

DRAFT AMENDMENT TO THE PARKS NETWORK PLAN

East Harbour Regional Park - Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui

Legal status

REGIONAL PARK/FOREST	TITLE HELD BY	LEGISLATIVE STATUS
East Harbour Regional Park – Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui	Wellington Regional Council	Scenic Reserve 1(a) 284.6 hectares
	Crown – Department of Conservation (land vested in Wellington Regional Council)	Currently Recreation Reserve, propose change to Historic Reserve 10.6 hectares

Territorial Authority: Hutt City Council

Note that there are three other titles located within, but separate to, the Park: a section of private property, the maritime reserve (where the lighthouse and NIWA buildings are situated) and a reserve used for police purposes.

Part of the property in the vicinity of the Wainuiomata River mouth is subject to a Crown Grant issued to Winstone Aggregates. The Grant authorises Winstones to extract minerals (river gravels and sand) and is for a fixed 100 year term starting from February 1985. No recent extraction has occurred on the land. Greater Wellington has formally approached Winstones asking it to consider the surrender of the Grant.

Background

Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui is a prominent headland located at the south-eastern edge of Te Whanganui-a-Tara (the Wellington Harbour). The area is recognised for its uplifted marine terraces, which create a sweeping landscape punctuated by the Baring Head lighthouse compound. The 295 hectares of reserve is home to a number of rare or threatened coastal plants as well as a grey scrub community growing on unstable rock faces. This seemingly barren landscape is home to a number of lizard species living on the scree slopes, various coastal birds nest on shingle beaches and native fish frequent the lower reaches of the Wainuiomata River. The area is popular for fisherman, both for sea and river angling. Rock climbers enjoy the bouldering opportunities at the headland, below the Baring Head lighthouse. The marine terrace was one of the first sites where hang gliding occurred on a regular basis in the 1970s in New Zealand.

Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui has been used by a number of iwi over time as a place for habitation, fishing and cultivation. When the Treaty of Waitangi was signed, Te Atiawa held manawhenua over the area. The block of land that encompasses Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui was awarded to Māori under the McCleverty Deeds of 1847 and it is likely that this area was

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used for grazing sheep. Some of the river flats were used by Māori for cultivation and were likely connected to Parangarehu Pa and adjacent wheat fields on the coast. In 1912, the Native Land Court determined titles and certificates of title were issued for subdivision the following year. It is possible that by this time Pakeha farmers had already leased or bought the land from its Māori owners for sheep farming.

The lighthouse site was donated by Eric Riddiford, a local landowner and farmer. The lighthouse and nearby houses were built from 1933-34 and finally opened in 1935. It was New Zealand's first electric powered coastal lighthouse. Initially there were two keepers and then one from 1960 until 1989 when the lighthouse became fully automated. The homes and structures associated with keeping the lighthouse remain today.

The area was also used for military purposes. Prior to World War II, barracks and a fortress observation post were built on Para Hill (where the trig station is located). After the outbreak of war, additional accommodation was built close by. The lighthouse compound hosted a naval signal station and was staffed, at least in part, by the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps. This site was later used by the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research for the installation of a meteorological station. National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA) now operates the station which has an internationally significant role in atmospheric sampling for greenhouse gas emissions.

In 1992, the recreation reserve where the lighthouse compound is located was vested in Greater Wellington and became part of East Harbour Regional Park. The surrounding land remained in private ownership until 2010 when it was purchased by Greater Wellington with contributions from the Nature Heritage Fund, Department of Conservation, Hutt City Council and a private benefactor. In 2011, this land was gazetted Scenic Reserve.

The iwi authority for this area is the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika. The mandated iwi fisheries organisation (MIO) - Te Atiawa ki to Upoko o te Ika a Maui Potiki Trust - also has an interest in the coastal marine area adjacent to Baring Head.

