

15.19 Waitakere Ranges Regional Park

15.19.1 Park values

The Waitakere Ranges Regional Park (the park) consists of 17,000 hectares of contiguous park land in close proximity to the Auckland metropolitan area. It contains steep hill country that is almost entirely covered in native bush with spectacular gorges and bluffs. On its western and southern sides it is bounded by a mainly rugged coastline. The impetus to create the park came from a community that wished to conserve the native flora and fauna of the area and have a large scenic park for their enjoyment.

The park has been built up over more than 100 year period by land vesting, purchases and gifts. It includes land acquired by the Auckland City Council for water catchment and reserve purposes, formerly known as Auckland Centennial Memorial Park, which officially came into being by an Act of Parliament in 1941. In 2008 the national significance of the Waitakere Ranges and the regional park were recognised in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act. The regional park makes up 60 per cent of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area.

The bulk of the park contains land held and managed in terms of the Local Government Act, 2002. A smaller proportion (approximately 17 percent) of the land area is held and administered under the Reserves Act 1977, which places additional management obligations in relation to administering land classified as recreation, scenic and scientific reserves under that Act.

Te Kawerau a Maki and Ngati Whatua have a long association with the Waitakere Ranges and are the recognised tangata whenua. The Waitakere Ranges are known to them as Te Wao Nui a Tiriwa (The Great Forest of the Tiriwa). Until the late 19th Century 'Waitakere' was a localised name referring to the Waitakere River Valley – Te Henga area. The special relationship Te Kawerau a Maki has with the ranges been acknowledged in various aspects of the park, such as the Arataki Visitor Centre, pou whenua in a number of park locations and the Pa Harakeke planting at Pae o te Rangī.

Kauri logging and sawmilling commenced in the Waitakere Ranges during the 1830s and only finally ended a century later. This "boom and bust" period saw numerous logging operations and mills start up and then close down and move to another part of the ranges as the timber resource was progressively worked out. Only the Cascade-Kauri area, where cutting rights were never issued, retained any larger specimens of kauri trees. Parts of the ranges were burnt to establish pasture, but farming was only ever a marginal proposition, other than on the foothills of the ranges.

The Waitakere Ranges were recognised early in the development of the Auckland region as an important future water catchment area. The region's first gravitational supply dam was built at Nihotupu in 1902. An extensive programme of dam construction continued until the last of the five dams that are currently operational was completed in 1971. Watercare Services Limited has a licence over 6,619 hectares of the inner area of the park that includes these five dams and their catchments. The dams contribute over a quarter of Auckland's metropolitan potable water supply.

Recreation and tourism has had a long history, with the wild, west coast beaches and forested ranges attracting visitors seeking a wilderness experience. Whatipu Lodge was one of a number of ventures developed to cater for the growing demand for tourist accommodation, and continues to be popular with park visitors. Today there are hundreds of archaeological sites and historic structures recorded in the Waitakere Ranges including

kauri timber dams, tramlines, quarries, flax and timber mills, log chutes, shipwrecks, schools, cemeteries, wharves and logging roads.

The Waitakere Ranges sit on an uplifted dissected plateau comprising of resistant volcanic material creating a landscape of gorges, bluffs, waterfalls ridges, slopes and gullies. There are a series of large catchments terminating in the dunes and exposed coastal beaches to the west and a less rugged landscape along the Manukau Harbour. The ranges contain numerous geological features that are of regional and national significance, as identified in Section 8.2, described in more detail in the Special Management Zones and shown on Maps 19.2 to 19.16.

The Waitakere Ranges is ecologically significant as one of the largest areas of coastal and lowland forest with intact sequences from wetlands and dunelands to coastal and inland lowland forest remaining in the region. It supports a wide diversity of habitats including forest, sand flats, dunes, coastal turfs, shrubland and wetlands including the Whatipu Scientific Reserve, the largest wetland complex in the region. The forest types reflect the history of forest clearance and milling but include remnant kauri and podocarp broadleaf forest, coastal forest and large areas of regenerating manuka and kanuka shrubland.

The park is home to 540 species of indigenous plants, several thousand insect species, over 100 snail species, 71 bird species, six lizards and two skinks, the long-tailed bat and Hochstetter's frog. They provide a refuge for a number of threatened plant and animal species including the Waitakere rock hebe (*Hebe bishopiana*) endemic to the Waitakere Ranges; and nationally threatened birds, particularly at Whatipu, such as fernbird, bittern and dotterels. Specific restoration projects continue to improve the condition of the ranges, including the return of several bird species which were lost during the last century.

Pest plant and animal control has a significant role in reducing impacts on ecological values and preventing spread onto neighbouring land. The Strategic Weed Initiative and pest buffer programmes continue to protect the park from pest plant and animal threats occurring on neighbouring land. The dumping of rubbish in the park, however, is an ongoing issue and a source of pest plant introductions.

The Waitakere Ranges are a major visitor attraction in the region and continue to be appreciated as a place to escape from the pressures of everyday life and enjoy peace and quiet in a large natural setting. The park contains over 140 tracks covering approximately 250 kilometres. The track network together with managed picnic areas and campgrounds, are the main recreational assets on the park and are one of the main ways people experience the park. The track entrances with associated vehicle parking, signs and toilets, are key visitor management points. There is also a range of accommodation facilities with a number of lodges and baches located within the park. Many visitors use the park land as a means to access the foreshore, therefore not actually using the park for recreation, but enjoying the west coast beaches.

Visitor counts at selected locations indicate that visitor numbers to the park have almost doubled over the past 10 years. This trend is likely to continue due to the proximity of the park to the growing urban areas of Auckland. Parts of the park are under pressure from increasing recreational activity, including commercial activity. Careful management of the type, intensity and distribution of activity on the park is required to ensure the pressure of use does not destroy the very qualities that people value about the park.

Visitor activity tends to concentrate in particular nodes or arrival areas and the track systems that emanate from these. Due to the age of the park, the infrastructure necessary to support activity in these areas is generally in place. However, in some circumstances a

renewal of this infrastructure is required or a range of management tools, outlined in section 5.6, will be implemented to manage the impacts of visitor growth. For example some of the tracks in the network are not of a suitable standard that would enable them to absorb any significant growth in use and it has been recognised that greater investment in the upgrade of the track system is required.

Stewardship

The Waitakere Ranges Regional Park as a significant rainforest has unique natural and cultural values that are under pressure from increasing visitor numbers and its proximity to the growing urban area. When the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park section of the Regional Parks Management Plan was reviewed in 2007 there was a strong message from submitters that there was a need to protect these values. The council therefore wants to ensure that all visitors to the park have a sense of care and stewardship when visiting and using the resources of the Waitakere Ranges.

As the gateway to the park land, the Arataki Visitor Centre plays an important role in providing information about the park, running a range of educational programmes and conveying important messages about care and stewardship of the environment of the Waitakere Ranges.

The council is assisted by a number of interested community groups and by volunteers who make a significant contribution of their time and resources to assist with maintenance, planting programmes, habitat enhancement, species recovery and pest plant and animal control on the park.

Discretionary Activity

The Waitakere Ranges support a range of commercial enterprises, some of which occur on the regional park land. Over the years the park has become increasingly popular for tourism operators, screen production companies and for sporting events. The primary attraction of the park land is its natural and scenic settings to which people have free access, mainly through the park track systems. While it is recognised that concessionaires and other recreation providers extend the range of recreational opportunities available to people, compared to other parks in the network, demand for these discretionary activities in the Waitakere Ranges is very high. Because of this, a precautionary approach has been taken. Limits have been placed on the size and nature of some activities that can take place at certain locations as a way of managing cumulative impacts on the park and the enjoyment of the park by other users.

As noted in section 11.5 on Discretionary Activities, the council will consider discretionary activities on the park, provided they do not detract from the park focus and outcomes including the enjoyment of other park users or adversely affect the natural settings and ecological and cultural heritage values. A decision to grant a consent for a discretionary activity does not imply any rights beyond the approved term of the consent.

As some activities may conflict with the outcomes sought for the park, such as maintaining its intrinsic qualities or preserving the visitor experience, limits will be imposed on the size and nature of some activities in particular locations. Large groups, especially organised sports events, have the potential to adversely impact on the park environment and the enjoyment of the park by other users.

The council will work with promoters and organisers to investigate alternative suitable locations for organised events within the Waitakere Ranges and across the regional parks network.

Hillary Trail

A multi-day trail is being developed in the park which has been named after Sir Edmund Hillary. This will travel through a variety of natural settings outside of the main arrival areas and destinations, reflecting the diversity of the Waitakere Ranges and surrounding areas. The trail will provide Aucklanders the opportunity to experience an affordable, multi-day tramp close to New Zealand's largest metropolitan area with overnight camping within the park. To avoid commercialisation of the trail no concessions will be granted over the entire trail, such as guided walks. The aim of the trail is to encourage families and young people with suitable fitness, not just the experienced trampers, to enjoy a self-guided tramp and to gain confidence in encountering an adventure in the outdoors.

The trail will utilise existing tramping tracks and infrastructure, though in some cases a realignment or connection of tracks is required. A further campground will also be developed off Anawhata Road. The trail covers approximately 70 kilometres. The Arataki Visitor Centre will be the gateway to the trail, though people may choose to start at Titirangi, particularly if catching public transport. The trail travels to Huia and then along the coast to Anawhata, where there will be two options, the primary route of the trail heads further north through Lake Wainamu to Muriwai Regional Park. A secondary option travels inland to Swanson through the Cascades area, with a public transport connection at the Swanson Train Station.

Kauri dieback

The Waitakere Ranges, including the park land has nationally significant kauri trees and stands. The park is home to some of the largest kauri in the region, with some notable trees, such as Aunt Agathis and Tom Thumb. In recent years, it has been determined that kauri trees in the park have been affected by a pathogen *Phytophthora taxon Agathis* (PTA) causing kauri dieback (refer to section 8.4.3 on pathogens). Diseased trees have been specifically identified in the Piha catchment, Cascades-Kauri area and around Huia.

The council as the landowner has a responsibility to protect kauri in this and other regional parks from the disease. Additionally, the council as the regional biosecurity agency has authority to contain or eradicate new diseases that are a significant risk to biodiversity.

PTA is a soil borne species that spreads predominately through soil and soil water movement. This includes natural vectors such as plant to plant root contact and water films in soil; human induced soil disturbance through walking, biking, or track development; and animal disturbance such as pigs turning over soil. For this reason off-track activity is strongly discouraged and special management of the track system will be implemented throughout the park.

A targeted survey of park entrances and along the track network has identified disease zones where there are issues with kauri health, including the impacts of kauri dieback. Soil compaction, root trauma, and physical damage of trees along tracks have also been associated with general ill-thrift or decline of kauri and this is not necessarily associated with disease.

Special measures have been implemented to help stop the spread of the disease, including the erection of signs, the supply of phytosanitary measures on tracks in the identified disease zones and on high use tracks in kauri areas, and the use of phytosanitary mats during events. Standard operating procedures have been developed for people working in the vicinity of kauri areas. In some circumstances the closure of tracks or areas may be

warranted, particularly during spring and autumn which are the optimum periods for the spread of PTA.

