. These zones define the typical level of service and facilities visitors might expect to find in that zone. Zones include the park entry, main access road and arrival area, secondary arrival areas, park destinations, tracks and trails, special facility areas. Management of visitor activity is focused within the zones.

Areas outside these zones are generally managed as open space or natural settings,



**Example of a Special Management Zone: the scientific reserve at Whatipū, Waitākere Ranges**

in accordance with the classification of the parks.

### Special management zones

The special management zones help define management of particular elements, such as natural and cultural features that are especially sensitive to or subject to high levels of human activity. Examples of these zones are historic precincts, archaeological sites, sites and areas of significance to mana whenua, wetlands, dune systems and wildlife habitats.

Sections 7.4 and 7.5 of the 2010 RPMP provide detail on the general and special management zones.



**Example of a Class 3 (recreation) reserve: Long Bay**



## Why we are reviewing the RPMP

We are reviewing the 2010 RPMP to ensure it reflects the current values, needs and aspirations of communities and mana whenua. It will also bring more regional parks and extensions to parks into the plan. We are also reviewing it to meet statutory requirements<sup>6</sup>.

- The Waitākere Ranges Regional Park section of the RPMP must be reviewed every 10 years under section 20 of the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008.
- Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 requires all parkland classified as a recreation, scenic, scientific, or historic reserve to have a current management plan in place.

## Funding for regional parks

As this discussion paper was being prepared, Auckland Council approved an emergency budget for the financial year 2020-2021 in response to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Some regional parks budgets have been reduced in the short-term, but we expect revenue, and our ability to spend, will return to normal in the medium term.

In 2021, the council will prepare and consult on a new Long-term Plan (LTP) for 2021-2031. The LTP presents a 10-year financial plan for the council which includes regional parks.

It's important to understand that while we're asking for your input into this review, the RPMP itself doesn't guarantee or ringfence any funding for regional parks.

What your input will do is help us set priorities for regional parks over the next 10 years. It is these priorities that will help guide consideration of funding decisions made through future long-term plan and annual budget planning processes.

The RPMP also provides guidance for commercial and revenue-making activities in regional parks.

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<sup>6</sup> Waitākere Ranges Regional Park makes up approximately 40 per cent of the regional park network by land area. Approximately 10 per cent of the regional

park land is held under the Reserves Act (the rest is held under the Local Government Act).

### 3 Te tiaki i ērā e whaipānga ana / Protecting what is valued



Auckland Council aims to protect the intrinsic, natural, cultural, heritage, landscape values of our regional parks at the same time as giving you access for recreation or leisure.

To protect the values of our regional parks, we:

- work with mana whenua to determine their views and interests
- use scientific and technical expertise to advise on the best ways to look after vulnerable indigenous species and habitats and protect significant heritage sites
- work within legislative and national requirements, such as the Biosecurity Act and Regional Pest Management Strategy for pest management
- follow best practice guidelines
- meet health and safety requirements.

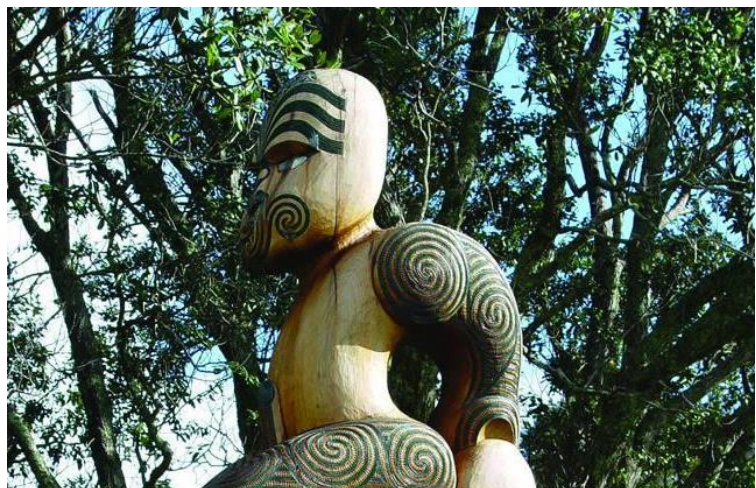


## Recognising and protecting Māori heritage

The council works with mana whenua to identify and protect Māori heritage in parks.

Māori heritage includes sites and landscapes that are identified as significant by iwi, hapū and whānau who have ancestral links to and customary authority over the land (mana whenua). The essential defining aspect of Māori heritage is the living connections or associations that mana whenua hold with a place.

Māori hold a holistic view of heritage. Many places of significance to hapū and iwi are also natural heritage or environmental resources – mountains, forests, wetlands, rivers, and gardening soils. Protection of Māori heritage tends to align with protection of the environment.



**A carving at Karanga-a-Hape (Cornwallis), representing Hape, a tupuna of local mana whenua, Te Kawerau a Maki**

## Acknowledging the national and regional significance of the Waitākere Ranges

The council must give effect to the purpose and objectives of the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 in preparing a

management plan for the Waitākere Ranges Heritage Area.

This includes recognising the significance of the ranges and protecting and enhancing their heritage features for future generations.

Every five years, the council reports on the [state of the environment](#) in the heritage area.



**Anawhata in the Waitākere Ranges**

## Protecting our biodiversity

Regional parks contain important examples of the range of major ecosystem types found naturally in the Auckland area<sup>7</sup>. These include sand dunes and coastal wetlands, forested lowlands and mountain ridges, and streams that run from the ranges to sea surrounded by natural forest. Auckland's rare and threatened species (such as kōkako, Hochstetter's frog and the Waitākere rock koromiko / hebe) find a home in many regional parks.

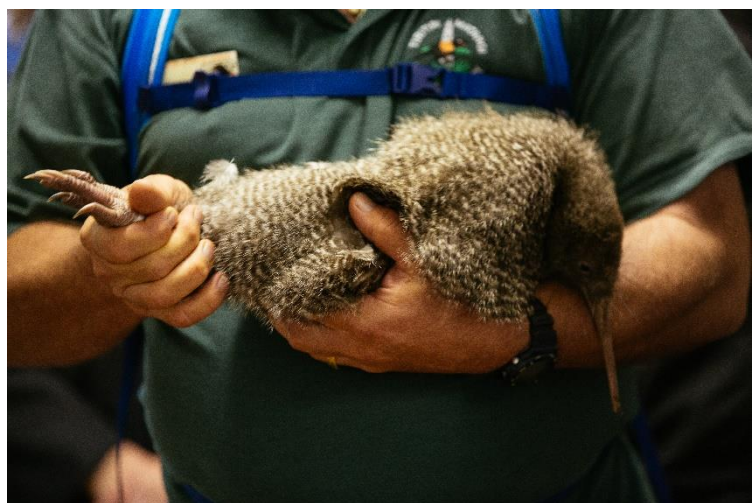
Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in our regional parks contributes not just to regional aspirations, such as those in the Auckland Plan 2050, but to national goals set in the New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy.

However, this biodiversity is under constant threat from animal and plant pests and from pathogens (diseases) such as myrtle rust that attacks a range of species including pōhutukawa and rātā trees. Visitor activities can cause damage, and some areas are also negatively affected by surrounding land use, such as silt entering waterways from cleared land. Additional pressure will come from climate change.

