

4.5 RECREATION AND ACCESS

4.5.1 OBJECTIVES

1. To increase recreational opportunities of the Outer Green Belt principally through the establishment of an interconnected network of paths, tracks and routes.
2. To provide or allow for recreational activities in the Outer Green Belt which are environmentally and socially sustainable, and based principally on active or passive enjoyment of the Outer Green Belt environment.

4.5.2 POLICIES

4.5.2.1 Appropriate forms of recreation

- a) *The Council will allow and mainly provide for types of recreational activity which, whether active or passive, are based on the quiet enjoyment of the natural environment. This mainly includes:*
 - *walking and tramping*
 - *mountain biking (subject to Mountain Bike Policy)*
 - *running*
 - *sight-seeing or scenery viewing*
 - *wildlife viewing*
 - *nature study (educational and recreational)*
 - *picnicking.*
- b) *The Council will consider allowing recreational activities which are not part of the above list, in specified areas following analysis of the benefits and effects and subject to reasonable conditions.*
- c) *Where necessary, guidelines will be developed for the approval and management of activities which have significant risks or effects on the Outer Green Belt environment and other users.*
- d) *The Council will discourage and not provide for types of recreational activity which unreasonably damage the environment, recreation facilities (including tracks) or affect the enjoyment of the Outer Green Belt by others.*
- e) *The Council will, in general, discourage the erection of club or recreational buildings and ensure structures are appropriate for the use and consistent with the principles of this Plan.*
- f) *The Outer Green Belt will not, in general, be used as a place for locating those activities which, because of their effects, are unable to be accommodated elsewhere.*

4.5.2.2 The access network

- a) *The access network will be designed and managed in accordance with any future Wellington City Council track policy.*
- b) *The following guidelines will apply in the design, establishment and maintenance of the Outer Green Belt access network:*

- *The primary access network will cater for a wide range of skill and fitness levels and abilities.*
 - *Tracks will be available for shared (ie. pedestrian and cycle) or multiple use wherever this is practical and appropriate.*
 - *There will be easy access to key destinations from main entrances, where possible.*
 - *The access network will be integrated with the wider city and regional track networks.*
 - *New tracks will be physically sustainable and have minimal environmental impact.*
 - *The access network will cater, where appropriate, for pest control, emergency services, and general management purposes.*
 - *Tracks will be signed and maintained to defined standards, with hazards identified and / or mitigated.*
 - *All tracks are closed to horses except where declared open.*
 - *All tracks are closed to motorised vehicles except by special permission on a case-by-case basis (Refer Policy 4.5.2.3).*
- c) *Access to Wellington City Council land in the Outer Green Belt is free and unrestricted subject to the following exceptions and conditions:*
- *Entry to Karori Sanctuary is controlled and subject to an entry fee.*
 - *Access for recreation is closed in the operational area of the Southern Landfill.*
 - *Access to Spicer Forest is controlled by the Greater Wellington Regional Council until a management agreement is established between the two councils.*
 - *The Council may, from time to time, restrict access to any specified area for appropriate management purposes in accordance with the Reserves Act.*
- d) *The Council will seek to establish the Skyline Track as a continuous dual or multiple use track spanning the entire length of the Outer Green Belt following the main ridgeline wherever possible.*
- e) *The Council supports the establishment of the Te Araroa Walkway through the Outer Green Belt following parts of the Skyline Track and the Northern Walkway, or any agreed alternative, and will provide practical assistance in its implementation and submitted to the relevant Council Committee.*

Explanation

The access network includes entry and exit points, roads and motorised vehicle tracks, paths, walking tracks, multiple use tracks, special purpose tracks and routes. This ordering does not imply a hierarchy of importance and the choice of track design partly reflects the type of setting and recreational experiences being provided in each area.

4.5.2.3 Recreational motorised vehicle access

- a) *Motorised vehicle-based recreation, other than driving on existing formed public roads, will be discouraged in the Outer Green Belt, except in accordance with the policies of this Plan and the operational guidelines. Subject to the further area specific policies in Section 5, requests for motorised vehicle-based recreation access, will be considered on their merits, based on a city-wide view of the facts.*

- b) *Generally, vehicular-based recreation must be properly organised and conducted by an appropriately qualified person or organisation to warrant consideration for approval.*
- c) *Commercial motorised vehicle-based recreation or tourism activities will require a concession permit from the Council approved by the Town Belt and Reserves Curator. Any licences or permits longer than one year in duration require approval of the relevant Wellington City Council committee.*
- d) *Commercial concession applications for motorised vehicle-based activities will be assessed in accordance with this policy and any general guidelines or policy for commercial concessions including Policy 4.5.2.7.*
- e) *Detailed guidelines for the assessment and management of recreational motorised vehicle access in the Outer Green Belt will be developed by the Manager, Parks and Gardens.*

Explanation

These policies are subject to further policies in Section 5 which, in respect to particular management areas, may impose a blanket ban on recreational motorised vehicle access.

4.5.2.4 Mountain bike access

- a) *Mountain bike access is in accordance with the principles contained in the Council's Mountain Bike Policy, including the principle that all tracks are open for mountain biking unless declared closed, and riders should give way to walkers on shared tracks.*
- b) *Makara Peak is a special management area which gives priority to the needs of mountain bikers. Mountain bikers are not asked to give way to walkers within this area and signage warning walkers about this and other characteristics of the area will be provided.*
- c) *Any review of the existing policy or the development of a city-wide track policy will take account of the special needs and issues within the Outer Green Belt.*

4.5.2.5 Provision of recreation facilities

- a) *Recreation facilities will be provided by the Council only where they are essential for the public's enjoyment of the Outer Green Belt.*
- b) *Some entrance areas, tracks and destinations may have a higher level of service and a wider range of facilities reflecting the importance and function of the site.*
- c) *Facility provision will be planned on an area basis within a landscape development plan (or similar document) to ensure efficiency, consistency and quality in the provision of facilities.*
- d) *Facilities will be subject to ongoing maintenance and management as set out by the relevant Asset Management Plan and as required following damage.*

4.5.2.6 Signage and interpretation

- a) *Signage and interpretation will be used to inform visitors about recreation opportunities and potential hazards, and environmental, cultural and historic values in the Outer Green Belt. Signs will also help to manage the interface between public and private land.*
- b) *As far as possible, signage and interpretation will be consistent with relevant park signage systems and corporate visual standards. Following internal consultation, variations from city-wide standards may be used in order to reflect the diversity within the Outer Green Belt or to emphasise an area's unique identity.*
- c) *An overall identity for the Outer Green Belt, which can be used within the basic standards may be considered, and adopted following Wellington City Council approval.*
- d) *The Council will produce high quality, accurate maps to inform the community and other potential visitors about the Outer Green Belt and the recreation opportunities it provides.*

4.5.2.7 Commercial recreation services and eco-tourism

- a) *The Council acknowledges the likely demand in the Outer Green Belt for commercial recreation services and eco-tourism. Each application will be assessed against the objectives and policies of this Plan and other relevant Wellington City Council policy.*
- b) *The Council will give priority to businesses which demonstrate, or actively pursue the achievement of industry best-practise standards for eco-tourism (encompassing the principles of environmental, social and economic sustainability).*
- c) *The Council will not permit commercial recreation and tourism businesses which have significant impacts on the natural environment or are likely to adversely affect the enjoyment of the Outer Green Belt by others.*
- d) *Detailed guidelines for the assessment and management of commercial recreation services and eco-tourism in the Outer Green Belt will be developed by the Manager, Parks and Gardens.*