In addition a kauri heath remediation plan will be developed. This will determine where track surface or drainage upgrades, or the rerouting of tracks is required, and will prioritise the rehabilitation of trophy trees.

15.19.2 Park vision

A regional conservation and scenic park that is managed to protect and enhance its natural, cultural and historic values, to provide a place of respite for the people of Auckland, to provide for a range of compatible recreational activities in natural settings, and to cultivate an ethic of stewardship.

15.19.3 Management focus

Over the long term, the entire Waitakere Ranges Regional Park, including the Waitakere Water Catchment land, will be managed as a Class I park (refer to section 5.3).

The following sites in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park will be managed as Special Management Zones: Anawhata, Arataki Visitor Centre and precinct, Cascades – Kauri, Cornwallis, Fairy Falls, Huia Lookout, Huia Valley, Kaitarakihi, Kakamatua, Karamatura, Karekare, Lake Wainamu, Lion Rock, Little Huia, Mercer Bay Loop Walk and lookouts, Mt Donald McLean lookout, North Piha, Pae o te Rangī, Pararaha Valley, Parau / Big Muddy Creek, Parkinson’s lookout, Piha Valley / Stedfast Park, Pukematekeo lookout, Rose Hellaby House and lookout, Spragg Bush, Tasman and Gap lookouts, Upper Nihotupu Dam car park, Water Catchment Area, Whatipu, and the Whatipu Scientific Reserve.

The park will provide:

- Protection and restoration of the over 16,000 hectares of dominant indigenous bush and forest, including its flora and fauna, ecosystems and threatened plants; recognising the significant contribution to the region’s biodiversity and ecosystem services.
- Maintaining areas of open countryside in appropriate locations, such as behind beaches, at major viewing points and farmed areas.
- Protected water supply catchment areas and associated infrastructure for the collection and storage of high quality water for potable metropolitan supply.
- Improving the health of kauri in the park.
- Retention of the farmed areas recognising their contribution to heritage landscapes, scenic values and vistas of the park and beyond.
- A place of respite, where the people of Auckland can enjoy the natural environment in places that feel wild and remote.
- A place to undertake extensive bush walks and overnight tramping expeditions, to enjoy spectacular views of the west coast, to picnic and relax, or to enjoy coastal water related activities, such as swimming, surfing and fishing.
- A range of short term accommodation, including intimate backcountry campgrounds, vehicle based camping opportunities, lodges and baches.
- A place to learn about the natural values of the park land and wider area of the Waitakere Ranges.

Over the next 10 years the management of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park will focus on:

- maintaining the dominant bush settings and retaining areas of open countryside in appropriate locations, such as behind beaches, at major viewing points and farmed areas,
- ensuring the park is managed in accordance with the purpose and objectives of the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008,
- continuing a range of conservation programmes involving; habitat protection and restoration; management of threatened species, including the restoration of species formerly found in the ranges; ongoing pest animal, plant and disease control; and conservation of cultural heritage resources, including built heritage, significant botanical heritage and archaeological sites,
- recognising the national significance of the Whatipu Scientific Reserve,
- addressing the impacts of kauri dieback and improving the overall health of kauri in the park,
- strengthening the relationship with Te Kawerau a Maki and Ngati Whatua and investigating opportunities for practical expression of kaitiakitanga,
- managing the park as a series of Special Management Zones recognising that there are a number of locations where visitors access the park and congregate. Careful consideration will be given to the style and level of infrastructure provided in order to protect the intrinsic qualities and sensitive features of each locality. It is not intended that these nodes will be developed beyond the existing level unless explicitly stated. All nodes will be managed with reference to the Class I parameters, recognising that Arataki and Cornwallis will need to cater for more intensive use,
- encouraging people to respect the park environment and the enjoyment of other park users. There will be increased emphasis on educating visitors about the park environment, and how they can act as responsible stewards of the park land,
- allowing for discretionary use provided that it avoids adverse cumulative impacts on the park's intrinsic values and visitor experiences. Restrictions will apply to areas of high ecological value, places of historic value, or areas where there are high levels of informal recreational use,
- continuing to restore the track system through increased maintenance to bring the tracks back to their stated standard,
- developing the Hillary Trail as a multi-day trail predominantly utilising the existing track network,
- expanding camping opportunities in association with the Hillary Trail,
- improving monitoring and reporting,
- recognising the regional strategic significance to Auckland of the water supply catchments and the water supply infrastructure, and managing the water catchment lands in accordance with the agreement with Watercare Services Ltd,
- supporting opportunities for volunteers, friends-of-the-park groups and local community groups to participate in the park's conservation programmes, and
- continuing to work with communities bordering the park, recognising their stewardship role.

Over the next five years the council's priority in regard to park development will focus on implementing the Hillary Trail, developing Arataki as a destination with links to tracks in the

area and the potential development of a café, development of camping opportunities at Stedfast Park, the provision of further toilets at a few arrival areas across the park and the provision of further interpretation.

15.19.4 The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008

This Act creates a distinct statutory identity for the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area. The purpose of the Act is two-fold: to recognise the national, regional and local significance of the Waitakere Ranges heritage area which includes the regional park; and to promote the protection and enhancement of its heritage features for present and future generations.

Section 7 of the Act outlines the heritage features to be protected, including:

- its terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems of prominent indigenous character that:
 - include large contiguous areas of primary and regenerating lowland and coastal rain forest, wetland and dune systems with intact ecological sequences,
 - have intrinsic value,
 - provide a diversity of habitats for indigenous flora and fauna,
 - collect, store and produce high quality water,
 - provide opportunities for ecological restoration,
 - are of cultural, scientific or educational interest,
 - have landscape qualities of regional and national significance,
 - have natural scenic beauty,
- the different classes of natural landforms and landscapes within the area that contrast and connect with each other, and which collectively give the area its distinctive character,
- the coastal areas, which:
 - have a natural and dynamic character, and
 - contribute to the area's vistas, and
 - differ significantly from each other.
- the quietness and darkness of the Waitakere Ranges and the coastal parts of the area,
- the opportunities that the area provides for wilderness experiences, recreation and relaxation in close proximity to the metropolitan Auckland,
- the historical, traditional and cultural relationships of people, communities and tangata whenua with the area and their exercise of kaitiakitanga and stewardship,
- the evidence of past human activities in the area, including those in relation to timber extraction, gum digging, flax milling, mineral extraction, quarrying, extensive farming, and water impoundment and supply,
- the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and its importance as an accessible public place with significant natural, historical, cultural and recreational resources,
- the public water catchment and supply system, the operation and maintenance, and development of which serves the people of Auckland.

The Act mandates the council to prepare, adopt and maintain this management plan for the integrated management of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. The plan must give effect to the purpose and objectives of the Act.

The Act states that a local authority must establish and maintain processes to provide opportunities for Ngati Whatua and Te Kawerau a Maki to contribute to the decision making processes and the implementation of the Act. The Act also requires the local authorities jointly monitor and report on aspects of the Act every five years.

Section 19 of the Act accepts that the Regional Parks Management Plan is consistent with the Act, but any decisions made to give effect to the plan must comply with the Act. The council must be able to demonstrate that any decision in relation to activities in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area has taken the Act into consideration. All decisions relating to the following should be documented;

- all discretionary consents, including approvals to concessionaires,
- all development proposals, including signs,
- all major maintenance projects or track realignments, and
- any activity using the park to access the marine area.

When making a decision, the council will:

- a) Systematically, check off whether the decision would have an impact on the heritage features listed in the Act, in particular the provisions of Sections 7 and 8.
- b) Where the proposal would have a significant effect on a feature, especially a negative effect, record what and how this was assessed and any measures taken to avoid or mitigate the impacts.
- c) In the parks context, special attention should be paid to the following issues;
 - impacts on the landscape and special character of a locality, e.g. its wilderness qualities,
 - visual impacts of proposals, especially on the character of the coastline,
 - impact on the “quietness and darkness” of the ranges, and
 - impact on natural functioning of streams.

15.19.5 Management policies

In addition to the generic management objectives and policies outlined Parts 4 to 14 of this plan, the following specific policies will apply to the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. The management policies below are annotated on the map 19.1 to 19.18, Volume 2.

Natural settings

1. Maintain an integrated pest plant control programme that enhances the viability of habitats for native flora and fauna, prioritising areas of high ecological value.
2. Undertake comprehensive pest animal control programmes to maintain and enhance the habitat for indigenous flora and fauna, with particular focus on:
 - a) maintaining the threshold for possum control to a maximum two percent residual trap catch over the entirety of the park to improve ecosystem health,
 - b) maintaining the goat-free status of the Waitakere Ranges,
 - c) liaising with the Department of Conservation to prevent the incursion of deer into the Waitakere Ranges,
 - d) lowering the threshold for rat and pig control,

- e) continuing integrated control for all mammalian pests at selected sites within the ranges, including the Ark in the Park to create mainland islands to allow for complete ecosystem recovery and reintroductions of rare and threatened species,
 - f) investigating opportunities to further expand integrated mammalian pest control in the Waitakere Ranges,
 - g) continuing the integrated pest animal management programme in the Waitakere Ranges onto neighbouring reserve land and private property.
3. Develop a kauri tree remediation plan to restore tree health where there is evidence of disease or other physical or environmental impacts.
 4. Protect and restore habitats for nationally and regionally threatened plants as guided by the council's threatened plant guidelines.
 5. Progressively undertake limited re-vegetation, with emphasis on riparian planting; coastal forest, wetland and dune enhancement; creating ecological linkages between ecosystems and habitats; and amenity planting at main activity areas.
 6. Continue to work with neighbouring property owners on the Strategic Weed Initiatives and pest buffer programmes.
 7. Systematically look to isolate bank edges from lay-bys and parking areas to address the rubbish dumping problem and introduction of pest plants.
 8. Continued support for, or partnering with community and interest groups in undertaking ecological programmes such as wildlife habitat enhancement, reintroduction programmes, and pest plant and animal control, where such initiatives are consistent with this plan. For programmes at specific locations refer to section 15.19.6 below.
 9. Work with the relevant roading authority to progressively close unformed roads throughout the park in accordance with policy 13.4.1.

Cultural Heritage

10. Resurvey and update information on archaeological sites on the park and implement archaeological management recommendations.
11. Interpret significant heritage stories, including people, places, milestones and events, in accordance with the Regional Parks Interpretation Strategy and Interpretation Guidelines.
12. Prepare and implement a conservation assessment of the Piha Tramway that runs from Anawhata Stream in the north to Paratutai in the south.
13. Acknowledge the land formerly held as part of the Auckland Centennial Memorial Park on park interpretation and signs.

Farmed Settings

14. Maintain farmed areas in the Waitakere Ranges, recognising that these are valued as part of the ranges' heritage, to facilitate recreation and use, and retain outstanding views and vistas.