Future management of biosecurity threats including pest plants, pest animals, and pathogens including kauri dieback will need to meet the legal requirements of the Regional Pest Management Plan (RPestMP) which is expected to become operative this year. The RPestMP contains special provisions for managing biosecurity threats in regional parks and adjoining buffer areas.



**At Tāwharanui Open Sanctuary, fence security, pest control and surveillance by volunteers keeps out predators and enables vulnerable birds and reptiles to thrive**



**In 2018 20 little spotted kiwi were released into the Shakespear Regional Park sanctuary, complementing an original population of 20 birds introduced from Tiritiri Matangi and Kapiti Islands in 2017**

<sup>7</sup> Our new online information resource, [Tiaki Tāmaki Makaurau](#) contains an interactive map to help you explore te taiao (the environment), the natural taonga

(treasures) of the landscape and other data relevant to conservation. Access [the map](#) here: <https://www.tiakitamakimakaurau.nz/conservation-map/>



## Volunteers are making all the difference



Many people support our regional parks by volunteering and belonging to friends or care groups, historic societies, and recreational groups. Volunteers do a range of activities in regional parks. These include weed and pest control, planting, restoring historic assets, developing and maintaining recreational assets, and delivering recreation programmes and activities such as walking tours.

Many groups make a significant contribution to managing regional parks. They bring people together to pass on skills and knowledge and encourage people to feel more connected or committed to their regional park. They also help in getting funding from other organisations to support activities such as reintroducing threatened species and community events.

Part of the vision for regional parks is fostering the ethic of stewardship, or kaitiakitanga. We want to encourage all people using our parks to care for their natural and heritage features and help them survive and flourish.

Recreational groups using the parks also volunteer for tasks such as track maintenance and clearance. For example, the Auckland Mountain Biking Club helps maintain both the walking and mountain biking tracks at Hūnua and Waitawa Regional Parks.

At Long Bay Regional Park, students from the Wairau Valley Special School visit weekly to help out with mulching and weeding jobs. This helps them learn life skills and work together as a team in different environments while also benefiting the park.

Volunteering and partnerships between the council and others to take care of our regional parks will continue to be essential.



## Managing kauri dieback disease

Over the past decade, kauri dieback disease has been spreading in northern New Zealand, with the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park a site of particular concern. Most regional parks have been surveyed for the disease and of these, the Hūnua Ranges remain one of the most important areas for kauri conservation as the expansive stands there appear to remain free of the disease.

To protect kauri in the Waitākere Ranges, the iwi Te Kawerau ā Maki placed a rāhui on the Waitākere Ranges in December 2017, requesting the public to avoid entering the area. Auckland Council supported the rāhui, and in May 2018, the council decided to close all of the forested area of the Ranges.

A track re-opening plan, was developed in 2019 after community consultation. Since then, the council has been progressively upgrading tracks to kauri-safe standards before they are re-opened to the public.

The existing RPMP requires proactive prevention of the spread of pathogens like kauri dieback disease<sup>8</sup>. It also allows for temporary or long-term track closures and quarantining of parkland to protect against diseases. The approach must be science-led and use best-practice techniques.

The council is following national guidance on mitigation standards that require landowners/occupiers of public tracks to minimise the risk of spread through soil on feet or on articles such as backpacks.



**Kauri dieback cleaning station in the Waitākere Ranges**

<sup>8</sup> Regional Parks Management Plan 2010: Objective 10.4.4: To be proactive in preventing the introduction of,

and/or mitigating the spread and impacts of disease on any susceptible host species and on park ecosystems.



### What does the current plan say?



To read the detail relevant to this section in the [current RPMP](#), see:

Section 10 – Natural settings

Section 11 – Cultural heritage settings

Section 17 – Individual parks

### Kōrerotia ōu whakaaro / Have your say

Remember you can provide comments online on [AK Have Your Say](#).

We mention the questions we ask in AK Have Your Say throughout this document and pose additional questions to help prompt your thinking.

#### Question in the AK Have Your Say questionnaire:

**Thinking about all regional parks, what do you love about them and want to see protected or maintained?**

To think about when answering this question:

- What do you value about regional parks?
- How can we help protect what you value about regional parks?
- How do you think parks management should balance protection and recreation outcomes?
- What level of trade-off is acceptable between protection and visitor opportunities?

## 4 Te panoni āhuarangi me ngā papa whenua ā-rohe / Climate change and regional parks<sup>9</sup>



Tāmaki Makaurau / Auckland is in a climate emergency. We have less than a decade to make the major changes needed to avoid the worst impacts of climate change.

Auckland Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and after consultation has adopted a framework for climate action – Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan. This plan aims to reduce our region's

greenhouse gas emissions to be in line with a 1.5°C temperature increase while ensuring we are prepared for the effects of climate change.

While regional parks will be negatively affected by climate change, they also offer opportunities to offset and reduce Auckland's emissions.

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<sup>9</sup> The figures quoted in this section relating to emissions and sequestration rates are the best known at the time of writing. The numbers are approximate and based on assumptions and may alter slightly as assumptions change over time. They should be read as indicative at this point.

## How regional parks will be negatively affected

The regional park network's 225km of coastline will be affected by rising sea levels. Even in the next decade, popular beaches, ancient heritage sites, fragile sand dunes and coastal wetlands may be damaged. The map on the next page illustrates that with one metre of sea level rise at Wenderholm Regional Park most of the recreational area and beach will be under water.

Our regional parks are home to some of the most critically endangered regional ecosystems<sup>10</sup> that will be threatened by sea-level rise. Some areas will become submerged, meaning the plants and wildlife in those locations will need room to "retreat" further inland or be lost forever.

Sea level rise is also the greatest threat to many important cultural and historic heritage sites in regional parks, as most of Māori and European settlement occurred near the coast.

Auckland is predicted to have changing rainfall patterns with drier springs and wetter autumns, and more severe cyclones and rainfall events<sup>11</sup>. In general, the "forecast" is for fewer rainfall days, drier soils, and more intense storms.

These changes mean increased fire risk, more stress natural ecosystems, and the death of more vulnerable plants and wildlife in our regional parks. They will also increase challenges for farming and revegetation.

Extreme storm events could be costly. The council and community may face difficult decisions about protection, adaptation, retreat or no action where there's damage to heritage sites, trees, buildings, paths and roads.

## Responding to the climate emergency

Preparing for change is one part of our response. For regional parks, this means identifying at-risk areas and planning ahead.

Anything built will need to be located outside the sea-level rise danger zone, while natural ecosystems will need have room to move and to retreat inland in response to sea-level rise and other pressures.

Farm management, fire management, and plant selection for new planting areas will all need to adapt. Landscape-scale restoration programmes can provide ecological corridors that will enable indigenous species to move and adapt to changing conditions.

Reducing emissions and sequestering (storing) carbon is the other part of our response. As an organisation we've adopted a target to reduce emissions from our own activities by 50 per cent by 2030. Regional parks can make a contribution to this reduction, particularly by storing carbon in vegetation. We can also reduce emissions associated with regional parks<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> For more information, see [Climate Change Risk Assessment for Terrestrial Species and Ecosystems in the Auckland Region](#). Auckland Council Technical Report 2019/014.

<sup>11</sup> For more information, see [Climate Change Risks in Auckland](#). Auckland Council Technical Report 2019/019.

