
**REVIEWING THE MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR THE
WELLINGTON BOTANIC GARDEN, OTARI WILTON'S BUSH,
BOLTON STREET MEMORIAL PARK AND TRUBY KING PARK**

1. Purpose of report

To seek approval to review the management plans for the Wellington Botanic Garden, Otari Wilton's Bush, Bolton Street Memorial Park and Truby King Park and incorporate these into one document, (new cluster plan) under section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977.

2. Executive summary

It is the intention to review the following management plans and combine them into a new cluster plan.

- Truby King Park Conservation and Management Plan 1993
- The Combined Management Plan for the Wellington Botanic Garden, Anderson Park and Bolton St Memorial Park 2002, and
- The Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve Management Plan 2007

Our approach is to streamline reviews and amalgamate reserves of similar values into one cluster plan. The new cluster plan will provide an integrated and consistent approach to garden management; build on past achievements, guide decisions and show where we need to focus our efforts over the next 10 years. The reasons why the review is happening now include; the need for strategic alignment, key issues around relevance, values, use and priorities, community expectations and age and content of existing plans.

The Plans will be reviewed under the process outlined in section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977. However, it is proposed that there is no need to notify Council's intention to review the plans and to proceed directly to the development of a draft plan for formal consultation in 2014.

Approval is being sought for the review of the management plans for the Botanic Garden Cluster and the Project Scope attached as Appendix One.

3. Recommendations

Officers recommend that the Strategy and Policy Committee:

1. *Receive the information.*

2. *Recommend to Council that it approve the review of the following management plans for the Botanic Garden Cluster and incorporate these plans into one document, in accordance with section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977.*
 - *Truby King Park Conservation and Management Plan 1993*
 - *The Combined Management Plan for the Wellington Botanic Garden, Anderson Park and Bolton St Memorial Park 2002, and*
 - *the Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve Management Plan 2007*
3. *Recommend to Council that it approves the scope of the review outlined in Appendix One*
4. *Note that public notice of Council's intention to review the plans is not required (under the Reserves Act) and will not materially assist with its preparation.*

4. Background

The Reserves Act (1977) requires all reserves, for which the Council is the administering body, to be covered by an approved management plan. A management plan provides the community with certainty about the function and management of reserves and enables the Council to more efficiently manage them under one plan. The Act also requires the administering body, in this case the Council to keep the plans under continuous review so they adapt to changing circumstances.

4.1 Summary Information

The Council is intending to review the management plans for the Botanic Garden Cluster and incorporate these plans into one document.

The management plans to be reviewed are;

- **Truby King Park Conservation and Management Plan 1993**
- **The Combined Management Plan for the Wellington Botanic Garden, Anderson Park and Bolton St Memorial Park 2002, and**
- **The Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve Management Plan 2007**

For the purpose of this report and the attached Project Scope, these four areas will be referred to as Gardens and are in the Botanic Gardens Cluster.

All four Gardens in the Cluster are complementary to each other and share similar heritage, landscape, botanical, educational and recreational values.

It is timely to undertake the Review now because;

- **Strategic Alignment is needed**

The Botanic Gardens are a significant education and recreation resource for the City. It is timely that their role and contribution to Wellington's smart vision, Our Living City programme and Our Capital Spaces is clearly articulated, current and purposeful. They will help to showcase Wellington as an Eco City.

- **There are several issues that need addressing in the revised plan**

International trends and roles for botanical gardens are changing and there is now a greater emphasis on environmental education and conservation leadership. There are several issues that need addressing and incorporating into the plan to realise these opportunities. These include; enriching the visitor experience, advancing education and research opportunities, greater co-ordination and consistency across the cluster, mature tree management, establishing development priorities and identifying additional resourcing options.

- **Community Expectations and Certainty**

Stakeholders expect the Review process to proceed this year. They have been involved with identifying key issues through workshops and discussions. The new plan will provide the community with relevant information, certainty and confidence on how we will manage the Botanic Gardens over the next 10 years.