General recreation and use management

15. Develop a plan for the ongoing maintenance of the track system, with a focus on improving drainage on the tracks, which is a component of maintaining a hard surface, and controlling vegetation growth.
16. Where it is seen as operationally desirable:
 - a) temporarily close tracks or areas of the park to protect or allow the recovery of the natural environment or cultural values, or
 - b) undertake re-routing of tracks to:
 - i. improve accessibility or safety,
 - ii. facilitate efficient maintenance or
 - iii. mitigate adverse environmental impacts, such as avoidance of large tree roots and threatened plants or the spread of disease, such as kauri dieback.

All such improvements will be undertaken in a way that ensures a net environmental benefit.

17. Actively discourage off-track activity unless formally approved as a discretionary activity, because of its impact on the park environment, particularly indigenous vegetation and fauna, and riparian margins.
18. Continue to implement measures on the tracks in the kauri disease zones and high use tracks in kauri areas to reduce the risk of spreading kauri dieback disease, (refer to policy 8.4.3.1).
19. Manage access to the water supply catchment areas in accordance with the lease and licence with Watercare Services Limited (refer to policies 222 to 224 below).
20. No further tracks will be developed in the water supply catchment areas without the permission of Watercare Services Limited.
21. Implement the Hillary Trail as an informal multi-day trail, utilising where practical, existing track systems and campgrounds. The trail will be maintained to a tramping track standard. No concessions will be granted over the trail as an entity, in accordance with policy 11.6.1.5.
22. Where track networks include sections of road, the council will work with the relevant roading authority to improve pedestrian safety.
23. Develop existing roadside parking areas so they are more easily identifiable, clearly named and have improved safety.
24. Review roadside parking areas where safety issues cannot be easily addressed or where they are not meeting their specified functions, whilst maintaining existing access points to the park.
25. Review the provision of camping in the park, including the potential to provide new camping opportunities or relocate existing campgrounds.
26. Investigate with the campervan association the potential to expand the opportunities for overnight stays by self-contained campervans in appropriate locations.

27. Work with Watercare Services Limited to ensure the ongoing provision of public toilets and recreational facilities in the Watercare catchment lands.
28. The number of organised sport events involving 50 or more participants, will be limited in some locations in order to protect sensitive environments and the experience of casual visitors. The council will work with applicants to avoid over-use of areas and tracks, and, where desirable, find suitable alternatives. These limits generally reflect current levels of activity and will be applied at the following locations:

Table 1: Limits on discretionary activity in the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park

Activity Management Nodes	Map reference	Organised sporting events involving over 50 participants
Anawhata	19.3	1 per year
Karekare	19.5	4 per year
Pararaha Valley	19.6	1 per year
Piha North ¹	19.4	2 per year
Piha Valley ¹	19.4	3 per year
Whatipu ²	19.7	3 per year

1 taking into account the timing of activities approved by the Waitakere City Council elsewhere at Piha – refer to Policies 177 and 211.

2 any group activities over 50 persons and all events, prohibited from the scientific reserve except on the eastern end of the reserve in the vicinity of the arrival area and Paratutai on existing tracks and grassed areas, where these do not detract from the purposes of the scientific reserve. (Also refer to policy 259 below)

29. The above limits will not apply to filming, weddings, educational groups, conservation programmes, community fairs, or similar group activities and events at the above locations, although these activities will be managed in accordance with the general policies on discretionary use in section 11.5.
30. The council reserves the right to decline applicants if, in its opinion, the frequency and extent of activity in an area will result in an unacceptable level of degradation of the park environment or the loss of the quality of visitor experience.
31. To restrict unnecessary, dangerous or damaging use of vehicles on beaches and dune areas, including Cornwallis, Mill Bay, Little Huia, Karekare, Piha and North Piha Beaches and in the Lake Wainamu, to reduce the associated unsustainable damage to the dunes and adjacent coastline, public safety risks, the alienation of non-vehicle users and the significant ongoing infrastructure costs for the agencies involved through:
- where feasible and practicable, blocking off illegal access points in co-operation with other agencies, for example local authorities or surf clubs,
 - declining discretionary applications that request access through regional parks to access the foreshore for purposes that would either result in or encourage illegal, unnecessary or damaging use of vehicles on the foreshore,
 - an education campaign eg signs, fliers, notices on noticeboard,
 - patrolling, and
 - staff modelling best practice through following a standard operating procedure for vehicle use on beaches.

32. Continue support for programmes advocating safe fishing practices on West Coast beaches.
33. Support the bush railway operations provided by Watercare Services Ltd. and the Waitakere Tramline Society as a means of enabling the public to enjoy the natural beauty of the park.
34. This plan does not limit or change the responsibilities or powers of Watercare Services Limited, in relation to the water catchment areas under the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage Act 1960, or Section 707ZZS of the Local Government Act 1974.

Tangata Whenua

35. Undertake a comprehensive human occupation report of the park, an assessment of tangata whenua values and a tupuna whenua report (tangata whenua identifying their relationship to the land).
36. Recognise tangata whenua of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park through:
 - a) acknowledging the relationship through a range of visitor services and infrastructure such as interpretation and tohu tangata whenua;
 - b) consulting on the planning, protection, development and management of the park and the tangata whenua values they contain;
 - c) investigating options with tangata whenua to enable them to exercise their role as kaitiaki over sites of significance; and
 - d) supporting tangata whenua to undertake activities which enable them to provide for their long term health and well being while sustaining the mauri of the park's natural and historic resources (refer to Part 7).
37. Senior staff responsible for managing the park will meet at least once a year with tangata whenua appointed kaitiaki (representatives) to discuss the annual work programme and the actions outlined in Part 7.

Note: For an up to date list of iwi, hapu and/or marae contacts please refer to the council website.

Principal Relationships

38. Liaise with the Waitakere City Council over matters of mutual interest, such as local community relationships, the planning and development of land adjoining park land, dune restoration programmes and issues around the management of visitors, park values, and an integrated management approach to adjacent beaches and reserves.
39. Liaise with the Department of Conservation on the management of the scientific reserve at Whatipu, all lands classified as scenic and recreation reserves under the Reserves Act and, where appropriate, the conservation of wildlife and reintroduction of species under the Wildlife Act and the Wild Animal Control Act.
40. Liaise with the Department of Conservation and the Ministry of Fisheries over the management of the interface between the park, coast and sea, fishing in the area and marine mammals.
41. Liaise with Watercare Services Ltd in terms of the "Deed of Lease, Licence and Agreement to Licence" and the alignment of issues relating to the Operational Plan,

Rainforest Express, Waitakere Tramlines, events and works within the water catchment areas.

42. Liaise with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust on the management of the Lake Wainamu Reserve, in consultation with adjoining landowners.
43. Liaise with agencies that provide emergency response services including the Waitakere Rural Fire Authority, NZ Fire Service, NZ Police (search and rescue) First Response, Westpac Rescue Helicopter, and the Piha, United North Piha, Karekare and Bethells Beach surf lifesaving clubs.
44. Liaise with community, conservation, care and restoration groups working in and around the park land such as Ark in the Park, Friends of Arataki, Friends of Whatipu, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society, Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Inc., West Auckland Historical Society, Huia Settlers Museum committee, and Residents' and Ratepayers' groups to provide support and direction.
45. Liaise with the West Coast Plan Liaison Group and where practicable and appropriate, give effect to the policies and actions identified in the West Coast Plan (2001).
46. The council will work with promoters and event organisers to investigate alternative suitable locations for organised events within the Waitakere Ranges and other regional parks.
47. Work to resolve the impact of existing encroachments on park values.

Special Management Zones

While the entire park will be managed as a Class I park, within this context there are a number of locations (nodes) where visitors access the park land. These range from a major visitor centre at Arataki with a wide range of visitor facilities, to a series of track entrances and lookouts with little more than a car park. These are locations where visitors congregate for recreational activities and to access the extensive track systems. These Special Management Zones are identified on maps 19.2-19.16.

There are areas within the Waitakere Ranges that offer a unique and special, remote wilderness experience for visitors. They also often contain significant forest ecosystems and high natural, scenic and historic values. Many of these areas are relatively accessible and are becoming increasingly popular to casual visitors. There is a need to manage access to these areas. The level and type of infrastructure will be controlled to ensure that the special character of these locations is not threatened.

Each of the following Special Management Zones contains a description of the important features of the locality, including any special or sensitive features to be protected, the desired quality of experience for visitors, and a series of policies that will ensure the location can cope with the defined level of activity.

Anawhata

Anawhata is one of the more remote areas of the park. Access is via Anawhata Road, the park land includes Anawhata Farm, the Anawhata Stream and catchment and access to a wild, west coast beach. The area offers a remote experience within a unique ancient volcanic setting that has retained many of the intrinsic natural qualities of the west coast, including natural unmodified coastal dune systems. The deeply incised Anawhata Gorge and adjoining beach are of regional geological significance.

General public access to the beach is restricted to pedestrian access from the end of Anawhata Road. There are a number of routes through the locality. Due to the sensitive nature of the environment and limited supporting infrastructure, limits have been placed on discretionary activities in this area (refer to map 19.3).

48. Manage Anawhata as a remote experience area with a small gravel car park, toilet and directional signs.
49. Advocate for the retention and maintenance of Anawhata Road as a road serving a remote location.
50. Maintain the views from the car park to Anawhata Beach through appropriate vegetation management.
51. Retain the existing farmland at Anawhata Farm as open pasture to maintain the landscape values and main vistas. Undertake sustainable farming practices. Revegetation will be limited to riparian enhancement, stock shelter and for erosion control.
52. Protect and maintain coastal habitats and the dune ecosystem and undertake pest plant and animal control, in particular protecting penguins and burrowing seabirds at Tewaha Point.
53. Manage the Anawhata catchment as a remote experience area with a marked tramping route. Maintain tracks leading into the wider area as tramping tracks and routes suitable for people with moderate to high levels of fitness and tramping footwear.
54. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Keddle House Conservation Plan 2003, and operate it as a bach for short-term accommodation to be available for general public use and under licence to the Auckland Outdoor Activities Club.
55. Manage the fire risk around Keddle House and its access road, through the regular maintenance of surrounding vegetation and the use of low fire risk species in any further amenity plantings within the house grounds, its access road and surrounding area.
56. Renovate the former Craw homestead and make it available, potentially under licence, for recreation, educational, conservation or community uses appropriate to the remote nature of the location.
57. Develop camping opportunities adjacent to Craw Homestead site as part of the Hillary Trail.
58. Retain the open space on the site of the former Hettig House, known as Hettig clearing, for group recreational opportunities.
59. Limit organised sport events, involving 50 or more people, to one per year in order to protect the wilderness qualities and sensitive ecosystems in the area, as set out in policy 28 above.

Arataki Visitor Centre and precinct

Arataki is the primary visitor information centre for the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. It contains the park administration headquarters, public education facilities, and the main

works depot and plant nursery for the park. The visitor centre was designed by Harry Turbott who worked under the instruction of Te Warena, a kaumatua of Te Kawarau a Maki, to ensure the building reflected Māori design principles. Arataki houses taonga of Te Kawarau a Maki, and pou whenua that reflects Te Kawarau a Maki's mana whenua status in the area. The Arataki precinct is designed as a gateway to the Waitakere Ranges to introduce and orient people to the features and values of the Waitakere Ranges. It caters for relatively large numbers of visitors, with over 150,000 visits per year. It provides visitors with information on the history and ecology of the Waitakere Ranges, the recreational opportunities available and specialist activities, such as school education programmes. It is also designed to cater for visitors wishing to obtain an experience of the Waitakere Ranges without the need to enter further into the park.