<sup>12</sup> Looking across all of Auckland Council's activities, we intend to achieve a 50 per cent reduction by 2030 of our own emissions primarily through reducing energy emissions (including from the vehicle fleet), phasing out refrigerants (used in council buildings) and tree planting

for offsets. We are not currently targeting an emission reduction from farming. We don't need to plant trees to offset emissions to meet the 50 per cent target. However, we will probably need offsets to meet the government's zero carbon targets for 2050 and to do this we need to start planting now. So (looking across all council-owned land, including potentially regional parks) we are targeting an additional 200ha of indigenous planting over the next 10 years, in large enough blocks that can be entered as permanent forest in the Emissions Trading Scheme (ETS), which is the standard for voluntary offsets.







## The regional parks climate footprint

Greenhouse gas emissions include carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), nitrous oxide and methane. Many human activities create emissions that have led to a global increase in these gases in the atmosphere. The gases trap in the sun's heat, and the increasing greenhouse gas concentration in the atmosphere is causing the global climate to change. The infographic on the next page illustrates the climate footprint of our regional parks.



## Storing carbon on parks

Regional parks are a significant “carbon sink” as plants capture and store carbon as they grow. Good management and more planting means we can increase that carbon sink volume.

### What we're doing

Keeping forests healthy through ongoing pest animal control and fencing are effective ways to help maintain and increase carbon storage.

Planting out grass with trees and shrubs increases carbon capture. We have replanted 206ha over the past 10 years and we plan to continue at least at this rate.

Measuring how much carbon is stored in different natural ecosystems is challenging and research continues in this area. Tree survival rates need to be monitored to improve our understanding of how much carbon is being stored.

### What else could we do?

Our planned rate of revegetation could be increased, although there are trade-offs to consider. In many areas, open farmed landscapes are highly valued for their broad landscape views, countryside character and recreational opportunities. Farmed areas also provide visitors close encounters with farm animals and the opportunity to see farming in action.

We could plant faster-growing exotic trees to capture more carbon more quickly than slower-growing indigenous species. However, the current RPMP strongly prefers planting of indigenous species because regional parks are important areas for protecting, restoring and enhancing Auckland's unique indigenous biodiversity.

# REGIONAL PARKS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

**250,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>** is captured and stored by forests on regional parks each year (over 35,000 hectares)

Fast-growing exotic trees store CO<sub>2</sub> **5x faster** than native trees

Nice planting!

Burpl Pardon!

About **20 hectares** is planted in native trees and shrubs each year

Farming on **1500 hectares** of regional parks emits about **5600 tonnes** of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent greenhouse gases each year

**1.1 million** visiting vehicles emit about **17,000 tonnes** of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent each year (assuming an average 30km round trip per vehicle)

Climate change will lead to more **droughts and storms**. The **sea level will rise**, covering beaches and coastal areas

No beach! No!



## Reducing agricultural emissions from farming operations

### What we're doing

We farm sheep and cattle on approximately 1500ha of land across 20 regional parks.

Farming is one of the council's larger sources of our own carbon emissions – approximately 23 per cent of the council's emissions come from our farming operations<sup>13</sup>. Nearly 80 per cent of these emissions come from animals' digestive systems producing methane. Most of the remainder comes from fertiliser use. Less than 2 per cent comes from farm operations such as diesel use.

Under the current RPMP farmed areas are valued as heritage areas in their own right. Many park visitors enjoy walking among the animals and the open grassed vistas, particularly on iconic coastal headlands.

The revenue helps fund other council activities.

The council aims to be a sustainable role-model for the farming sector. Farm emissions can be steadily reduced by following best practice and the latest in farm management science. Land less suitable for agriculture is being progressively retired and planted in shrubs and trees.

### What else could we do?

The existing Ambury Farm Experience Centre could be expanded to demonstrate regenerative agricultural practice, connecting Aucklanders with where food comes from and engaging them on topics including sustainable consumption, healthy and sustainable diets and sustainable living.



**Auckland Council's farming and regional parks team took out four awards at the 2020 Balance Farm Environment Awards: the soil management, water quality enhancement, livestock farm and climate stewardship awards**

<sup>13</sup> According to Auckland Council's 2017-2018 greenhouse gas emissions inventory, parks and farms make up 23% of the council's total emissions footprint.

Buildings contribute another 63% to this, where buildings on parks are counted.



**Ambury Regional Park in Māngere is a drawcard for visitors ranging from school children to tourists who come to experience seeing farm animals up close. Ambury Farm Day is one of the biggest events held on regional parks, drawing around 30,000 people.**

**The Ambury Farm Experience Centre provides hands on curriculum-based learning experiences for more than 5000 students each year, growing young people's connection to nature and inspiring action for a sustainable future.**



## Reducing visitor travel emissions

Remote locations often mean that private vehicles are the easiest or the only way to access many regional parks. Visitors make more than an estimated 1.1 million vehicle trips to parks each year. Assuming an average round trip is 30km, these trips emit approximately 17,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent each year.

### What we're planning

Building walk and cycle trails between communities and regional parks will help reduce these emissions and provide a safe and enjoyable way for more Aucklanders to access regional parks without using a private vehicle. We are working on a 120km cycle trail between Mangawhai and Puhoi, with connections to Te Ārai, Pakiri, Tāwharanui, Mahurangi, Te Muri and Wenderholm Regional Parks. Another cycle trail being planned in the south will connect the Hūnua Ranges to the existing Hauraki Rail Trail.

### What else could we do?

There are other ways (not covered in the current RPMP) which could reduce the carbon footprint associated with private vehicle trips to regional parks, including:

- electric vehicle charging stations
- reserving car parks for electric vehicles
- paid parking where public transport is available
- online information for visitors to check how busy a carpark is before they set out
- a voluntary carbon offset scheme for park visitors
- car-free days for regional parks where many visitors come from nearby areas.

We are interested to hear your views on how visitor emissions could be reduced.



## Sustainable management of parks

### What we're doing / planning to do

The council aims to be a leader in sustainable management of regional parks. This includes having a zero-waste policy and exploring onsite energy generation such as solar panels on buildings.

Our zero-waste policy means every visitor is asked to take home their rubbish and recycling. All events in regional parks must be zero-waste.

Watercare manages critical water infrastructure based on regional parks. Much of our water supply comes from the Waitākere Ranges and Hūnua Ranges Regional Parks. These important water

reservoirs are sustained by the surrounding forested parklands.

Under Te Tāruke-ā-Tāwhiri: Auckland's Climate Plan, we plan to adopt standards for sustainability across all built assets, including third party certification for major projects. Future buildings and structures on regional parks are expected to meet these standards.

### What else could we do?

Our climate plan encourages the development of small and large-scale renewable electricity generation within our region to help meet our growing electricity demand.

### What does the current plan say?



To read the detail relevant to this section in the [current RPMP](#), see:

- Section 8 – Sustainable management
- Section 12 – Farmed settings

### Question in the [AK Have Your Say](#) questionnaire:

**Regional parks will play a role in offsetting and reducing carbon emissions by 50% by 2030. How do you think regional parks should contribute to combating climate change?**

To think about when answering this question:

- Thinking about our plans to plant another 200ha in regional parks – should we plant more trees, or plant less?
- Should we plant exotic trees to store carbon more quickly?
- What do you value about farming on regional parks?
- How could visitors reduce their vehicle emissions when travelling to parks?

## 5 Penapena wheako manuhiri / Managing visitor experiences



A game of cricket at Cornwallis Beach, Waitākere Ranges

Regional parks are cherished by Aucklanders and visitors who enjoy the connection to nature, outdoor recreation, and community.

