



REPORT 1
(1215/13/IM)

OUR CAPITAL SPACES SUBMISSION

1. Purpose of Report

To enable Community Board members to approve the Boards submission on Our Capital Spaces.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Makara / Ohariu Community Board:

- 1. Receive the information.*
- 2. Approve the submission of the Makara / Ohariu Community Board on Our Capital Spaces attached as appendix 1.*

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Our Capital Spaces – Draft Open Spaces and Recreation Framework for Wellington 2013-2023

This submission is made on behalf of the Makara/Ohariu Community Board

Our Capital Spaces - the open spaces – the areas of land or water which provide public access are important to all Wellington residents and visitors. Any increase of participation in sport, recreation and leisure activities has got to be a good thing for everyone. However there is a need to involve those who are affected in the planning of this framework. The Board would like to submit on some of the suggestions which relate to Makara and Ohariu.

1. The developing of Spicer Forest Recreation Park requires careful thought. If the park is developed as suggested in the plan, it potentially will involve a substantial increase in traffic flow through Ohariu Valley, to a destination that until now has had little traffic other than local residents, and has been the end of a road. The road through Ohariu Valley, whether from Johnsonville or Makara was never designed to take heavy volumes of traffic, and this will put substantial increased pressure on the infrastructure. Clearly the intent is to encourage people from outside Ohariu Valley to come into the valley for recreational purposes. It is unlikely to result in local residents increasing their participation in recreational activities, because they already have these opportunities on their doorstep, so the increased number of potential traffic movements is a matter of serious concern. If the intent is to encourage entry into the Park from the Porirua end, then the concerns regarding increased traffic through Ohariu Valley may be mitigated.

Traffic to Makara Beach particularly in the weekends is already close to capacity, and the coastal environment and fishery is experiencing detriment impact by current use. The area is losing its rural, open space attributes. Residents have expressed a view that they do not want more toilets, roads, or parking, and want the beach area to be preserved and retained as a wild and open space.

2. The suggestion of developing a master plan for Te Kopahau Reserve is another matter of consideration by the residents of Makara, but primarily those involved in any farming enterprise. That consideration relates to the access by the public, over what is private land. The issue here is that there is difficulty in trusting some of the general public to act responsibly when accessing private property. Some members of the public seem to regard the fact that when they are in open rural country as providing an opportunity to behave irresponsibly i.e. shooting of livestock, damaging fencing and property. Any recreational area should be closed to vehicle access, i.e. motor bikes, quad bikes, 4 wheel drive vehicles, firearms and dogs not on a leash. The completion of any walkway on private land should be at the owner's discretion.

These concerns also relate to the suggestion of completing the Skyline Track, (between Old Coach Road and Spicer Forest) and links to adjacent suburban communities. Our Board often receives expressions of concern from local residents about the behaviour

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of members of the public and this can only increase if access to the rural area is expanded. These concerns we believe are also shared by the police and emergency services because this behaviour often occurs in isolated areas, which has very little easy access when such emergencies arise.

If these developments are to proceed, there needs to be careful and clear negotiation with the owners of the land which is to be crossed, and the terms upon which the public may be granted access to the land. (i.e. portions of walkways closed during lambing season, like the Westwind Recreation Area.)

3. The above comments also apply to the proposed partnerships for completing coastal tracks between Owhiro Bay and Makara, Otari and Makara, and for Karori Stream.

Because the coastline between Owhiro Bay and Makara is isolated, the coast is being stripped of paua, there are piles of rubbish left, and quite often smouldering fires. The fire danger is real and present, and residents are often required to douse fires left by visitors. Homes are close to vegetation, and fires are often started close to the hillsides for shelter in this windy environment. Consultation is necessary to mitigate these problems.

4. The Makara community is already heavily involved in the restoration of the Makara Beach Estuary. The Makaracarpas group have made significant progress with the cleaning up of the beach and estuary, native planting, pest control, and are moving further back into the valley with pest and plant work. Makaracarpas are willing to be involved in consultation with the Council on this open space area.

Makara and Ohariu does not have the infrastructure (water, sewerage, road, phones, emergency services, telecommunications or retail) necessary to cope with increasing numbers of visitors, and has a rural zoning focus and restrictions. Residents don't want the rural nature of the area to change, and that which attracts visitors now (its wildness) will be lost forever. We are passionate about where we live, and the Community Board wants to be involved in a coordinated approach to the development, management and protection of the open space of Makara and Ohariu.

Christine Grace
Chair