- **Reserve Management Planning Process and Forward Programme**

Current management plans for the Botanic Gardens Cluster Review have been identified as in need of review. It has been some time since the last reviews (except Otari). Many of the initiatives in the current plans have been achieved. The new plan will provide an integrated and consistent approach to garden management; build on past achievements, guide decisions and identify priorities over the next 10 years.

The new cluster plan will continue to respect the uniqueness and individuality of each Garden. This involves developing a vision for each and establishing goals to achieve these visions.

4.2 Strategic framework

Our Capital Spaces – An Open Space and Recreation Framework for Wellington will provide the strategic context for the review. In particular the management plan will be consistent with the four outcomes of Our Capital Spaces:

- *Getting everyone active and healthy*
- *Protecting our birds, nature, streams, and landscapes*
- *Contributing to Wellington's outstanding quality of life*
- *Doing it together.*

The management plan will focus on the following priorities and key actions:

Outcome 3 – Contributing to Wellington’s outstanding quality of life

PRIORITIES	ACTIONS
3.1 Our natural attractions showcase our environment and conservation values	3.1.1 Otari-Wilton’s Bush, Wellington Botanic Garden, Outer Green Belt, Wellington Town Belt, Skyline Walkway, Zealandia and Wellington Zoo continue to showcase Wellington as an eco-city (Ex)

4.3 Community Engagement

Early engagement has been undertaken with key stakeholders through workshops, meetings and email. Their feedback has assisted in the identification of the key issues discussed in the Scope, attached as Appendix A.

Workshops and meetings were held with the; Botanic Garden Staff, Otari Wilton’s Bush Trust, Friends of Wellington Botanic Garden, Friends of Bolton Street Memorial Park, Truby King House and Garden Trust, Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust , and Te Runanga o Toa Rangatira Inc.

An email explaining the Review and requesting feedback on the future management of the four Gardens was sent out to relevant community groups and residents associations. Initial feedback was received from Newtown Residents Association, NZ Historic Places Trust, Wellington Zoo, and the Wellington Botanical Society.

Officers will continue to engage with key stakeholders on specific issues during the preparation of the Draft plan.

5. Discussion

5.1 Structure of management plan

The new cluster plan will be structured around four main sections:

Section one: General policies, including education and awareness, plant collections, recreation, heritage conservation, marketing and promotion, community partnerships and rules for use and development.

Section two: Specific Garden Management Plans

This will include background information, description and historic summary of each Garden. It will include a vision for each Garden and establish goals and specific policies to achieve these visions.

Section three: Rules for use and Development

This section will outline the rules relating to the provision and management of all development and activities with the Gardens. These included activities that are allowed, managed and prohibited activities.

Section Four: Implementation Priorities

This section will provide a list of implementation actions that have been identified in section 2. Actions will be prioritised and categorised into; new initiative, existing programme or expansion of existing programme.

5.2 Identification of key issues

The issues that need addressing in the new cluster plan are described in detail in the ***Project Scope*** attached as Appendix One.

There are some common issues relating to all the Gardens such as; advancing their educational role, implementing reviews of plant collections, enriching the visitor experience, marketing and promotion, protecting landscape character, heritage conservation, and future additional resourcing.

The ***Wellington Botanic Garden*** is one of Wellington's oldest nature based attractions with an emphasis on plants in general, set in 25 hectares of heritage garden landscape. It is of national significance and offers many learning and passive recreation opportunities. In summary the issues facing the Botanic Garden over the next 10 years include; advancing the Garden's environmental education role, managing the heritage tree framework and changes in landscape character, developing a leadership role in heritage conservation, and enriching the visitor experience.

Bolton Street Memorial Park is Wellington's earliest cemetery set in a distinctive 'old world' landscape. Accentuated by aging graves and memorials, mature trees and heritage roses. The key issues facing Bolton Street Memorial Park are; greater recognition including a possible name change, heritage conservation of the graves, monuments and heritage buildings, and balancing vegetation management and landscape character.

Truby King Park is a 1.9 hectare; Wellington City Council owned historic reserve and heritage listed area located in the residential neighbourhood of Melrose. The Park was once the house and garden of Sir Frederic and Isabella Truby- King – founders of the NZ Plunket Society. The Council purchased the property from the NZ Plunket Society in 1990. The Park contains an architecturally designed homestead, family mausoleum and remnants of the original 1920's garden.