### Experiences in different parks

Some regional parks provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy large, natural spaces. Many people come to explore and exercise, to enjoy the views and access to the coast, to picnic, or relax alone or with friends and family. Some parks are accessible to people with varying abilities, while others offer more challenging terrain.

Each regional park offers a unique experience. Different recreational, learning and volunteer opportunities are available in different places across the network. Dogs are allowed in parts of some parks, as defined within the [Dog Management Bylaw 2019](#) and the council's [Policy on Dogs](#). Some activities such as mountain-biking or horse-riding are

catered for in places where there is an appropriate space or suitable paths.

The management plan defines which activities can occur within each park, based on the natural and heritage values being protected and on the recreational, learning and volunteer activities unique to that park.



Horseriding at Muriwai



## Walking is a favourite activity

Auckland's regional parks provide key leisure opportunities for people in native forest, coastal and farmed settings, removed from the sights and sounds of the city. Our regional parks are unique in terms of the scale and range of walking, tramping and running opportunities.

Track systems, managed picnic areas and camping sites enable people to enjoy and experience the parks.

While most of the tracks are day walks, multi-day walks are available with stops in back-country campgrounds in the Hūnua Ranges and Waitākere Ranges. However, a number of tracks in the Waitākere and Hūnua Ranges (about a third of the total regional parks track network) are closed and not included in the current five-year track upgrade programme for reopening due to kauri dieback disease. Other sections are planned to be upgraded and reopened over the coming years.



## Learning about nature

We deliver 59 programmes on regional parks to approximately 25,000 children each year. These provide “learning through experience” opportunities for all ages. These programmes connect children to nature and help raise young people’s awareness, knowledge and understanding of natural, historic and cultural values on regional parks and their sustainable management.

Outdoor learning provides an opportunity for children to directly experience environmental issues and inspires them to make a difference.

Some examples of the topics covered in the programmes include:

- shorebird migration paths from New Zealand
- coastal creatures that live on the shore
- forest habitats and how all forest dwellers are interconnected
- biological impacts of pest control and how ecosystems adapt.

## Auckland is growing and changing

Auckland will look very different in 30 years.

Our population is expected to grow from 1.66 million people today to 2.4 million over the next 30 years. An extra 720,000 people would need 313,000 more dwellings, and room for an extra 263,000 jobs<sup>14</sup>.

Growth is expected to be concentrated in and around multiple centres. Auckland will have four major centres – today’s city centre and Albany in the north, Westgate in the north-west and Manukau in the south. Each centre will have businesses and jobs, services and homes. Warkworth and Pukekohe will be rural centres.

Many existing urban areas will be redeveloped to provide more housing. Also, around 15,000 hectares of rural land and coastal areas could accommodate 137,000 homes and 67,000 jobs over the next 30 years.



## Green space will be even more important

As the city grows, our regional parks will become even more important as people seek time out from busy urban living. In some places the city will be growing up around some regional parks. It will be more challenging to manage the parks so that their natural and heritage values are not degraded by surrounding development and increasing visitor numbers.

The direction we set in the next 10-year RPMP will influence how the parks respond to increasing numbers of visitors, and to changing visitor expectations. We want to know what kind of changes, if any, you think should occur to regional parks.

**Next page: Projected urban development areas within Auckland**



### Campground at Wenderholm

<sup>14</sup> Auckland Plan 2050, pages 13 and 202. The figures are estimates and are in the process of being updated. Available at: <https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-plans->

[strategies/auckland-plan/about-the-auckland-plan/docsprintdocuments/auckland-plan-2050-print-document.pdf](https://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/plans-projects-policies-reports-bylaws/our-plans-)





## Responding to changing and diverse visitor needs

Even today our regional parks are coming under increased pressure from population growth and urban development. Visitor numbers are growing. Visitors are more diverse and have changing expectations about how they want to use parks and the experiences they offer.

One challenge we have is to understand what changes would help the widest range of people to enjoy the parks as possible. For example, some visitors prefer to use charcoal fires for family barbecues, but these areas are not set up to manage the fire risk so charcoal fires are not permitted. However, with appropriate fire management protection, charcoal fires could be provided in some parks.

New technologies, such as e-bikes, drones and amplified sound systems along with water-based activities such as stand up

paddle boards, are changing the way people want to use parks for recreational activities. Some of these activities can have adverse impacts on other park users.

Many visitors expect to have mobile phone connectivity, even in more remote locations. They plan their regional park trip by seeking digital information and want to access their phones when on-site. Digital communications can also enhance the visitor experience by providing information about parks and by enabling people to report any issues they encounter in real time.

However, these different activities or services would come at a cost and other people may appreciate the ability to be “off grid” to enjoy the peace and quiet. Our challenge is to understand what changes can be made to regional parks to enable as wide a range of people as possible to enjoy them.



**Splore festival at Tāpapakanga Regional Park attracts thousands of music-lovers each summer**

## Managing popular demand

Some parks are particularly popular at peak summer times. Muriwai, Long Bay, Cornwallis and Wenderholm can become very congested. People may not know about parks that are less congested or have elements that match their lifestyles.

There is high demand for park accommodation which range from basic campgrounds to bach stays, especially over summer. While some people are happy with basic accommodation, others want higher quality facilities.

Many events held on regional parks are very popular, such as Ambury Farm Day, the Ōmana Childrens Day, the Splore festival at Tāpapakanga, trail running, and Music and Movies in Parks.

Planting days are held in many parks, where volunteers can come along and help with restoration projects.

The current RPMP categorises visitor activities based on the kind of impact they are expected to have on other activities and on the values that are being protected. In the RPMP, different activities are either permitted, controlled, discretionary, or prohibited, in different places.



## Should the range of experiences in regional parks be expanded or reduced?

Everyone has free entry to all regional parks.

The current RPMP allows for charges where a special level of service or experience is provided, such as exclusive use for a private event, filming, or where commercial guides offer services such as sight-seeing tours. Concessions or licences are required for commercial and exclusive-use activities.

### What could we do?

We invite your views on whether new types of activities, paid or free, could be allowed or provided in our regional parks.

We also invite your views on whether we should aim to gather more revenue through activities on parks.

For example, regional parks could host<sup>15</sup>:

- more large-scale events
- destination revenue-generating experiences (such as a treetop walkway, a zipline adventure down a steep valley, with an entry charge)
- a broader range of accommodation.

Alternatively, the range of activities could be reduced in some parks; for example, to maintain quiet and naturalness.

<sup>15</sup> These examples are not being proposed. They are provided to prompt your thinking.



### What does the current plan say?



To read the detail relevant to this section in the [current RPMP](#), see:

- Section 13 – Recreation use and management.
- Section 17 – Chapters on specific parks.

We want to hear your ideas about new activities and experiences, any problems you have experienced in regional parks, and information or facilities that would improve your visit.

### Questions in the [AK Have Your Say](#) questionnaire:

**Thinking about all regional parks, what changes could be made to better serve visitors?**

**What concerns do you have about their use?**

**What would you like to be able to do on regional parks?**

To think about when answering these questions:

- How can regional parks manage higher visitor numbers and respond to visitor needs as the city continues to grow?
- Do you see any issues or conflicts between visitor activities on regional parks... and do you have any solutions?
- Should we develop new directions for our regional parks?
- Do we need to offer more in our regional parks, from leisure to accommodation?
- Would you prefer a wider range of experiences or less developed regional parks?
- Should we keep free access to regional parks?
- How could regional parks generate income to help pay their way?