A business plan for Arataki will be developed that will look at ways of reinvigorating Arataki as a place of learning, getting visitors to stay longer, and capturing repeat business. This would include looking at ways to promote Arataki as a destination rather than just a visitor centre and entrance to the park. It is anticipated that this review will potentially cover:

- creation of seasonal themes,
- provision of a rolling lecture series,
- live interpretation - such as traditional music or themed gardens,
- utilising partners - such as Te Kawarau, Ark in the Park, and Friends of Arataki,
- showcasing sustainability projects,
- increasing events,
- merchandising that more appropriately matches visitor expectations,
- use of spaces,
- the food and beverage offer,
- mobility access, and
- promotion and marketing.

Friends of Arataki are a local community group that support the services provided at Arataki and a range of other projects throughout the park.

60. Maintain Arataki as the major visitor destination site for the Waitakere Ranges, involving a staffed centre providing park visitor and tourist information and services, including light refreshments and appropriate merchandising.
61. Improve the layout and functionality of the visitor centre in accordance with the Arataki Business Plan as demand requires.
62. Enhance the role of Arataki in educating visitors in the values of the park land to inculcate responsible behaviour and a sense of stewardship.
63. Maintain Arataki as a primary centre for environmental and school education programmes, including the location for NZ curricula-based school programmes, the bush-camp and a nature trail. Visitor and education programmes and services will be extended as demand requires.
64. Expand the range of interpretation provided at the centre, including consideration of interpreting topical issues, such as kauri dieback and whale strandings.

65. Conserve the pou and develop and implement an effective long-term maintenance plan.
66. Make Arataki and its facilities available for community events and public meetings.
67. Enable the establishment of a café/restaurant under licence at Arataki, if a business plan determines this would be commercially viable.
68. Review the need for additional parking, and visitor facilities and services, as demand requires.
69. Maintain vistas of the city and the Manukau and Waitemata harbours from Arataki and improve visibility of the centre from Scenic Drive through appropriate vegetation clearance.
70. Advocate for safe speed limits on Scenic Drive in the vicinity of Arataki Visitor Centre.
71. In association with the appropriate roading authority and Watercare Services Ltd, investigate the need for additional safe parking in the vicinity of Exhibition Drive.
72. Construct tracks linking Arataki with Exhibition Drive, the Incline and the Slip Tracks in consultation with Watercare Services Ltd.
73. Investigate a tree canopy walkway as a possible option for linking Exhibition Drive with Arataki or as part of the Nature Trail.
74. Investigate the provision for family cycling on Exhibition Drive and its link to Arataki.
75. Promote Arataki as the gateway and entry point to the Hillary Trail.
76. Implement an annual pest animal control and conservation programme, in partnership with the community.
77. Maintain a nursery to support revegetation programmes in the western sector of the parks network.

Cascades – Kauri

The Cascades-Kauri area is a popular destination with high conservation values; it contains significant stands of mature kauri and lowland podocarp broadleaf forest and has one of the largest waterfalls in the Waitakere Ranges, known as the Cascade Falls. The Cascade Falls along with their conglomerate bluffs and the Waitakere Falls further south are both of regional geological significance.

Cascades-Kauri is a destination providing a range of informal recreational opportunities being particularly popular with visitors seeking picnicking, and accessible walks within mature, native forest, with access to large kauri trees, picturesque streams and waterfalls. The location provides access to an extensive network of tramping tracks and routes, including the Montana Heritage Trail, which offers a half day easy tramp through the ranges. A pou whenua is located at one of the area's viewing points on the Auckland City Walk. The park includes the Waitakere Golf Course, which has been located on the site since 1948 and is managed under a licence. The open space values of the golf course enables expansive views of the forested escarpments surrounding what is a natural amphitheatre. The area lends itself to appropriate events.

This area is the location of the Ark in the Park conservation programme which is a partnership project between the council and the Waitakere Branch of the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society. The project currently covers approximately 1200ha, but it is intended that it will progressively expand to cover 2,000ha over time, as identified in maps 19.2, 19.11 and 19.12. It involves extensive pest animal and plant control, wildlife habitat and ecological enhancement and re-introduction of rare and threatened forest species. The programme includes monitoring of ecosystem recovery and species reintroductions. Cascades-Kauri also contains a park depot.

78. Manage Cascades-Kauri as a destination with a focus on:
 - a) providing for a range of recreational activity based on golf, picnicking and the extensive walking and tramping track systems, with provision of an unsealed car parking area, toilets, picnicking facilities and park information and
 - b) undertaking conservation programmes in the upper Waitakere River catchment in partnership with Ark in the Park and in accordance with the Ark in the Park Operational Plan.
79. Maintain and upgrade sections of the Auckland City Walk as a loop-walk for visitors with low to moderate levels of fitness and walking footwear.
80. Upgrade the Montana Heritage Trail as an accessible loop tramping track for people, with a moderate level of fitness, and access to tramping tracks and routes for people with higher levels of fitness and tramping footwear.
81. Explore options for creating viewing opportunities of the Waitakere Waterfall.
82. Dogs must be restrained on leads at all times (except approved and clearly identified pest control dogs), and will be restricted to particular tracks, in recognition of the restoration programme and the presence of sensitive wildlife.
83. Make provision for designated sites and for events on the grassed areas.
84. Improve the amenity of the horse paddock with planting while maintaining the open space for future recreation opportunities, as shown on map 19.12.
85. Work with Ark in the Park to ensure their operational requirements are met.
86. Realign the Waitakere Golf Course licence boundaries to sit within the current footprint of the golf course and classify the land held in this area as Recreation Reserve and the remaining unclassified land as Scenic Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977.

Cornwallis

Cornwallis Peninsula, including Cornwallis Beach and Mill Bay, is a major beach destination with safe swimming and extensive picnicking areas that are popular with families. Visits to this area are high in comparison to other areas of the park. There are three main entrances, one off Pine Road and two off Cornwallis Road. The Cornwallis wharf is a major feature of the area and is a popular boat launching and fishing spot. There are four bookable picnic sites, two with barbeques and shelters. A park house and a park storage site are located on the peninsula.

The peninsula, with its unique manuka-covered coastal gumland setting, offers an open landscape that contrasts with the verdant forests of the rest of the Waitakere Ranges.

There is also a pine forest in this area, which was planted in the 1920s but owing to the very impoverished gumland soil never thrived. Wilding pines are an ongoing problem in the area. The cliffs on the western side of the Cornwallis Peninsula are a geological feature containing excellent exposures of a sequence of marine sediments.

The area also contains three heritage features, the Orpheus Graves Monument overlooking Kakamatua, the McLachlan Monument on Puponga Point, and the pou whenua on Cornwallis Beach.

87. Manage Cornwallis as a major beach destination and picnic area on the southern Waitakere Ranges, including the boat ramp and wharf, while recognising its unique landscape and gumland ecology.
88. Progressively implement the concept plan for Cornwallis (refer maps 19.17a and 19.17b) over the long-term through a series of development plans in consultation with key stakeholders, including improvements to:
 - a) vehicular circulation and parking,
 - b) access to beaches and track network, and
 - c) signage and interpretation.
89. Maintain and manage the Cornwallis wharf.
90. Promote and enforce restrictions related to vehicle use on the beach in accordance with policy 31 above.
91. Investigate the removal of pines from Puponga Point and, in the meanwhile, manage them to ensure public safety and to maintain the views from the McLachlan Memorial in terms of the Deed of Gift.
92. Undertake a conservation assessment of the McLachlan Memorial and protect the historic aloe at Cornwallis Beach.
93. Progressively remove all wilding pines from the area.
94. Prepare and implement a pest plant and animal management plan for Cornwallis to protect and enhance indigenous flora and nesting penguins and petrels.

Fairy Falls (Scenic Drive)

The Fairy Falls tracks offer tramping through mature native forest with significant kauri stands to the scenic Fairy Falls. The falls flow in several drops over erosion-resistant conglomerate. This is a popular and accessible tramping destination with minimal facilities. It contains a number of track platforms and stairs designed to facilitate safe visitor access and to protect tree roots.

95. Manage Fairy Falls as a track network entrance with unsealed car parks, visitor information and a toilet.
96. Upgrade the toilet as required.
97. Reconfigure the existing car parking on Scenic Drive or relocate it to improve safety, and upgrade the car park on Mountain Road.

98. Maintain tracks to cater for people with moderate to high levels of fitness and walking footwear.
99. Review the appropriateness of the stairs and platforms, and the alignment of tracks, to retain the natural setting and landscape qualities.
100. Review the track section of the Old Coach Road Track with a view to making it a consistent standard when used as a loop track combined with the Fairy Falls Track.

Huia Lookout

The Huia Lookout offers scenic views across the Manukau Harbour and to the Karamatura area.

101. Manage the Huia Lookout as a scenic lookout with a car park, a walking track suitable for people with limited mobility, and directional and interpretation signs.
102. Develop a picnic area.
103. Maintain vistas over Huia and Little Huia and from the Manukau Heads to Cornwallis through appropriate vegetation clearance.

Huia Valley

This is a dam access road managed by Watercare Services Ltd. that has a number of tramping tracks and routes leading off it. It has valuable stands of remnant forest containing significant kauri and within this area is the highest point in the ranges, Te Toiokawharu.

104. Continue to manage the tracks as a more remote back country experience.
105. Work with Watercare Services Ltd. on facilitating public pedestrian access into the lower Huia Dam site.
106. Work with Watercare Services Ltd. to ensure the ongoing provision of interpretation and a toilet at the lower Huia Dam.
107. Investigate options for public use of the former Huia dam caretaker's house (Whare Puke) that are compatible with its heritage values.

Kaitarakihi

Kaitarakihi is an access point to a small, secluded beach on the Manukau Harbour that is popular for picnics. It is also an access point to the historic Spragg Memorial, a war memorial to Wesley Spragg and other WW1 soldiers, which offers views across the Manukau Harbour. An annual Armistice Day Commemoration ceremony is held at the memorial.

108. Manage Kaitarakihi as a picnicking and beach access point with a small unsealed car park, toilets and directional signs.
109. Manage the Spragg Memorial to maintain all views in accordance with the Deed of Gift, through appropriate vegetation clearance.
110. Relocate the toilet back from the beach when it needs replacing.

Kakamatua

Kakamatua, with its large sand flats, offers a remote coastal experience for visitors. It has a gravel car park.

111. Manage Kakamatua as a beach track entrance offering remote coastal wilderness experiences.
112. Retain the unsealed car park and improve vehicular access to ensure safe egress from and onto Huia Road.
113. Protect and enhance the coastal estuarine and wetland habitats.
114. Improve the interpretation of the Maori and early European history of the area.
115. Provide toilet to cater for the growing number of visitors.

Karamatura

Karamatura contains a dramatic mountainous landscape with open pastures, high rock cliffs, waterfalls, gorges and surrounding native forest. The Karamatura Stream catchment and the Marama catchment are of regional geological significance.