Key park characteristics

Land

- Geological features include raised beaches and a series of uplifted marine terraces and escarpments
- Grey scrub community and skink habitat
- Wainuiomata River lower reaches and salt water estuary
- The unique range of ecosystems which have not been fragmented

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People

- Internationally important atmospheric sampling station operated by NIWA
- History of Māori occupation
- Lighthouse compound with associated buildings, adjacent to the lighthouse
- WWII Observation posts and barracks
- A brown trout fishery and rock climbing area
- Scenic value of a dramatic undeveloped landscape, backdrop to the Wellington harbour

Management focus

The focus for East Harbour Regional Park (Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui) is to:

1. Protect biodiversity, heritage, geology and landscape values
2. Provide for compatible recreation
3. Ensure that any developments do not compromise the atmospheric sampling work
4. Investigate options to reuse the lighthouse houses

Specific policies

Biodiversity and ecosystems

- a. To source plants for restoration projects firstly from within the site and, if unavailable, from the nearest source of similar habitat type.
- b. To remove introduced flora and fauna where practicable and affordable except where:
 - Plants contribute to the historic values and setting of the lighthouse compound, and do not cause ecological damage
 - Plants or trees are part of archaeological evidence of previous occupation by Maori (e.g. karaka trees)
 - Pasture or similar vegetation is the best way to maintain the scenic, recreational, historic or cultural values of the site
 - Sheep and/or cattle are the best management option for mitigating fire risk.
- c. To monitor key species (eg, rare and threatened plants or animals) to understand the effect of pest plant/animal control in areas where stock are removed, whilst retaining the option

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to reintroduce grazing if it is found to be a more effective management tool to maintain these values.

***Explanation:** The general approach is to remove stock from sensitive areas to protect the ecological values. While grazed areas tend to have lower pest animal numbers, grazing can also damage sensitive native plants and native fauna habitats. A review in 3 to 5 years will help to determine if a different land management policy is needed.*

Landscape and geological features

- d. To protect the park's key landscape features and values from inappropriate use and development. Specifically the:
- Two uplifted marine terraces (listed in Hutt City Council District Plan as a significant natural resource site)
 - Raised shingle beach.
- e. No new buildings or structures will be located on the marine terraces within the Scenic Reserve where these would affect the aesthetic value of the landscape, unless such structures are essential for the management of the area and cannot reasonably be located elsewhere.

***Explanation:** The marine terraces are a key focal point when viewed from other areas (eg, Wellington City, the harbour entrance, flight paths) and also add to the sense of space and remoteness when visiting the area.*

Cultural heritage

- f. To manage key sites of historic and cultural heritage significance in the Park, which include:
- Parangarahu Pa site, and the wheatfields to the north
 - Māori garden sites adjacent to the Wainuiomata River
 - Observation posts at Para Point
 - The lighthouse compound (which includes the gardens, shelterbelt and buildings)
 - Infrastructure related to the compound (bridge, road, old pump house and pipes).

***Explanation:** Working with iwi is essential to ensure that sites are not affected when installing park infrastructure (fences, roading etc.). Where new sites are discovered, Greater Wellington's Accidental Discovery Protocol must be followed. Where damage is from natural changes or vandalism, iwi will be notified and agreement reached on any actions needed.*

- g. To develop a heritage conservation plan for the lighthouse compound which includes the possibility to reuse the lighthouse houses as visitor accommodation.

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Explanation: Wooden buildings benefit from being inhabited or used frequently. Further work will identify suitable uses for the buildings which can retain their heritage and structural integrity and be complementary to the general management intentions for the area.

- h. To interpret the range of stories associated with Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui
- i. To work with Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika to identify and interpret sites of value to Māori.

Land management

- j. To retain grazing in areas of low ecological significance for the purpose of mitigating fire risk.
- k. To provide an easement for Maritime NZ, NIWA, NZ Police and the private property owner for them to access their facilities.
- l. To manage public access to the lighthouse compound in a way that takes into account the security needs of Maritime NZ, NIWA and NZ Police facilities.
- m. To restrict access to, or undertake removal of, structures that put public safety at risk.
- n. To maintain the existing roading network for restricted vehicle entry only. Restricted vehicle access will be provided for management purposes, existing easements, volunteer activities Greater Wellington approved events and concessions. Note that this does not restrict pedestrian or cycle access.
- o. To ensure that Park operations and any proposed developments do not unduly interfere with atmospheric sampling. In particular, Greater Wellington will consult NIWA with regard to any potentially emitting activities at or near the lighthouse compound.

Visitor Services

- p. To maintain the following as secondary entrances to the Park:
 - Vehicle Bridge
 - Wainuiomata River Mouth.
- q. To develop interpretation through partnership/sponsorship based on the main themes of Māori and early settler history, maritime navigation (lighthouse keeping and ship wrecks), research, defence, geology and ecology.