## 6 Ētahi atu kaupapa hei whāngai i ōu whakaaro/ Some other topics to prompt your thinking

We have identified some other park-based services and activities to prompt your thinking. You can provide suggestions and ideas relating to these or any other areas you think relevant.

### Park services and features

- Digital information
- Safety and preventing injuries
- Security cameras
- Toilets
- Waste management
- Wifi on parks
- Shade
- Accessibility
- Events
- Carparks, EV charging
- Cycle trails linking parks
- Te Araroa Trail
- Greenways
- Walking tracks
- Access to remote areas
- Campgrounds and baches
- Concessions and leases
- Commercial activities
- Plaques and memorials
- Partnering
- Farm and nature education
- Archaeology
- Dark skies
- Outstanding natural features
- Connectivity to adjacent parkland
- Māra hūpara (traditional playground)

### Visitor activities

- Smokefree: vaping and marijuana
- Paragliding and hang-gliding
- Drones
- Metal detectors
- Group sizes
- Naturism
- Graffiti
- Nature play
- Bad behaviour
- Wilderness experience
- Mountain-biking
- Horse-riding
- Planting trees
- Volunteering on parks
- Music and noise on parks
- E-bikes and scooters
- Vehicles on beaches
- Motorised vehicles
- Scattering of ashes



## 7 Ngā tohuaro mā ētahi whenua tautuhi / Directions for particular parks

The current RPMP has a chapter for each regional park that sets out the values and management focus for that park. It explains what activities are appropriate in various parts of the park, and what heritage features, landscapes, and natural environments need special protection.

We want your ideas and suggestions for the regional parks that you know well. In AK Have Your Say you can provide ideas for as many parks as you want. You can also drop pins on a map in our Social Pinpoint site and place a comment against a specific location.

These AK Have Your Say questions are to prompt your thinking about any regional park that you would like to comment on specifically:

**What do you love about the park that you want to keep the same?**

**What issues need to be addressed?**

**What would you like to see more of at the park?**

**What new opportunities do you see for the park?**

### Land to be amalgamated into adjacent regional parks<sup>16</sup>

Since a review in 2013, some local parks have been managed as part of the nearby regional park – these are listed in the table below. You can also comment on these areas when you comment on these regional parks.

Regional park	Land to be amalgamated into adjacent regional park
Long Bay	Piripiri Park
Mahurangi	Scott Point Reserve, Te Kapa Peninsula
Muriwai	Oaia Reserve, Muriwai
Te Ārai	Te Ārai Reserve
Waitākere Ranges	Mārama Plantation Reserve, Little Huia
	Douglas Scenic Reserve
	Rāroa Park
	Parkland surrounding Waitākere Quarry Scenic Reserve
	Karekare Reserve
	Lone Kauri Road – 3 reserves
	South Piha Plantation Reserve
	Lake Wainamu Scenic Reserve
	Tasman View Esplanade
	Lake Wainamu Walkway (easement over lake edge only)
Waitoru Reserve, Bethells Rd	

<sup>16</sup> As listed in the Auckland Council 10-year Budget 2018-2028, [Volume 2 of 3](#), pp.224-225

## Te Ārai Regional Park extensions

Te Ārai Regional Park initially covered the land at Te Ārai Point. In 2017, land to the north of the point was added into the park, bringing it to its current 297ha. An additional 180ha to the south of Te Ārai Point may come into the park in the future.

In late 2017, we consulted on the management and inclusion of the new parkland to the north and potentially to the south of Te Ārai Point into Te Ārai Regional Park. The additional land was to be added through a variation to the 2010 RPMP. Consultation resulted in 181 submissions.

Information from those submissions is being brought into this review. You can view the 2017 background paper on the Te Ārai

variation and our summary of the submissions in the [supporting information](#) for this consultation.

The current RPMP manages Te Ārai Point as a Class 1 park (conservation focus). With the potential inclusion of the southern area, we propose the whole park would become Class 2 (mixed conservation and recreation focus) with a special management zone in the northern area to recognise its conservation values.

We will review all comments provided during the 2017 consultation process. You do not need to restate your earlier suggestions, but please provide additional comments if you have them.

### New additions to the park network

Three regional parks and an extension to an existing regional park will be added into the plan through this review. They are:

- Glenfern Sanctuary on Aotea / Great Barrier Island
- Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill
- Motukorea / Browns Island
- Mahurangi East extension.

In this section we describe each park or park extension and propose a park class and management focus for the next 10 years. We welcome your feedback on the proposed focus and your suggestions for these parks.



## Glenfern Sanctuary

Parkland	Proposed management direction and use
Glenfern Sanctuary	Class 2: Conservation and ecological restoration, education opportunity for visitors

Glenfern Sanctuary is a coastal property of 83ha at Port Fitzroy harbour on Aotea / Great Barrier Island’s west coast. It is located on the Kōtuku Peninsula with four other properties: the 80ha Kōtuku Point Scenic Reserve managed by the Department of Conservation, the Orama Christian Trust, and two private landowners.

The Sanctuary is bordered on the east by a predator-proof fence installed in 2008. This extends northwards across the whole peninsula to create the Kōtuku Peninsula Sanctuary. Glenfern is the gateway to the peninsula and the operational base for pest control, monitoring and habitat restoration for the Kōtuku Peninsula Sanctuary.

### History

Glenfern Sanctuary was founded by former owner and conservationist the late Tony Bouzaid. Glenfern Sanctuary was purchased

by Auckland Council in 2016 with the support of the Department of Conservation and Foundation North. It is managed locally by the Glenfern Sanctuary Trust on our behalf. Read more online:

<https://www.glenfern.org.nz/about>

### Park values

The Sanctuary and wider Kōtuku Peninsula are recognised as having significant ecological values. This includes sensitive areas dominated by coastal broadleaf and broadleaf-podocarp forest, They are also home to threatened birds and reptiles such as pāteke / brown teal, kākā, kereru, takoketai / black petrels, tītī / Cook petrels, and niho taniwha / chevron skink.

The area has cultural significance for Ngāti Rehua Ngātiwai ki Aotea. The Sanctuary includes an archaeological site (stonefields).



**Glenfern Sanctuary looking down to the harbour**



LOCATION MAP



LEGEND

- Regional park - grass/open
- Surrounding land
- Department of Conservation land
- Regional park - bush
- Existing Buildings
- Tracks
- Predator proof fence

### Existing services

The park is open daily to the public. It offers walking tracks through remnant and regenerating bush, guided tours on the history of the sanctuary and its conservation activities, extensive bird life, and sweeping views of the Hauraki Gulf.

It offers accommodation and visitor facilities for school groups, students, volunteers and the public.

### Potential services

At the time of purchase, we intended the sanctuary to be self-funding over time. A proposal to develop an island-based environmental education centre has been suggested and a feasibility study completed in 2018 confirmed Glenfern Sanctuary as the preferred location.

Glenfern is ideally positioned to host an environmental education and sustainability centre. It has links to Hillary outdoors programmes that are delivered on an adjacent property and is near to the Motairehe and Kawa marae and to Department of Conservation land.

The centre could provide a unique off-grid island-based education opportunity for tertiary and school students and would encourage visitors to the island.

Further work is required to develop a business case for this proposal, including investigating funding models, benefits to the local community, constraints and risks.