It is a popular recreational destination with a wide range of recreational opportunities, including accessible picnicking, camping and tramping opportunities. It contains the only approved abseiling site in the Waitakere Ranges that is accessible to the general public. The area is particularly popular with schools for outdoor education and other community groups.

The area also contains a park depot, the Huia Settlers' Museum (operated under licence by the Huia Settlers' Museum Society Inc.), a Heritage Trail, a pou whenua, the Huia Community Hall (owned and managed by the Huia-Cornwallis Residents' and Ratepayers' Association Inc.), the Kiwanis' Huia Camp and Lodge, which includes the historic Hinge House, and the historic Huia Schoolhouse, managed as part of the Huia Lodge.

A development plan has been prepared for the arrival area to Karamatura. This includes the relocation of the parking area from the valley picnic area and improvements to the overall amenity of the area.

116. Manage the Karamatura area as a recreational destination with an emphasis on a range of recreational uses within a natural, scenic setting, the retention of its farmed landscapes and the interpretation of its historic and cultural importance.
117. Progressively implement the Karamatura Arrival Area Development Plan in consultation with the Waitakere City Council and the local community, with priority given to providing a toilet at the arrival area. Limited mobility access will be provided to the valley picnic area and the foreshore.
118. Maintain camping in the area, with the:
 - a) Karamatura Valley as a back-country campground,
 - b) Karamatura Barn Paddock as a vehicle-based campground and
 - c) Exploration of the reinstatement of the Tanekaha campground as part of the Hillary Trail.

119. Develop the Hinge Bay paddock as a bookable event site.
120. Retain the existing farmland as open pasture to maintain the heritage landscapes, scenic values and main vistas, including those from the harbour. Implement sustainable farming practices and undertake revegetation where necessary for riparian enhancement, stock shade and shelter and for erosion control.
121. Manage the Kiwanis' Huia Camp and Huia Lodge as short-term rental accommodation. Investigate licensing out the management of these facilities.
122. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Huia Lodge (former school, Huia) Conservation Plan 2000, and the Hinge House, Huia, Conservation Plan 2003.
123. Continue to license the Huia Settlers' Museum Society Inc. to operate the Huia Settlers' Museum. Buildings may be upgraded and extended as demand requires, subject to the approval of the council.
124. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Manukau Timber Company Mill, Hinge Bay, Huia (Site Q11/472) Conservation Plan, 2000, and interpret the site as part of the Huia Heritage Trail.
125. Extend the Huia Heritage Trail to include heritage places in the Karamatura Valley.

Karekare

Karekare is a popular surf beach, and a coastal settlement. It is a geographically contained area with constrained vehicle access and limited parking capacity. The car park is provided by the Waitakere City Council but is managed by the council. Waitakere City Council provides and manages the public toilets at the main car park. There is a pou whenua situated alongside this car park.

The Karekare environment is dominated by large coastal dune systems traversed by a stream which provides one of the access points to the beach. The Pohutukawa Glade has a significant stand of Pohutukawa forest and also provides an access point to the beach. The landscape is also dominated by the Watchman dacite dome. This along with the cliffs above Union Bay which contain the well-exposed remains of a multiple crater formed by a volcanic eruption, are features of national geological significance. Cliffs at the south end of the beach also contain exposures of stratified conglomerate rock illustrating volcanic and sedimentary processes.

The Karekare Falls are popular with visitors and as a setting for photography, filming and weddings. The regional park land provides access to a number of popular tramping routes including the Pararaha Valley wilderness area and the Whatipu Scientific Reserve. Limits have been placed on discretionary activities in this area due to the sensitive environment, high informal use of the area and limited capacity of the supporting infrastructure.

The Karekare Surf Lifesaving Club has clubrooms located near the beach and provides lifesaving services from the beach.

126. Manage Karekare as a beach destination, picnicking area and tramping track access point at the Pohutukawa Glade.
127. Protect and maintain the dune and forest ecosystems and habitat of threatened birds, and undertake pest plant and animal control in partnership with the local community care groups.

128. Provide information and interpretation about the values of the Whatipu Scientific Reserve, particularly noting that dogs are prohibited from the reserve.
129. Limit the car park and any overflow car parking to its existing capacity.
130. No vehicle access will be permitted in the Pohutukawa glade unless for operational or emergency response purposes.
131. Promote and enforce restrictions related to vehicle use on the beach in accordance with policy 31 above.
132. Continue to maintain pedestrian access through the Pohutukawa Glade and along the Karekare Stream to the beach to cater for day visitors with low to moderate levels of fitness and walking footwear. Minor realignment of the track access from Pohutukawa Glade to the beach may be undertaken as required, so as to avoid areas prone to flooding.
133. Work with the Karekare Surf Lifesaving Club to maintain an effective lifesaving and emergency response service at Karekare, including investigating an all-weather and tide vehicular access to service the Surf Lifesaving Club and the provision of licences to enable access to their site, the retention of the foreshore wall and landscaping of park land.
134. Limit organised sport events, involving 50 or more people, to four per year, in order to protect the wilderness qualities of the area, as set out in policy 28 above.

Lake Wainamu

Lake Wainamu Reserve covers 155 ha of regenerating native bush, areas of grass, a large dune lake, wetland fringing the lake and a small area of dunes. The reserve is owned by the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust and managed on their behalf by the council and is subject to a management agreement. The Waitakere City Council has a reserve bordering the northern point of the lake; this covers a large area of dunes. Part of the lake boundary is also in private ownership.

Lake Wainamu covering 14 hectares is a unique freshwater lake, impounded by an extensive open dynamic sand dune system. The Waitohi Falls flow into the head of the lake. The lake has been degraded by the illegal introduction of exotic coarse and pest fish and aquatic pest plants, but has shown recent signs of improvement with the implementation of a aquatic habitat restoration project. A number of grass carp have been introduced to the lake to eradicate the pest plant egeria and these will be removed when the weed is eradicated. Due to the lake's high conservation value, fishing is not permitted in accordance with the Regional Pest Management Strategy.

The lake and surrounding reserve are a popular recreational destination. Currently there is a track around most of the perimeter of the lake and it is intended a loop track be completed in the near future. The extensive black sand dunes are vulnerable to uncontrolled recreation, particularly unauthorised motorised vehicles.

135. Manage Lake Wainamu Reserve as a remote day use location and manage the sand dunes free of vegetation to ensure their integrity and natural dynamics are preserved.
136. Recognise the significant Maori cultural values of the wider area.

137. Manage Lake Wainamu Reserve in accordance with the management agreement with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust and in consultation with adjoining landowners.
138. Continue implementation of the aquatic habitat restoration programme for Lake Wainamu, in consultation with the community, which will include the control of pest and coarse fish and pest plants, and monitoring the ecological values and native fish populations.
139. Work with the Waitakere City Council and adjacent land owners on an integrated pest plant control programme, including pampas and marram grass.
140. Support the installation of a pou whenua in the area in consultation with Te Kawerau a Maki and Friends of Arataki.
141. Work with the Waitakere City Council and adjoining private land owners to complete a perimeter track around the lake.
142. Provide a toilet facility in consultation with the adjoining landowners and the Waitakere City Council.
143. Fishing is prohibited in the lake, unless part of an authorised pest control programme.
144. Prohibit unauthorised motorised vehicles and watercraft from land managed by the council and from the lake.
145. Promote and enforce restrictions related to vehicle use on the dunes and beach in accordance with policy 31 above.
146. Manage tracks leading into the area as tramping tracks and routes suitable for people with moderate to high levels of fitness and tramping footwear.

Lion Rock (Piha)

Lion Rock or Whakaari is an iconic feature of Auckland's west coast with high natural, scenic and cultural significance. It is a high rock stack with a distinctive lion-shaped profile that is an eroded remnant of an ancient volcanic plug. It was once a fortified Māori pa and the significance to tangata whenua is illustrated by the carved guardian pou whenua. It also contains plaques in memory of people who served in the World Wars.

A track leads up to a lookout with spectacular views along the Piha coastline and the Tasman Sea. Its steep nature and harsh coastal environment poses potential risks to visitors.

147. Manage Lion Rock as a scenic lookout by maintaining practicable public access in its current form, without compromising Lion Rock's natural, cultural or landscape values. Public access will be limited to the natural ledge two-thirds of the way up the rock.
148. Recognise the significance of the Lion Rock and wider area to Te Kawerau a Maki.
149. Seek the scheduling of the plaques on Lion Rock in the District Plan.
150. Undertake pest plant and animal control and small scale revegetation to restore the coastal vegetation and protect nesting penguins, taking into account the archaeological sites on the rock.

Little Huia

Little Huia is a small farmed area of regional park land. It contains a public boat ramp and boat shed managed by the council, and toilet managed by the Waitakere City Council. It is a popular spot for boaties and the location suffers from a lack of vehicle parking space, especially for boat trailers, causing congestion during peak periods.

Barr Cottage, which is operated as a bach, is at Little Huia. It also contains 'Project K' Lodge, which has been used for volunteer programmes and rented for community recreation programmes.

151. Manage Little Huia for boat launching and as a location for park volunteer programmes while retaining its natural character.
152. Retain the existing farmland as open pasture to maintain the heritage landscapes, scenic values and main vistas. Implement sustainable farming practices and undertake revegetation where necessary for riparian enhancement, stock shade and shelter and for erosion control.
153. Finalise and implement the development plan for Little Huia which addresses the issues of congestion around the boat launching area and lack of facilities, in consultation with fishing clubs, the local community, and the Waitakere City Council.
154. Consider removing the boat shed that is beside the boat ramp.
155. Promote and enforce restrictions related to vehicle use on the beach in accordance with policy 31 above.
156. Explore opportunities to renovate the 'Project K' Lodge to a level suitable to support volunteer, education or community programmes, including looking at external funding. Investigate the potential to licence out the management of the lodge.
157. Implement the recommendations of the Barr Cottage of Little Huia: Conservation Assessment 2006, and operate the cottage as a bach for bookable short-term accommodation.

Mercer Bay Loop Walk and lookouts (Piha)

The Mercer Bay Loop Walk provides accessible elevated spectacular vistas of the rugged west coast shoreline, Whatipu and the Tasman Sea. In the cliffs of Te Ahua Point at the northern end of Mercer Bay is a nationally significant geological feature; being a sea cave that has eroded vertically to form a 100 metre chimney.

The area is also of historic and cultural significance. There is a Māori pa, known as the Te Ahua pa surrounded by steep natural defences. It is also the location of a World War II radar station now a marine navigation beacon. It contains a gravel car park and toilets off Log Race Road.

158. Manage Mercer Bay Loop Walk as an accessible walk giving access to a number of lookouts, and its entrance to a number of coastal tramping tracks. Ensuring track maintenance is sensitive to the nationally threatened forget-me-not *Myosotis petiolata* var. *pansa* that exists on the track edges.