Partnership in Parks

- r. To recognise the Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust, Taranaki Whanui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika relationship to East Harbour Regional Park through:
 - Access for cultural harvesting

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- An approval process for the appropriate use or removal of natural materials for commercial activities / purposes
 - Identifying and developing interpretation related to cultural sites
 - Protection and restoration of biodiversity values.
- s. To liaise with Hutt City Council, Department of Conservation and private landowners regarding recreational linkages between open spaces areas and to ensure vehicles are limited to roads and car parks. This includes an agreement for pedestrian access over private land in Fitzroy Bay, between Baring Head/Orua-pouanui and the Parangarahu Lakes area.
- t. To liaise with Hutt City Council, Historic Places Trust, NIWA and Police on the management and use of the lighthouse compound and associated buildings.
- u. To support the partnership with Friends of Baring Head Trust, Forest and Bird and MIRO in meeting the outcomes of this Plan.
- v. To work with Maritime New Zealand to provide visitors with access to the lighthouse tower periodically.
- w. To ensure that any new partnerships contribute to advocacy, restoration or educational outcomes for Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui.

AREA	DESCRIPTION	REASONS FOR SIGNIFICANCE
Baring Head / Ōrua-pouanui	Headland	Listed in Hutt City Council District Plan as significant natural resource site. Previously recorded as a major nesting site for black-backed gulls.
Coastal platform	Raised shingle beach and rock stacks	The shingle beaches provide habitat for the coastal <i>Notoreas</i> moth (chronically threatened), variable oystercatcher (at risk), banded dotterel (nationally vulnerable), Cook Straight Blue Penguin, Caspian tern (nationally vulnerable), katipo (chronically threatened), red admiral butterfly and Myers' cicada (At risk) as well as lizard species. Cushion plants and rare ecosystems of native sand binding plants are present as well as <i>Muehlenbeckia complexa</i> and mingi mingi at the toe of the scarp.
Valley escarpment	Steep screes extending from the top of the marine terrace to the river flats.	Contains grey scrub community (proposed conservation status of Serious Decline) dominated by Grey's groundsel (naturally uncommon), matagouri (regionally rare), <i>Clematis afoliata</i> and some

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AREA	DESCRIPTION	REASONS FOR SIGNIFICANCE
		mistletoes. High lizard numbers recorded including spotted skinks. Regenerated forest at the northern end included a grove of karaka trees.
Coastal escarpment	The cliffs from the toe of the scarp to the marine terrace above	Species present here are not found elsewhere on the property. Mainly divaricating shrubs such as mingimingi and pohuehue (<i>Muehlenbeckia complexa</i>) with flaxland dominating further up the slopes. Species recorded include <i>Pimelea carnos</i> a hybrid, tupata (<i>Coprosma repens</i>), speargrass (<i>Aciphylla squarrosa</i>) and species of fern.
Marine Terrace	2 uplifted marine terraces	Listed in the Hutt City Council District Plan as being of regional/national significance.
Wainuiomata River	Lower reaches of the river including a tidal estuary with gravel bar at the mouth.	Listed as a Water of National Importance. It contains a number of native fish species: short and long finned eel, inanga, lamprey, common, giant and red fin bully and giant kokopu. <i>Muehlenbeckia astonii</i> (nationally endangered) present. Grey duck (nationally critical). Feeding & roosting site for various coastal birds e.g. Pied stilt, gulls, terns

Projected future changes

Where appropriate, these are represented on the Map of Projected Future Changes (Page 13)

1. Repair boundary fences to be stock proof
2. Remove stock from ecologically sensitive areas (refer Policies b. and c.)
3. Prepare a biodiversity area management plan for sites in the park with high biodiversity value (coastal lagoon, scarp, dunes-shingle beaches, wetlands)
4. Prepare a species list, including recording key species for seed collection and propagation, for restoration projects in the park. Work with community groups to initiate the restoration process.
5. Improve safety and signage on the internal road (beyond the vehicle bridge) to allow for shared pedestrian/cycle/vehicle use