### Proposed management focus

We propose to manage Glenfern Sanctuary as a Class 2 park as it has both important conservation features and recreation and education services.

A chapter on the Glenfern Sanctuary is likely to focus on the following matters:

- mana whenua interests and values
- improving biosecurity and biodiversity through pest management and conservation programmes
- developing an environmental education and sustainability centre
- increasing awareness and promoting Glenfern to visitors to Aotea/Great Barrier
- developing partnerships to support the activation and funding of park operations.

#### Questions to prompt your comments and suggestions:

- What are the priorities for Glenfern Sanctuary?
- What do you think about the proposal to create an environmental education centre at Glenfern Sanctuary?
- Do you have any other suggestions for the use of Glenfern Sanctuary as a regional park?



## Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill

Parkland	Proposed management direction and use
Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill	Class 2: Protect natural and cultural heritage features and sites of significance; revegetation of site; passive recreation.

Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill is the largest non-volcanic hill in the Auckland area. This 48ha regional park is located in the middle of an urban area between Sylvia Park Road and Great South Road, adjacent to the Southern Motorway.

The summit of Mutukaroa rises steeply to 61m from the southwest to the ridge and is a dominant landscape feature. It offers panoramic views across the isthmus and visual respite from the surrounding industrial landscape of the Penrose-Westfield area. From the hill, visitors have views of the surrounding volcanic cones and the Manukau and Waitematā Harbours.

### Park values

It has significant and extensive cultural, historic and landscape values. It was the largest undefended pre-European Māori settlement in the Auckland area. It contains many sites of significance to Māori, and important archaeological sites, including extensive areas of pits and terraces, middens, palisade fortifications and adze manufacturing areas. The site also contains remnants of early European farming activities.

Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill is scheduled for protection as an Outstanding Natural Feature in the Auckland Unitary Plan for its geological and landform values. It is one of the least modified sandstone ridge complexes remaining in Auckland. Ridges like it are some of the most common landforms

beneath urban Auckland, but unmodified and undeveloped examples are rare.

Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill also includes the best inland exposure of rhyolitic tuff in Auckland. This volcanic material originated from volcanic eruptions hundreds of kilometres away in the central North Island.

### History

Mutukaroa means “the end of a long / lengthy battle”. It offered strategic access between the Manukau and Waitematā Harbours. Shellfish beds, spring water and rich soils provided resources for early Māori villagers and later European settlers.

From 1960 to 1993 the land changed hands several times until the Auckland Regional Council and Parks Wilderness Trust lobbied for its protection as parkland. In 1993, a management trust was formed and a 10-year lease of the Crown portion was issued.

A management plan for the park was prepared in 2001 by the Auckland Regional Council, Auckland City Council and the other parties involved in the Mutukaroa Management Trust.

The focus of the 2001 management plan for Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill was:

- Preserve and protect the archaeological features and sites of historic significance, the distinctive landforms and landscape integrity, and enhance the natural values of the park.
- Establish, manage and maintain the vegetation within the park and restore the

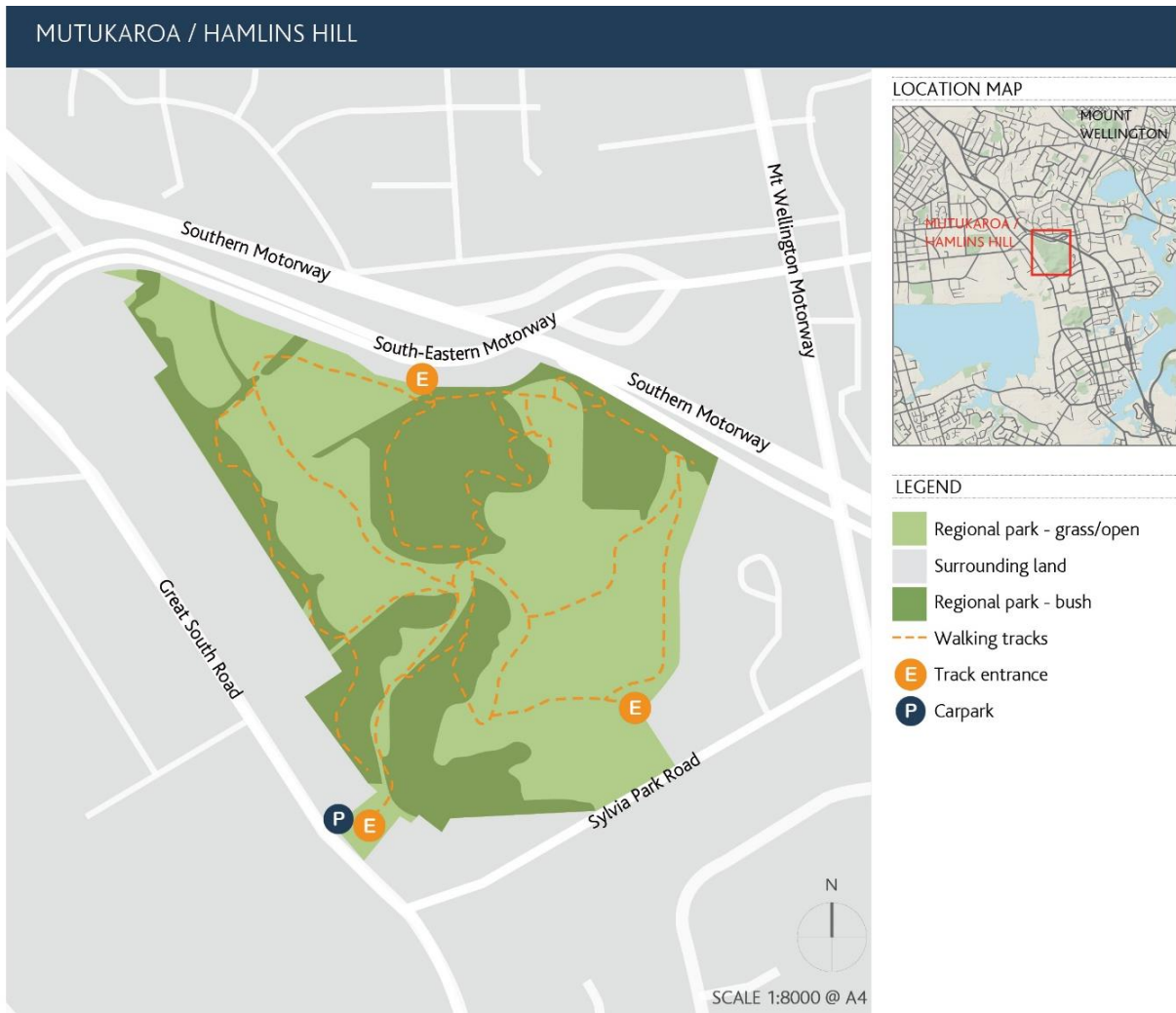
natural character of the environment by enhancing ecological habitats and wildlife and visual amenity.

- Provide for informal, casual and unstructured recreational use of the parkland in ways that were compatible with its cultural heritage and landscape values.
- Use grazing for pastoral management of the parkland while ensuring this does not adversely affect the historic cultural and landscape values of the land.

In 2004, a concept plan was prepared, but not implemented. Some of its priority actions included developing the main entrance to the park, establishing walking tracks and viewing platforms, and developing a mountain bike trail around the perimeter of the park.