159. Prepare and implement a development plan to review the layout of the arrival area to improve visitor convenience and safety, and upgrade the toilets, while maintaining the undeveloped and rugged nature of the area.
160. Maintain coastal vistas and visibility of the beacon through appropriate vegetation management.
161. Support the installation of a pou whenua in the area in consultation with Te Kawerau a Maki and Friends of Arataki.
162. At the track entrance interpret the historic sites of the area including the Te Ahua pa, the World War II radar station and the discovery of radio stars.

Mt Donald McLean Lookout

Mt Donald McLean is prominent exfoliation dome and one of the highest points in the Waitakere Ranges. The lookout offers panoramic vistas of the southern Waitakere Ranges and Manukau Harbour and beyond. It is accessed by a gravel road, jointly maintained by the council and the Waitakere City Council, and a short walk to a lookout. It also provides access to a number of tracks in the southwest of the park.

163. Maintain an accessible walking track to the Mt Donald McLean lookout.
164. Keep visitor infrastructure to a minimum with a small car park, a walking track to a viewing platform, directional signs and interpretation on the views of the Waitakere's and beyond.
165. Maintain vistas of the Waitakere Ranges and Manukau Harbour through appropriate vegetation clearance.
166. Provide protection to the Hebe bishopiana population.
167. Maintain this as an access point to tramping tracks in the wider area for people with moderate to high levels of fitness and tramping footwear.

North Piha

North Piha contains a sealed car park and picnic area, and provides access to the northern end of the beach. The area is a popular destination for surfers and leads to tramping tracks to Whites Beach and Anawhata. The area is dominated by the dune system behind the beach and Te Waha Point. Further north the in the cliffs surrounding Whites Beach and Paikea Bay is one of the best exposed craters in the Waitakere Ranges. Northern blue penguins nest along the coast.

Limits have been placed on discretionary activities in this area due to the sensitive environment, and high informal use of the area.

168. Manage North Piha as a beach access point, informal picnic area and access point to tracks in a manner that protects its natural value.
169. Protect dune systems by providing defined access points from the car parks and the road and maintain dune revegetation areas through pest plant and animal control.
170. Protect fauna, especially nesting penguins through ongoing pest animal control.

171. Dogs are prohibited from this area.
172. The land at North Piha donated by the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society will not have access developed in the life of this plan.
173. Work with the North Piha Water Supply Society to formalise arrangements for their water tanks to occupy park land.
174. Keep visitor infrastructure to a minimum with a car park, and directional and water safety signs.
175. Promote and enforce restrictions related to vehicle use on the beach in accordance with policy 31, including the modification of the car park surrounds to inhibit unauthorised access to the beach.
176. Install public toilets in a discrete location.
177. Limit organised sport events involving 50 or more people to two per year, taking into account the timing of activities approved by the Waitakere City Council elsewhere at Piha, as set out in policy 28 above.

Pae o te Rangī

Pae o te Rangī is a farmed area with access to a number of tramping tracks. Tracks link to Cascade Kauri Park, the Anawhata catchment and Lake Wainamu. The elevated areas offer panoramic views over the northern end of the Waitakere Ranges and to the Tasman Sea, Kaipara, Manukau and Waitematā Harbours. The area is the location of an established Pa Harakeke (flax reserve for cultural purposes). Pae o te Rangī contains a small remote campground with a toilet, and is the only area in the ranges that provides for horse riding, outside the winter months.

178. Manage Pae o te Rangī as a remote farmed location offering access for tramping, camping, and horse riding.
179. The area will be closed to horse-riding in the wetter months of the year, as determined by staff, to protect the environment.
180. Manage the existing farmland as open pasture to maintain the landscape values and vistas. Implement sustainable farming practices and undertake revegetation where necessary for riparian enhancement, stock shade and shelter, and for erosion control.
181. Maintain vistas from the elevated areas of Pae o te Rangī over the northern Waitakere Ranges and to the Tasman Sea, Kaipara, Manukau and Waitematā Harbours through appropriate vegetation clearance.
182. Improve truck loading access to the stock yards from the main road.
183. Keep visitor infrastructure to a minimum with an unsealed car park, directional signs, tramping tracks and routes and a campground and associated toilets.
184. Manage tracks leading into the area as tramping tracks and routes suitable for people with moderate to high levels of fitness and tramping footwear.
185. Assist the Waitakere River Care group implement a riparian restoration programme along the Waitakere River.

186. Maintain and enhance the Pa Harakeke planting in partnership with Te Kawerau a Maki.

Pararaha Valley

The Pararaha Valley, containing the Cowan's and Pararaha Streams, offers a remote wilderness experience with a variety of ancient volcanic cliffs, stream and wetland settings and a number of historic features associated with the timber industry, such as remnants of kauri dams. This valley contains significant taraire forest in a range of habitat types. There is a range of sites significant to tangata whenua, including a pa and wahi tapu sites. It is an access point to the Whatipu Scientific Reserve.

There are two remote campgrounds, one located in the lower end of the Pararaha Valley and a small bush campground off the Odlins Track. The area is accessible from a gravel car park on Lone Kauri Road, and by tracks from Karekare, Whatipu and Huia, and is popular with adventure sporting enthusiasts and tramping groups. Due to the significant ecological values of the area off-track activity is particularly discouraged and limits have been placed on discretionary activities.

187. Manage the Pararaha Valley as a remote wilderness area with limited infrastructure.
188. Protect the wetlands, coastal ecosystems, threatened species, and nesting seabirds, through undertaking pest plant and animal control and supporting community restoration initiatives.
189. Manage tracks leading into the area as tramping tracks and routes suitable for people with moderate to high levels of fitness and tramping footwear.
190. Encourage visitors to stay on tracks and marked routes by using signs. Clarify the track exit to the beach. Maintain safety structures, such as ropes and boardwalks, where necessary to prevent damage to riparian vegetation and wetlands.
191. Provide interpretation on the Hillary Trail and the values of the Whatipu Scientific Reserve at the Pararaha campground shelter.
192. Limit visitor facilities to an unsealed car park on Lone Kauri Road and toilets at the campgrounds. The camping shelter at the Pararaha campground will be retained.
193. Upstream of the Pararaha campground no visitor facilities will be provided.
194. Limit organised sporting events, involving 50 or more people, to one per year recognising that these can compromise the wilderness qualities and sensitive nature of the environment, as set out in policy 28 above. (Refer also to Whatipu Scientific Reserve policy 257 below.)

Parau / Big Muddy Creek

This area is accessed by a car park behind the Lower Nihotupu Reservoir pumping station which is part of the Watercare Services' licensed area. To the east there is a backdrop of regenerating forest in a sequence, including kauri ricker and coastal broadleaf forest, to mangroves in the estuary. This includes what is known as the Manchester Unity Block which was partially developed for subdivision and includes an abandoned road network. There are significant weed issues in this area. Part this land was purchased by the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society and subsequently gifted to the council.

195. Upgrade the access-way into Big Muddy Creek.
196. Work with Watercare to explore the opportunity and demand for a picnic area.
197. Develop and implement a pest plant control programme.
198. Explore options for developing tramping tracks from Huia Road to Victory Road through the park land previously known as the Manchester Unity Block, making use of the existing formed roads where practical.

Parkinson's Lookout (Scenic Drive)

Parkinson's Lookout is an accessible lookout and picnic area off Scenic Drive offering panoramic views over the Waitakere foothills and the city.

199. Manage Parkinson's Lookout as a lookout and picnic area with a small car park.
200. Reconfigure the arrival area to improve visitor safety and its function as a picnic area.
201. Maintain vistas of the Waitakere Ranges foothills, Waitemata Harbour and the city through appropriate vegetation clearance.

Piha Valley / Stedfast Park (Glen Esk)

The Piha Valley has high ecological value with rich mature broadleaved forest with regenerating kauri which is contiguous with the more exposed coastal vegetation to the south and the kauri forest in the upper Piha catchment. The area was the site of the Piha Mill, one of the ranges' major timber milling operations which was built in 1910 and closed in 1921.

It is a popular destination with people seeking accessible walks within mature native bush and views of the scenic Kitekite Falls. The falls are one of several regionally significant waterfalls that reflect the interaction of fluvial erosion processes with the varied lithology of the Waitakere Ranges. The Piha Gorge is the best example of a gorge in the Waitakere Ranges.

The area is popular as a picnic area and provides extensive tramping opportunities as an access point for a range of tramping tracks in the wider area, including the Maungaroa Lookout Track. Due to its high informal use and sensitive ecological values, limits have been placed on discretionary activities in this area.

The area currently known as Stedfast Park includes an outdoor education camp based at the foot of the valley which is operated under licence. It includes a large area of open space and offers a range of recreational activities, including archery, swimming, tramping and rope courses. The future management of this land will be determined through the preparation of a development plan.

The area is the location of a park house used as an office and a park depot.

202. Manage the end of Glen Esk Road as an access point to the track network in the area with unsealed car parking, toilets and picnic facilities, while retaining its natural setting.
203. Maintain the Kitekite and Knutzen Tracks as walking tracks to and from the Kitekite Falls for visitors with moderate levels of fitness and walking footwear. A series of

loop tramping tracks in the wider area will be maintained for people with higher levels of fitness and tramping footwear.

204. Remediate the informal tracks off the Kitekite Falls track to stop off-track activity in the area.
205. Maintain the Sir Algernon Thomas Green as a picnic area and investigate a track linking this with the forested hills donated by Sir Algernon Thomas.
206. Investigate an appropriate name for the land currently known as Glen Esk, including Stedfast Park.
207. Undertaking riparian planting and pest plant control on Stedfast Park.
208. Undertake pest plant control at the entrance to the Maungaroa Lookout Track.
209. Review the future development of Stedfast Park, taking into consideration:
 - a) the potential to relocate the park depot,
 - b) the layout of the arrival zone and access into the park,
 - c) replacement of the current bridge with one that has the capacity and loading required to facilitate access for emergency vehicles, buses and other service vehicles, and
 - d) maintaining the outdoor education camp, including the opportunity to provide for camping.
210. Support the West Auckland schools' ecological restoration programme on the Ministry of Education land.
211. Limit organised sporting events involving 50 or more people to three per year, taking into account the timing of activities approved by the Waitakere City Council elsewhere at Piha, as set out in policy 28.

Pukematekeo Lookout (Scenic Drive)

Pukematekeo Lookout offers panoramic vistas across the northern parts of the Waitakere Ranges and the Waitemata Harbour. The historic and unique Pukematekeo Bridge, which is closed to vehicle access, is a point of interest.

212. Manage Pukematekeo as a lookout with a small sealed car park, and directional and interpretation signs.
213. Maintain vistas of the northern Waitakere Ranges, Waitemata Harbour and city through appropriate vegetation clearance.
214. Prohibit vehicular access to Pukematekeo outside normal park operating times.
215. Maintain the Pukematekeo Summit Bridge consistent with the Pukematekeo Summit Bridge Condition Report, 2004.

Rose Hellaby House and lookout (Scenic Drive)

Rose Hellaby House is an historic house with period gardens which was gifted to the people of Auckland and is managed according to conditions in the deed. The conditions require it

be open to the public. The location offers panoramic views over the Waitakere Ranges foothills and the city.