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6. Replace the vehicle bridge when necessary for safety, for both the public and in conjunction with easement holders.
7. Establish a network of tracks and make some suitable for multi-use (walking, cycles and horses). Investigate a new route from the climbing boulders to Baring Head lighthouse compound
8. Develop a car park at Wainuiomata River mouth to contain vehicles in this space and keep vehicles off the beaches
9. Investigate the feasibility of a small car park near the lighthouse compound and a link road to the existing internal road, taking into account policies (e) and (f).
10. Re-classify the reserve containing the lighthouse compound from Recreation Reserve to Historic Reserve
11. Allow for an interpretation centre/day use facility at the generator building for day use. Investigate a toilet at an appropriate location nearby in consultation with NIWA
12. Work with tangata whenua, Hutt City Council and Historic Places Trust for appropriate recognition of key sites, including registration of the lighthouse compound
13. Consult with tangata whenua and the NZ Historic Places Trust in the preparation of a conservation plan for sites of significance
14. Restore the historic pump shed (a Friends of Baring Head project)
15. Prepare a heritage conservation plan for the lighthouse compound
16. Undertake maintenance of the lighthouse cottages as outlined in a conservation plan to prevent their deterioration and preserve them for possible further use.
17. Investigate installing foot/cycle bridge near Wainuiomata River mouth car park which links to track network
18. Investigate a bridle track at the northern end (to avoid the steep road to the marine terrace).

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For more information:

Baring Head ecological values (Greater Wellington, June 2011)

Baring Head: Recreation and Tourism Options Study (Tourism Resource Consultants, March 2011)

Research Report on Heritage Features: Baring Head, Wellington (NZ Historic Places Trust, June 2011)

Orua-Poua-Nui: Baring Head – Cultural Values Report (Raukura Consultants, February 2011)

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Rules applying to activities in the Baring Head/Ōrua-pouanui area of East Harbour Regional Parks & Forests*

*This table updates Table 9 from the Parks Network Plan, found in Chapter 7 Rules for use and development.