In 2009, the four iwi representative organisations on the management trust representing Ngāti Paoa, Ngāti Whātua, Ngai Tai, and Waikato-Tainui, jointly prepared An Iwi Proposal for Mutukaroa, setting out their shared aspirations for the regional park.

- Afford our young people skills training in nursery, conservation, site protection, waahi tapu care, and environmental appreciation.
- Long-term work opportunities as guides, visitor centre positions, hospitality and craft outlet training and work.
- Provide a significant memorial on the site reflective of each iwi.
- Encourage full participation by iwi to foster manaakitanga, kaitiakitanga, and whanaungatanga.



## Current situation

Today, the park is managed by Auckland Council as a regional park. The council continues to own some parts while other parts are owned by the Crown are subject to Treaty settlement processes that provide statutory acknowledgements to mana whenua.

Most of the land is open pasture and is farmed. Extensive areas on the lower slopes and gully areas have progressively been replanted in native species by volunteers.

Visitors enjoy recreational activities such as casual walking, jogging, picnics, sightseeing, dog exercising, cycling, mountain biking, children's play and kite flying.

## Proposed management focus

We propose to manage Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill as a Class 2 park as it has a mix of important natural and cultural heritage features and recreation services.

A chapter on Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill is likely to focus on the following matters:

- mana whenua interests and values
- protection of the archaeological features and sites of historic significance
- protection and management of existing native vegetation
- protection of significant geological and landform values
- recreation activities
- partnering opportunities
- operational matters.

### Questions to prompt your comments and suggestions:

- What should the priorities be for Mutukaroa / Hamlins Hill?
- How would you like the heritage features of the site protected and promoted?
- What changes, if any, would you like to see to the recreational opportunities?





## Motukorea / Browns Island

Parkland	Proposed management direction and use
Motukorea / Browns Island	Class 1: Preserve volcanic landforms, historic and cultural sites, continue day trip recreation

Motukorea / Browns Island lies within the inner Hauraki Gulf, to the south of Rangitoto and west of Motuihe Island / Te Motu-a-Ihenga.

### Park values

This 60ha island is one of the least modified and best-preserved volcanic cones in the Auckland volcanic field. It was created in a series of eruptions around 24,000 years ago. It is scheduled for protection as an Outstanding Natural Feature in the Auckland Unitary Plan for its geological and landform values.

The island is largely covered by grass but the rare coastal herb, *Euphorbia glauca*, grows on its coast and significant native vegetation, including pōhutukawa, remains in the northern cliffs. The island is currently managed to remain free of mammalian pests.

Motukorea / Browns Island is of great significance to mana whenua. Its near-intact historic landscape includes more than 65 sites of significance to Māori. These represent a small example of the extensive settlements of the hapū of the Tainui waka that once had extensive lands on the volcanic area of the Tāmaki isthmus.

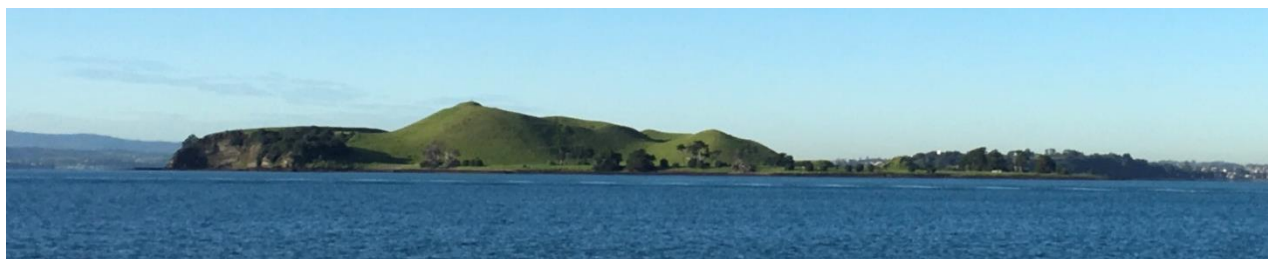
### Current services

Visitors enjoy the island for its outstanding landscape, historic and cultural values and open space, and are attracted by its natural quietness. Day visitors enjoy walking and picnicking and these activities are supported by limited basic facilities. The island can only be accessed by small watercraft landing on the foreshore.

### History

The island was managed by the Department of Conservation (DoC) on behalf of Auckland Council under a management agreement. In 2014 the island was identified for inclusion in a jointly developed reserve management plan between DoC and the 13 iwi of Tāmaki Makaurau under the Ngā Tūpuna Maunga Collective Redress Settlement Act, providing the island stayed under DoC administration. Instead, in 2017, the administration and management responsibilities for the island moved back to Auckland Council.

The island was formally established as a regional park in 2018. Ngā Tūpuna Taonga o Tāmaki Makaurau Authority, and in particular Ngāti Tamaterā, retain a strong interest in its management and future direction.





LOCATION MAP



LEGEND

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Regional park - grass/open |  Buildings (Toilets) |
|  Regional park - bush       |  Volcanic cone       |
|  Regional park - coastal    |  Tracks              |

### Proposed management focus

We propose to manage Motukorea / Browns Island as a Class 1 park to prioritise protection of its natural and heritage features, as due to its remote location, visitor numbers are low and services are limited.

A chapter on Motukorea / Browns Island is likely to focus on the following matters:

- mana whenua interests and values
- protection and management of threatened and rare bird species
- pest plant and animal control
- re-vegetation and long-term management of the coastline
- protection of significant geological and landform values

- beach access and visitor facilities e.g. toilets
- recreation activities
- partnerships
- operational matters such as maintenance requirements, water supply and fire control.

#### Questions to prompt your comments and suggestions:

- What should the priorities be for Motukorea / Browns Island?
- Do you have any other suggestions or ideas for the use or management of Motukorea / Browns Island?





## Mahurangi East extension

Parkland	Proposed management direction and use
Mahurangi East extension	Class 2: Provide access for recreational opportunities, bach stay and back-to-basics camping opportunities; preserve historic heritage

In 2020, with generous financial support from the John Turnbull and Margaret Turnbull Trusts, Auckland Council purchased 95ha of land adjacent to Mahurangi Regional Park which we refer to as the Mahurangi East extension.

The name Mahurangi covers the large harbour, and the existing Mahurangi Regional Park is spread across several headlands and peninsulas around it.



### Park values

The Mahurangi East extension land is identified in the Auckland Unitary Plan as an outstanding natural landscape with outstanding natural features. It contains two pā sites and six middens of significance to mana whenua.

### Current situation and potential services

The land is in pasture with areas of trees and shrubs. The land is not yet open to the public and may continue to be farmed in the medium term until funding becomes available to develop access and basic amenities.

Some of the pasture could be reforested over time, leaving other areas open for recreational activities, enabling visitors to enjoy the spectacular views.

Recreational activities could include picnicking, camping, swimming and kayaking. An existing house has the potential to be bach accommodation and a camping site could be sited on flat ground near the north-facing bay.