216. Manage Rose Hellaby House and gardens as a historic precinct and lookout with a small car park, a lookout platform, and directional and interpretation signs.
217. Manage Rose Hellaby House and gardens under licence, and continue to implement the recommendations of the Aranui Rose Hellaby House Conservation Plan 2001 and Rose Hellaby House Garden: Historical Investigation & Planting Proposal 2005.
218. Maintain vistas of the Waitakere Ranges foothills, the Waitemata Harbour, and the city through appropriate vegetation management.

Spragg Bush (Scenic Drive)

Spragg Bush provides access to a number of easy bush loop-walks readily accessible from Scenic Drive. It is the location of a historic cemetery.

219. Manage Spragg Bush as an accessible bush-walk destination with a car park and directional signs.
220. Review the car parking area at Spragg Bush with a view to reconfiguring it to maximise visitor security and prohibit vehicular access to Spragg Bush outside normal park operating times.
221. Manage tracks leading into the area as walking tracks suitable for people with moderate levels of fitness and walking footwear.
222. Improve interpretation and conservation of the historic Spragg Cemetery.

Tasman and Gap Lookouts (Piha)

The Tasman Lookout and track provides views over the southern reaches of Piha beach, Lion Rock and the Gap. The Gap Lookout overlooks Taitomo Island, owned by Te Kawerau o Maki. There is a gate near the entrance to the Tasman Lookout Track which the Piha Deep Sea Fishing Club use to access the beach.

223. Manage the Tasman and Gap Lookouts as coastal lookouts and tracks while retaining the natural character of the area.
224. Discourage off-track access down to the foreshore from the Gap Lookout due to safety reasons and to prevent environmental damage.
225. Remove exotic vegetation to minimise the fire risk in the area and progressively replace it with locally appropriate native eco-sourced and broadleaved species.

Upper Nihotupu Dam car park (Piha Road)

A series of walking and tramping tracks emanate from the Upper Nihotupu Dam car park providing access to the interior of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park land, including access to the water catchment areas, and a number of water supply dams and associated infrastructure. This includes access to the Upper Nihotupu Dam where the Rainforest Express terminates, and the Upper Nihotupu Auxiliary Dam, a decommissioned dam now managed as a heritage structure by the council.

226. Manage the Upper Nihotupu Dam car park as an entry point into the Nihotupu Water Catchment Area, with an unsealed car park and directional and interpretational signs. The need for toilets will be investigated as demand requires, in consultation with Watercare Services Ltd.
227. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Upper Nihotupu Auxiliary Dam Heritage Assessment 2004, and manage the decommissioned dam site in accordance with the Building Act 2004, including periodic monitoring to minimise the risk of ponding at the dam outlet.

Water Catchment Area

The Water Catchment Area is managed under licence by Watercare Services Ltd. Covering an area of 6619ha; its primary purpose is to protect the cleanliness of, and to prevent contamination of, the metropolitan water supply. For this reason, certain restrictions apply to this area of the park; public access to the water in the dams is prohibited and access to the exclusive use and buffer lands is minimised. A further objective is to ensure the sustainable management and efficient use and development of regionally significant water supply resources within the water catchment areas. This includes the ongoing operation, maintenance and upgrade of Watercare's structures and facilities.

For this reason it is noted for the avoidance of doubt, that this plan does not limit or change the responsibilities or powers of Watercare in relation to the water catchment areas under the Auckland Metropolitan Drainage Act 1960, or Section 707ZZZS of the Local Government Act 1974. In addition, it is recognised that the provisions of this plan have no affect on the Resource Management Act 1991 matters, except to the extent they are incorporated through a planning instrument, or unless the Act authorises it to be taken into account.

The public are allowed to access the area and Watercare has provided a relatively high level of visitor facilities, such as toilets and picnic facilities, in the vicinity of the dams. The council will work with Watercare to explore opportunities for the future management of these visitor facilities.

Service roads, some of which are sealed, offer relatively easy access to a number of remote areas within the interior of the Waitakere Ranges. Watercare operates the Rain Forest Express a narrow-gauge railway that travels on the Nihotupu tramline from Jacobson's Depot to the Upper Nihotupu Dam.

228. Manage the Water Catchment Area in terms of the "Deed of Lease, Licence and Agreement to Licence" and the associated Annual Operations Plan, in association with Watercare Services Ltd.
229. Implement pest plant and animal control programmes in partnership with Watercare Services Ltd. as lessee, to protect high ecological values in the catchment.
230. No discretionary activities will be permitted in water catchment "exclusive use land" and the "buffer land," as defined in the Watercare Lease and Licence, without the written approval of Watercare Services Limited, and Watercare Services Limited will be consulted on any proposed use and applications for discretionary use on the catchment park land, as shown in maps 19.19 – 19.21.

Whatipu

Whatipu is a remote wilderness area with high scenic qualities and access to an exposed coastline. Whatipu is accessed by a winding gravel road. It has an unsealed car park, toilet

block and an information board and interpretation shelter. The area contains extensive accreted sand flats and impounded wetlands that are classified as a Scientific Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. (Refer to the provisions for the Whatipu Scientific Reserve below.)

The area is popular with trampers, sightseers and fishermen. The hinterland behind the sand dunes consists of open pastures extending up the Whatipu Valley, surrounded by native forest covered hills and cliffs. The area contains features of historic and natural interest such as heritage buildings, Māori heritage sites, pou whenua, remnants of logging industry railways and sea caves. The Whatipu lodge has been providing accommodation since the early 1900s and is a collection of buildings, the oldest of which is the Gibbons' Homestead, built in 1867. The lodge has a campground associated with it; both are operated under licence. The area provides access to extensive tramping track systems that lead into the elevated interior of the park.

231. Manage the Whatipu area as a remote wilderness experience and wildlife protection area, recognising, in particular, the role of the adjoining scientific reserve.
232. Advocate for the retention and maintenance of Whatipu Road as a road serving a remote location.
233. Include in visitor facilities an unsealed car park and toilets at the arrival area, and a combined information and interpretation shelter.
234. Review the design of the interpretation shelter.
235. Improve signage in the arrival area.
236. In public education and interpretation, emphasise the role of the scientific reserve, the historic and cultural significance of the area, and the conservation programmes being undertaken.
237. Maintain signage in the car park covering safe fishing practices.
238. Manage tracks leading into the area as tramping tracks suitable for people with moderate to high levels of fitness and tramping footwear.
239. Continue to implement the recommendations of the Whatipu Lodge Conservation Plan 2000, the Proposed Remedial Works for Whatipu Lodge 2003, the Liebergreen Cottage Conservation Plan 2003, and the Liebergreen Cottage Guidelines for the Conservation, Repair and Continued Use of the Interiors 2007.
240. Manage the Whatipu Lodge complex, bach and campground under licence, for short-stay accommodation.
241. Remove unauthorised structures and caravans from the Whatipu campground.
242. Review farming in the Whatipu Valley, ensuring the retention of suitable areas of open space and undertaking pest plant control.
243. Undertake riparian management of the Whatipu Stream and its tributaries, in accordance with policy 8.3.1.3.

244. Limit organised sporting events involving 50 or more people, to three per year, in order to protect the wilderness and remote qualities of the area, as set out in policy 28 above.

Whatipu Scientific Reserve

The reserve area extends from Paratutae in the south to Karekare Point in the north, covering 820ha. It is a dynamic coastal environment of high scientific interest, containing extensive accreted sand flats and impounded wetlands.

The reserve was classified in 2002 as a scientific reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, at which time the Department of Conservation transferred the reserve's management to the council. The Reserves Act specifies that a scientific reserve is for "protecting and preserving in perpetuity for scientific study, research, education, and the benefit of the country, ecological associations, plant or animal communities, types of soil, geomorphological phenomena, and like matters of special interest."

The scientific reserve status recognises the national importance of Whatipu and all activities and management in the scientific reserve must be in accordance with the parameters set out in the Act. A conservation plan for the reserve has been prepared by the council which consolidates the information on the physical and ecological values of the reserve, and includes management recommendations. The high level recommendations from this conservation plan have been included in the policies below.

The vegetation associations, sequences and habitat values of Whatipu are not known to occur anywhere else in the region and at only a few sites nationwide. The reserve includes the largest wetland complex in the region and due to the diverse range and large extent of habitat at Whatipu, provides many feeding, roosting and breeding sites for birds. It is home to threatened species, including NZ dotterel, and threatened plant species that occur in the wetlands and on the interface with the sea. The extensive pingao on the dunes is regionally unique.

There are also a number of nationally significant geological features and unique associations including the rock platforms, caves and sand plains. The sand flat itself is the best example in New Zealand of rapid recent coastal sand aggradation. The Whatipu caves and the pyroclastic dikes are also nationally significant.

Due to the sensitive nature of the scientific reserve, the council will take a precautionary approach to its management. Recreation is not provided as a function of scientific reserves; however use for recreation can be compatible as long as it does not impact on the primary purpose of the reserve. While low impact informal activities will generally be allowed, high impact group activities, such as organised sporting events, will be restricted. There are two small remote campgrounds within the reserve that pre-date the scientific reserve classification: one near the Whatipu Caves and the other at Tunnel Point near the entrance to the Pararaha Valley. These sites cater for 20 campers each, and toilets are the only facilities provided.

245. Manage the scientific reserve to protect: its ecological values, including native species, natural habitats, biodiversity and ecosystems; and to protect its geological and geomorphological values.
246. Implement the conservation plan for the scientific reserve, with particular emphasis on the protection of nesting sea and shore birds, protecting threatened plants, and undertaking pest plant and animal control programmes.

247. Establish and implement a pest plant control programme which focuses on:
 - a) controlling exotic grasses ie pampas, Indian doab, kikuyu, marram, and Paspalum species to levels where they no longer interfere with natural processes,
 - b) controlling low-incidence pest plants which have the capacity of significantly modifying communities and or successional pathways to zero density,
 - c) systematically controlling gorse,
 - d) attempting to eradicate all new incursions, and
 - e) attempting the eradication of alligator weed from the lakes.
248. Develop and implement an integrated pest animal control programme, including adjoining land, to protect the biodiversity values of the site.
249. Support and work with community groups, such as the Friends of Whatipu and the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society on restoration programmes and other community initiatives to deliver protection, restoration and education programmes.
250. Prepare and implement a biosecurity standard operating procedure (SOP) for all staff, researchers and volunteers working in the reserve and promote biosecurity messages to those visiting the reserve to reduce the risk of spreading pest plants or diseases.
251. Prepare a vegetation map of the reserve as a basis for management and monitoring.
252. Support and provide opportunities for research within the reserve, developing a list of preferred research topics.
253. Manage the scientific reserve as a remote destination with limited basic facilities to enable the appreciation of the reserve's natural, historical and cultural values.
254. Investigate education opportunities, such as guided walks, a self-guided trail, interpretation and factsheets.
255. Limit the impact of park visitors on the reserve by:
 - a) directing foot traffic to appropriate access points and rationalising the number of informal access points to, and tracks through the reserve to confine visitors to specific areas and destinations, and to ensure these avoid sensitive areas,
 - b) clearly identifying tracks through the use of marker posts, if necessary, to protect the wetland environments, and manage access to and from the Pararaha Valley,
 - c) monitoring the use of the Whatipu Cave and Tunnel campgrounds to ensure no detrimental impacts of this activity.
256. Relocate the toilet at the Tunnel Point campground so it is in more of a discrete location.
257. Undertake remedial work to minimise corrosion of Tunnel Point boiler.
258. Dogs are prohibited from the Whatipu Scientific Reserve, except when being used for operational purposes.