The key factors that require addressing in the new plan include;

- Reassessing the Parks role and core values.
- Finding a sustainable use for the house
- Determining the appropriate level of management/service for the garden.

Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve is nationally significant, New Zealand's only Botanic Garden dedicated solely to native plants and one of Wellington's top nature based attractions. It comprises of the largest

remaining pre-European forest remnant on the Wellington peninsula, approximately 100 hectares, and a significant natural seed source.

In 2007 the Council approved the Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve Management Plan. The vision and goals described in the plan are still relevant today and their intention will be carried over into the new plan. Changes mainly in the form of updates will occur in the detail, particularly in the policies and implementation priorities.

The key areas of the 2007 plan that need addressing and/or updating include;

- Implementation of the Collections Review 2008
- Prioritising implementation of the Landscape Development Plan
- Advancing environmental education
- Marketing and promoting Otari with emphasis on its national conservation, science and research roles.

5.3 Management planning process and timeline

The statutory process for the review of the three management plans under the Reserves Act 1977 is as follows:

1. The Council notifies its intention to review the plans and distributes a **discussion document** asking for written suggestions on the proposed plan. Consultation takes 2 months
2. Officers prepares a **draft management plan** based on the feedback
3. The Council approves the draft plan for consultation. Consultation on the draft plan takes 2 months
4. The Council considers written submissions and if people wish to be heard will hear oral submissions on the draft plan and approves the **final plan**.

The Council can determine that written suggestions on the review outlined in stage 1 would not materially assist in its preparation and dispense with this stage. It is proposed to do this for the following reasons:

- Officers have engaged with key stakeholders to help identify key issues
- The Gardens have carried out regular visitor research surveys which have assisted in the preparation of the Project Scope.
- The Gardens in consultation with stakeholders have prepared various detailed operational and development plans including but not limited to; Collections Reviews, Tree Plans, Graves and Memorials Maintenance Guidelines, Ecological Assessment for the Botanic Garden Native Forest Remnants and Otari Landscape Development Plan.
- Officers have undertaken desk top research of international trends
- 'Our Capital Spaces' - Open Space and Recreation Framework: 2013 -23, has identified some key priorities and actions for the open space network including the botanic gardens cluster.

The proposed process and timeline are as follows:

Stage	Date
Resolution to prepare a management plan	September 2013
Preparation of draft management plan	September 2013 - February 2014
Council approve the draft plan for public consultation.	February 2014
Consultation on the draft plan	March - April 2014
Receipt and analysis of submissions including oral hearings	June 2014
Council approve final plan	August 2014

5.4 Financial considerations

None at this stage. Management plan process managed within existing budgets

5.5 Climate change impacts and considerations

These will be considered during the development of draft plan.

5.6 Long-term plan considerations

None at this stage

6. Conclusion

The review of these management plans into one cluster plan will provide greater co-ordination and consistency of garden management. It will set the direction and priorities for managing the Gardens over the next 10 years and showcase Wellington as an Eco City. The new cluster plan will highlight the unique nature and values of each Garden, articulate a vision for each and specific objectives and policies to achieve those visions.

Contact Officer: Mike Oates, Manager, Open Space and Recreation Planning

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1) Strategic fit / Strategic outcome

The policy supports Council's overall vision of Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital. The plan supports and is consistent with our Capital Spaces: an Open Spaces and Recreation Framework for Wellington 2013 - 2023

2) LTP/Annual Plan reference and long term financial impact

The project is identified in the 2013/2014 Annual Plan.

3) Treaty of Waitangi considerations

Mana whenua will be consulted during the preparation of the draft plan

4) Decision-making

This is not a significant decision.

5) Consultation

a) General consultation

Engagement has occurred with all major stakeholders. Formal consultation will occur once the draft management plan has been prepared and SPC has approved it for public consultation.

b) Consultation with Maori

Engagement has occurred with Mana whenua.

6) Legal implications

The plan will be prepared following the process outlined in section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977

7) Consistency with existing policy

The management plan will be consistent with Our Capital Spaces.