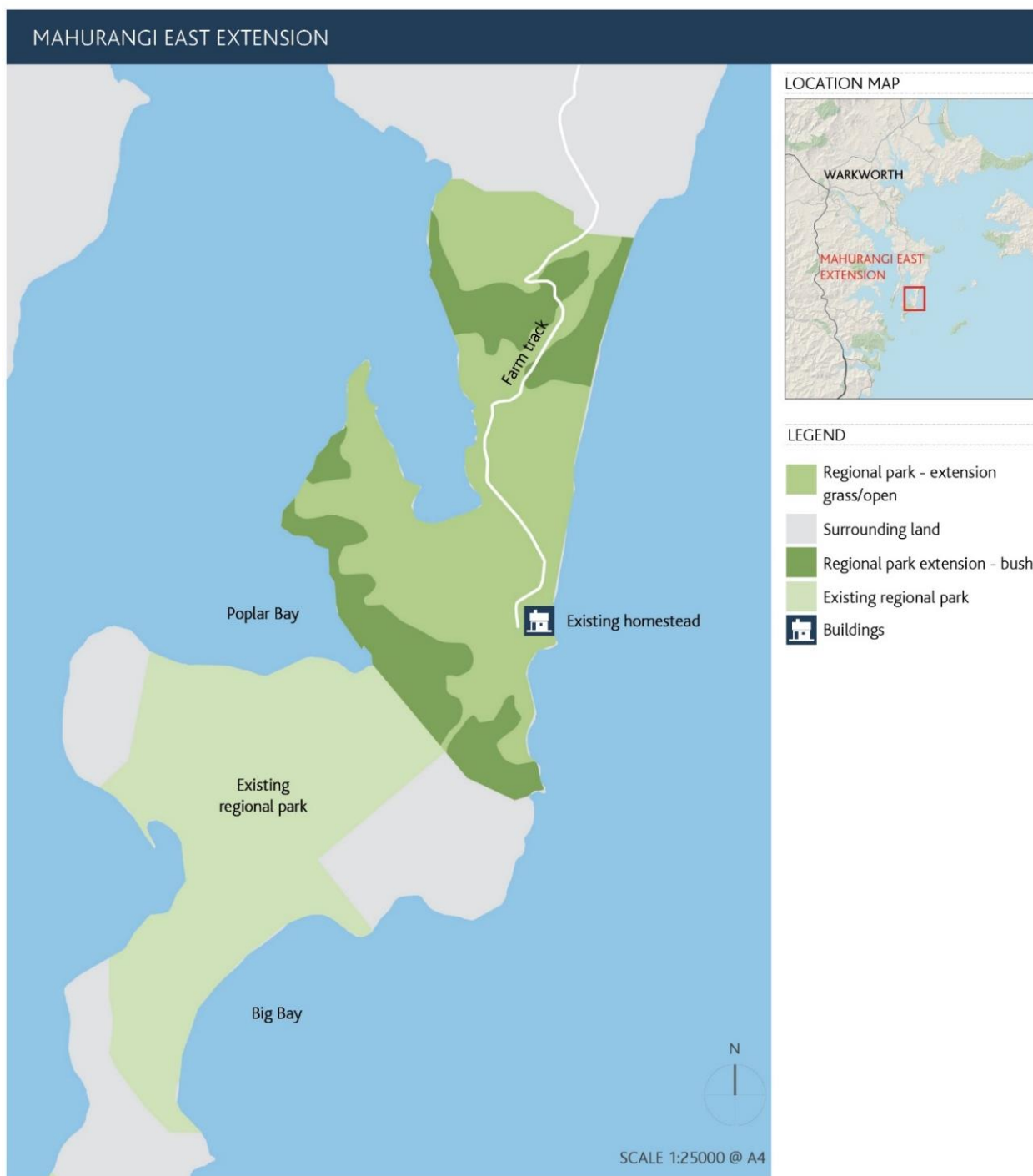
With the purchase, we gained a vehicle easement to obtain access over private land from Martins Bay in the north. This will eventually enable road access through the extension to the existing east part of Mahurangi Regional Park which is currently only accessible by sea.

### Proposed management focus

We propose to bring this extension into the existing Mahurangi Regional Park, which is a Class 2 park in recognition of both its outstanding natural features and its recreation services.

The section of the next RPMP on the Mahurangi East extension is likely to focus on the following matters:

- mana whenua interests and values
- developing road access into the existing parkland
- pest plant and animal control
- re-vegetation and long-term management of the coastline
- beach access and visitor facilities
- recreation activities
- partnerships and operational matters.



**Questions to prompt your comments and suggestions:**

- What should the priorities be for the Mahurangi East extension?
- What recreational activities would you like to see provided at Mahurangi East extension?

## **Kōrerotia ōu whakairo**

### **Have your say**

Please provide us with your suggestions for  
the Regional Parks Management Plan review

by

**5pm, Monday 12 October 2020**

**Go to: [AK Have Your Say](#)**



## APPENDIX: Parks classification criteria<sup>17</sup>

	<b>Class I NATURAL</b>	<b>Class II</b>	<b>Class III RECREATION</b>
<b>Visitor experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Generally, a wilderness experience in a predominantly natural landscape.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A range of visitor experiences, with a mix of natural environments and limited active and social recreation experiences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active recreation and large group activities while protecting the unique natural and cultural values of the park.</li> </ul>
<b>Management focus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on protection of the natural and cultural environments and scenic landscapes, while providing for recreation opportunities where appropriate.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision for recreation opportunities balanced with sustainable management of natural and cultural environments and scenic landscapes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on providing recreation opportunities while protecting significant natural and cultural environments and scenic landscapes.</li> </ul>
<b>Recreation activities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on informal recreation activities requiring little infrastructure and few facilities, such as tramping, walking, picnicking and remote camping.</li> <li>Limited group activities and events.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision for informal recreation outside main arrival areas.</li> <li>The opportunity for more structured recreation is generally limited to main arrival area, developed picnic areas and vehicle accessible campgrounds.</li> <li>Moderate group activity and events are facilitated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emphasis on providing for more structured and group recreation, such as developed picnic sites with barbecues.</li> <li>Provision for large group activities.</li> <li>Ability to book venues and sites.</li> <li>Broader range of discretionary activities considered appropriate, including events.</li> </ul>
<b>Intensity of use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The levels of use and visitor numbers are limited or dispersed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A moderate range of uses but are monitored and controlled.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wide range and amount of use, managed to minimize recreational conflicts and adverse environmental impacts.</li> </ul>
<b>Extent of development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal level of infrastructure and development</li> <li>Limited vehicle access and parking</li> <li>Expected facilities: generally gravel-based car parking except at some major arrival areas, information board, toilets, and walking tracks at limited locations, tramping tracks and routes, back-country campgrounds and limited vehicle-accessible campgrounds in keeping with the dominant natural values.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimal to moderate level of infrastructure and development</li> <li>Expected facilities: car park, toilets, information structure, and picnic areas, trail systems, backcountry and/or vehicle-accessible campgrounds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Moderate level of infrastructure and development</li> <li>Expected facilities: sealed car parks, toilets, information structure, picnic areas, barbecues, designated sites, trail systems, vehicle-accessible campgrounds, ranger station.</li> </ul>
<b>Visitor services</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ranger contact service, such as emergency telephone contact details, with a ranger presence and education services at limited locations.</li> <li>Limited structured programmes and interpretation focusing on environmental protection and stewardship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ranger presence with education services at limited locations.</li> <li>Structured programmes and interpretation focusing on social, education and environmental benefits, and stewardship.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ranger presence and education services.</li> <li>Structured programmes, events and interpretation focusing on social, education and environmental benefits, and stewardship.</li> <li>Bookable sites.</li> </ul>

<sup>17</sup> The table is from section 7.1 of the [Regional Parks Management Plan 2010](#).