259. Ensure that all activities approved in the Whatipu Scientific Reserve are consistent with the purpose of the scientific reserve and prohibit any group activities over 50 persons and all organised sporting events, except on the eastern end of the reserve in the vicinity of the arrival area and Paratutai on existing tracks and grassed areas, where these do not detract from the purposes of the scientific reserve.

15.19.6 Recreation and use activities

Permitted activities

The table below shows the permitted activities that are allowed on the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park, as outlined in section 11.3. It also outlines any permanent restrictions that will be applied to the permitted activities for this park.

If an activity is not listed in this table, it may be allowed as a controlled (see table below) or discretionary activity in terms of section 11.5, unless they are prohibited in terms of section 11.6 of this plan.

The council may also apply temporary restrictions to any permitted activities (refer to policy 11.3.1.2). Any temporary restrictions will be advertised in park brochures, signs or using other media.

Permitted activities	Status/restriction
Barbeques	Permitted at facilities provided. Portable gas barbecues are permitted at picnic sites. Fire restrictions will apply over the summer period.
Boat access	Boat ramp at Little Huia and Cornwallis only. Hand launched craft can be launched from these and other beaches.
Dogs	Dogs are generally permitted on a lead in the Waitakere Ranges but are excluded from: all picnic areas, campgrounds, water supply dam buffer lands and reservoirs, grassed areas at Cornwallis, the Whatipu Scientific Reserve and adjoining Crown foreshore and Pararaha Valley, Lion Rock, North Piha, South Piha (south of Lion Rock outside of daylight saving hours), Lake Wainamu and surrounding areas, and the Tasman View Lookout Track. Dogs are subject to Waitakere City Council dog control policies and bylaws which are subject to change and reference should also be made to the relevant Waitakere City Council website and the council website. Council will seek to have these policies amended for Cascades-Kauri (refer to policy 82 above).
Informal individual, family or group activities.	Informal groups are limited to 50 persons in order to manage conflict with informal recreation activities. Groups larger than 50 must obtain a discretionary activity consent. With the exception of Cornwallis where the limit will be 100 persons. (Refer to section 11.5 on discretionary activities). Informal activities generally include, picnicking, walking, tramping, and informal games (refer to section 11.3 and Glossary)
Mountain biking	Mountain biking is prohibited. Opportunities maybe provided in the future for family cycling with the Exhibition Drive extension.
Running, tramping and	Off-track activity is prohibited in water catchment areas and

Permitted activities	Status/restriction
walking	is actively discouraged elsewhere unless approved by permit. Restrictions may apply to walking on farmland during farm operations or in some locations in order to protect livestock, or in areas identified as kauri dieback zones. Phytosanitary measures may be required when using tracks within kauri dieback zones.

Controlled activities

The table below shows the controlled activities that are allowed on the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park, as outlined in section 11.4. It also outlines where information on permanent restrictions to controlled activities can be found. Note: controlled activities require prior booking through the council.

If an activity is not listed in this table, it may be allowed as a discretionary activity in terms of section 11.5, unless they are prohibited in section 11.6 of this plan.

The council may also apply temporary restrictions to any controlled activities (refer to policy 11.4.1.2). Any temporary restrictions will be advertised in park brochures, signs or using other media.

Controlled activities	Description of site (if applicable)	Restrictions/conditions
Abseiling	Karamatura Valley only.	Conditions on booking confirmation.
Baches	Keddlle House at Anawhata (6 people) and Barr Cottage at Little Huia (6 people).	Conditions on booking confirmation.
Campervans / caravans	Self-contained campervans in designated parking areas at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arataki (5 Vehicles), • Barn Paddock (5 Vehicles), • Cascades Falls (5 Vehicles), • Cornwallis/Pine Ave (5 Vehicles), • Glen Esk Road(5 Vehicles), and • Log Race Road (5 Vehicles). Campervans and caravans permitted at Whatipu Campground (managed under licence)	Require self-containment certificate in car parks; further conditions outlined on booking confirmation and camping pass. Apply to licensee
Camping	Vehicle based campgrounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barn Paddock campground, Karamatura (60) and McCreadies Paddock, Karekare (20) • Backcountry campgrounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karamatura Stream (40) • Odlins (20) • Pararaha (40) • Pae o te Rangī (30) • Tunnel (20) • Whatipu Caves (20) New vehicle based campground proposed at Craw Homestead at Anawhata Reinstatement or expansion of the	Conditions on booking confirmation and camping pass.

	Tanekaha (Karamatura) and Pararaha campgrounds as determined by demand.	
Lodge Accommodation	Whatipu lodge, bach and campground (100) (managed under private licence); Huia and Kiwanis Lodges (Huia), Project K lodge (Little Huia).	Bookings for Whatipu done through the licensee. Conditions for other lodges on booking confirmation or pass
Designated sites	Two special premium designated sites and two basic designated sites at Cornwallis. Proposed designated sites at Cascades-Kauri and Karamatura.	Listed in Recreation Notes and on booking confirmation or pass
Meeting venues	Arataki Lecture Hall and Audio-visual Theatre.	Conditions on booking confirmation or pass
Recreational horse riding	Horse riding is prohibited from the park, including water catchment areas, except on the Pae O Te Rangi farmland.	Conditions listed on recreation notes and horse riding pass. Restrictions may apply during lambing, when ground conditions are unsuitable or when it conflicts with park operations.

Leases / licences

The table below identifies existing leases and licences operating on the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. (Note licences may be surrendered and new ones may be created during the term of this plan.)

Holder	Type	Expiry date	Notes
Sixtee Investments / K E Turner	Licence	2011	Grazing at Huia and Whatipu.
Aranui Antiques / Lockwood and Lawson	Licence	2014	Rose Hellaby House – Antiques sales business – open to the public.
Telecom	Licence	2009 (currently under review – potentially 2029)	Telecommunications mast at Waiatarua.
Vector Ltd.	Licence	2010 – May	Telecommunications at Laingholm.
Auckland University Tramping Club	Licence	2010	Tramping Hut at Anawhata - also available for public use by permit issued by the council.
Buckland and Woon	Licence	2010 – March	Grazing at Huia.
Mansell	Licence	2010 – March	Grazing at Huia.
Auckland Outdoor Activities Club	Licence (under consideration)	2010 – March	Designated use of Keddle House for tramping club purposes; open to the public outside of these times.
Waitakere Golf Club	Lease	2010 - Dec	Public golf course at Cascades- Kauri Park.

Holder	Type	Expiry date	Notes
NZ Scouting Association	Licence	2011	Scout den on Bishop Reserve, Titirangi.
Adventure Camp Piha Trust Board	Licence	2011	Outdoor Education camp at Stedfast Park
Ark in the Park	MOU	2011	Undertaking conservation programmes over 1200ha in Cascades area with ability to extend to 2000ha.
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research	Licence	2011	Monitoring facility at Arataki.
Boys Brigade Northern Regional Trust	Licence	2013	Hut at Piha, beside old school.
Whatipu Lodge and Campground Ltd.	Licence	2013	Whatipu Lodge, bach and campground accommodation.
National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research	Licence	2017	Sea level measuring device at Anawhata.
Telecom	Licence	2019	Telecommunications mast at Piha.
Montana	Sponsorship	2020	Sponsorship of the Montana Trail.
D S Taylor	Licence	2020	Encroachment on park land at Karekare.
Huia Settlers Museum Society Inc.	Licence	2021	Use of building for museum; open to public.
Waitakere City Council	Lease	2028	Water reservoir at Laingholm.
Watercare Services Ltd	Lease	2092	Metropolitan water supply catchments; open to public except for the exclusive zones around the water supply dams.
QUEII (Queen Elizabeth II National Trust)	Management Agreement		Lake Wainamu

For an up to date list of leases and licences please refer to please refer to the council website.

15.19.7 Monitoring and reporting

The council will monitor aspects of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park in accordance with section 5.7 Research, monitoring and benchmarking. In addition to the standard monitoring programme, the council will undertake specific monitoring of the ranges as part of the council's state of the environment reporting. As a component of this, a number of site-

specific monitoring programmes are undertaken focussing on assessing biodiversity benefits of conservation management.

The Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act requires the local authorities to jointly monitor aspects of the Act, and provide a report no later than five years after the commencement of the Act and then on a five yearly cycle.

The council will also encourage and support research if it contributes to the understanding of the natural values of the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and contributes to the objectives of this plan.

259. Undertake the Waitakere Terrestrial Monitoring Programme (see outline below) and work with the Waitakere City Council to jointly monitor and report on the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Act 2008 monitoring requirements, including:
 - a) the state of the environment in the heritage area,
 - b) the progress made towards achieving the objectives and
 - c) the funding impact arising from activities to be undertaken specifically to give effect to the Act.
260. Monitor and report periodically on the effectiveness of specific management programmes in the Whatipu Scientific Reserve.
261. Undertake long term monitoring of kauri health along tracks and in forest plots, and assessments of the efficacy of programmes initiated to control kauri dieback.
262. Undertake baseline monitoring and monitor the environmental impacts of recreational activity on the park, including pre and post-event monitoring, and periodically report on the cumulative range and number of activities in the park.

Waitakere Terrestrial Biodiversity Monitoring Programme:

At present, Hochstetter's frog, possums, and rodents, are monitored across the Waitakere's, and birds and invertebrates are monitored in specific locations (eg, Ark in the Park). However, to adequately address the monitoring objectives of the WRHA Act 2008, and in the Regional Parks Management Plan it is necessary to develop a comprehensive terrestrial monitoring programme (which includes monitoring of forest, wetlands and duneland ecosystems). This programme will ensure a systematic, strategic approach centred on State of the Environment reporting, which includes assessing the effectiveness and efficiencies of biodiversity related policies and management objectives. The programme will be compatible with and form part of the regional biodiversity monitoring programme that is currently in development.

Programme objectives:

- To quantify the existing state of indigenous biodiversity and monitor changes in pattern and important processes through time
- To identify key threats to indigenous biodiversity
- To assess and improve the effectiveness and efficiencies of biodiversity related management and policy development
- To contribute to public understanding of issues, status, trends, and management
- Identify and remedy significant gaps in biodiversity information required for policy and management
- To fulfil statutory monitoring and reporting requirements

Field monitoring will be conducted to achieve stated objectives across the WRHA and in the Hunua's and surrounding foothills (reference site) and within key ecological restoration initiatives (ie, Ark in the Park and the Kokako Management Area).

Monitoring will involve Database and Information analyses (eg, indigenous land cover status and trends and consented development), and field monitoring of indigenous plants and birds, and invasive weeds and mammalian pests. Monitoring will begin in late 2009 and existing field monitoring programmes (eg, of Hochstetters frogs) will be integrated where appropriate. This programme includes the production of technical reports, annual summary reports, and five yearly State of the Region reports.