ACTIVITY CATEGORY: ✓ Allowed ○ Managed → Restricted ✘ Prohibited

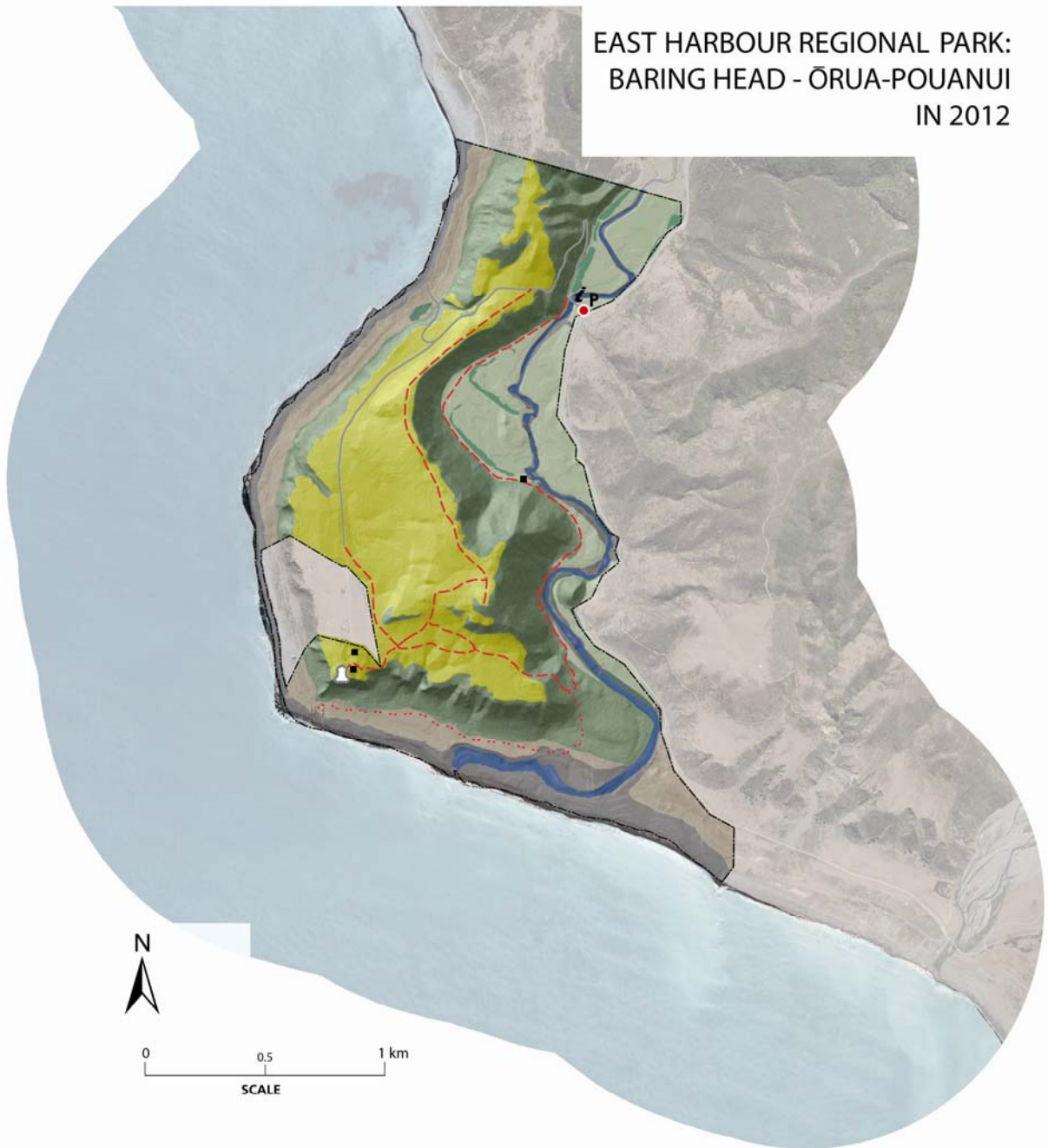
ACTIVITY IN PARKS	Activity category	SPECIFIC RULES
Aircraft landings	→	
Animals, excluding dogs/horses	→	
Ashes – burial/spreading	✘	
Camping (designated sites)	✘	<i>Note: Camping is provided at Catchpool Conservation Campsite (administered by DOC).</i>
Camping (wilderness based)	✘	
Collecting natural materials	○	<i>Note: Greater Wellington administers a permit system which is run consultation with the local iwi</i>
Commercial activity	→	
Dog walking	✘	
Events (commercial, or larger than 30 people)	→	
Filming (commercial)	→	
Firearms (refer also to Hunting)	○	<i>Duck shooting by permit administered through Fish and Game. Any other hunting is undertaken only for management purposes.</i>
Fires (open)	✘	
Fireworks	✘	
Fishing	✓	
Hang gliding / parapenting	→	<i>Where vehicles are required for this activity, a concession must be obtained, which will include limits on number of entry days and vehicles.</i>
Horse riding	○	<i>Riders require a key to access the area and must follow designated tracks. Due to safety reason, no horses allowed on the road ascending</i>

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ACTIVITY IN PARKS	<i>Activity category</i>	SPECIFIC RULES
		<i>from/descending to the vehicle bridge.</i>
Hunting	✘	<i>Duck shooting by permit administered through Fish and Game. All other hunting prohibited.</i>
Informal games	✓	
Lease/licence	➔	<i>Note: This area is subject to requirements of the Reserves Act 1977 for any applications for a lease or licence.</i>
Motorised recreation (Cat A: club/casual)	✘	<i>There is restricted vehicle travel only (Refer to Policy m.) on roads within the park.</i>
Motorised recreation (Cat B: special events)	✘	<i>Due to the sensitive ecology and landscape there are no opportunities for off road access.</i>
Mountain biking	✓	
Picnicking	✓	
Swimming	✓	
Walking, tramping, running	✓	

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EAST HARBOUR REGIONAL PARK: BARING HEAD - ŌRUA-POUANUI IN 2012



Natural Features

- Marine Terraces
- Escarpments
- River flats
- Raised beach
- Beach & river gravels
- Wetlands
- High point
- Rivers and streams

Park Facilities: General

- Minor Entrance
- Map board
- Carpark
- Buildings

Park Facilities: Tracks

- Shared Gravel road (refer to Rules)
- Shared track (refer to Rules)
- Marked route (Walking)

Other Features

- Lighthouse and NIWA climate station

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EAST HARBOUR REGIONAL PARK: BARING HEAD - ŌRUA-POUANUI Projected future changes

