

5.2 SECTOR 2: BESTS RIDGE

5.2.1 OVERVIEW

Sector 2 is primarily private land. Apart from very small remnants of bush lying along the east flowing stream margins and localised plantation forestry, the entire area is in pasture. The Churton Park reserves lie above the residential area and below the main ridgeline. These are also mainly in pasture.

This pastoral environment is a significant landscape with striking vistas lying above the more closely treed suburban landscape.

There is no established track network in this area and this remains one of the major gaps in access along the main Outer Green Belt ridgeline. As development extends up Stebbings Valley, demand for access to this ridge will increase.

Sector 2 has limited ecological significance and is not directly connected to any of the major ecological corridors. Rather than the creation of a meaningful ecological corridor through this area, the priority should be the protection of open pastoral landscapes on high areas and a green (planted) fringe adjoining the existing and future urban edges (lower slopes).

A number of historic gold mining shafts are present within this sector. The 'Tawa Flats All Luck Gold Mining co.' of 1881 had shafts in the area including one which is now buried beneath Erlestoke Crescent.

5.2.2 ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

5.2.2.1 Working with landowners

The predominance of private land does not, in itself, present an impediment to the objectives for the sector. The focus on the grassed landscape is consistent with on-going commercial grazing. There is considerable opportunity to work with landowners to negotiate access and encourage the location of buildings away from ridgelines. However, protection as Open Space under the Reserves Act 1977 (with emphasis on the main ridgetop and eastern slopes) could greatly assist all the objectives for this area.

Objectives

1. Work with landowners to:
 - prevent land uses or the building of structures which would have a negative effect on the ridgetop landscape
 - protect Outer Green Belt values through a variety of appropriate means.
2. Consider land acquisition opportunities as they may arise, with a focus on the main ridgeline and the eastern slopes.

5.2.2.2 Access

Bests Ridge is one of two major gaps in access along the main ridge of the Outer Green Belt (the other is between Kilmister Tops and Makara Hill Road). Demand for access along this section has been limited in the past, but with the development of

Churton Park and increasing interest in the improvement of general access to open spaces in the northern suburbs, demand for access along this ridge will increase. Managed access across farmland, whether private or public, is both practical and achievable.

Objectives

1. Work with private landowners to achieve a recreational access route along the main ridgeline, and at one or more side routes on the eastern side.
2. Once established, include the main ridgeline link as a part of the Skyline Track and, secondarily, as part of the Te Araroa Walkway.

5.2.2.3 Ecological linkages and regeneration of indigenous bush

The opportunities for ecological linkages of indigenous vegetation are limited given the pasture landscape and the very small remnants of bush. Widespread regeneration of bush is not sought for this areas, and the main focus is on the retention of the pasture landscape.

However, a buffer of vegetation along the residential edge is sought intended to soften the urban edge and reflect the need for 'greening' within the urban environment. The focus here will be on riparian planting to protect and enhance stream ecosystems.

Objective

Encourage the development of:

- o a buffer of native vegetation along the residential edge of the eastern slopes, which results in a connected and accessible corridor
- o restoration of riparian planting along western stream courses.

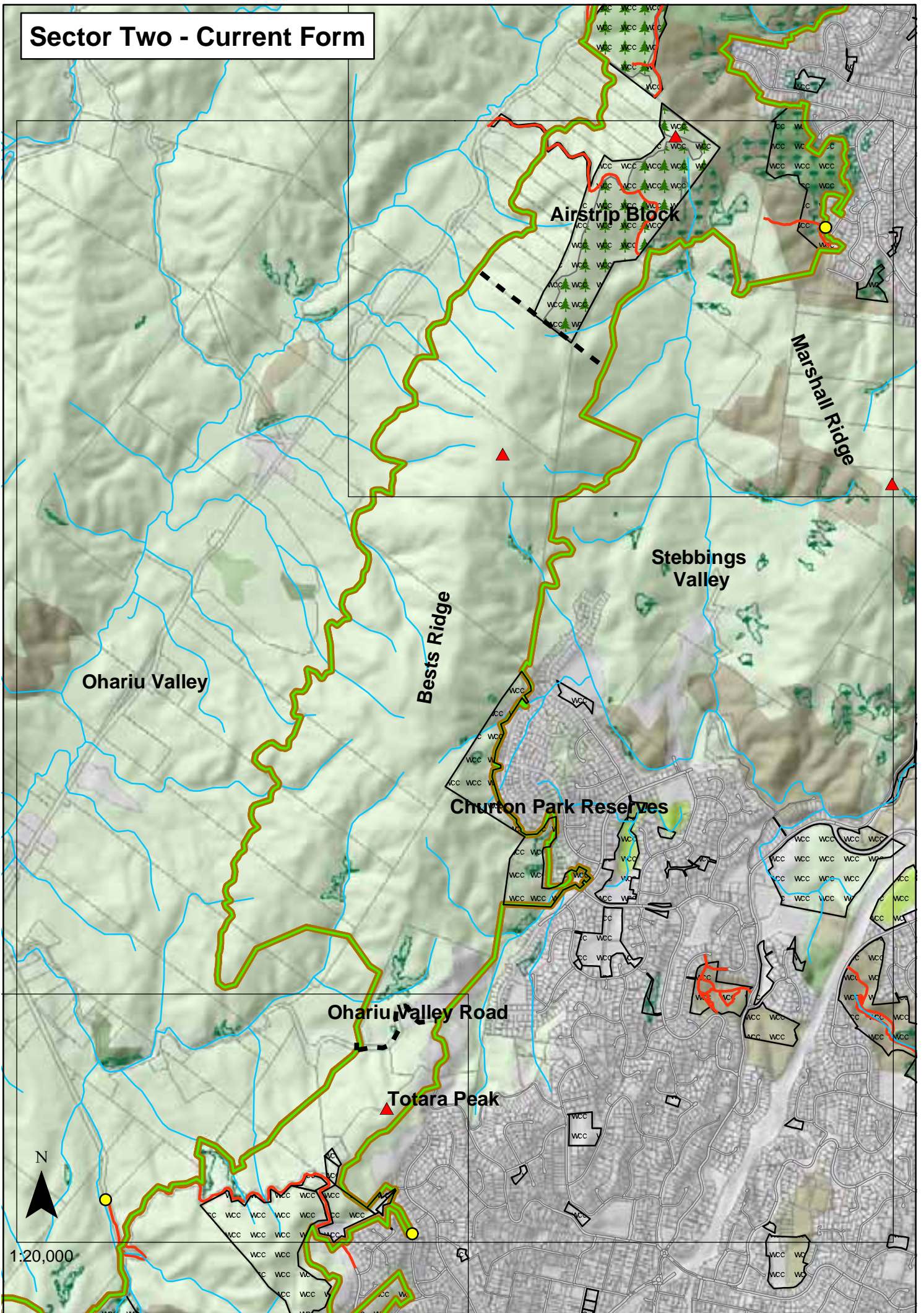
5.2.2.4 Pasture landscape

Plantation forestry is the greatest threat to the existing landscape values of this ridgetop area.

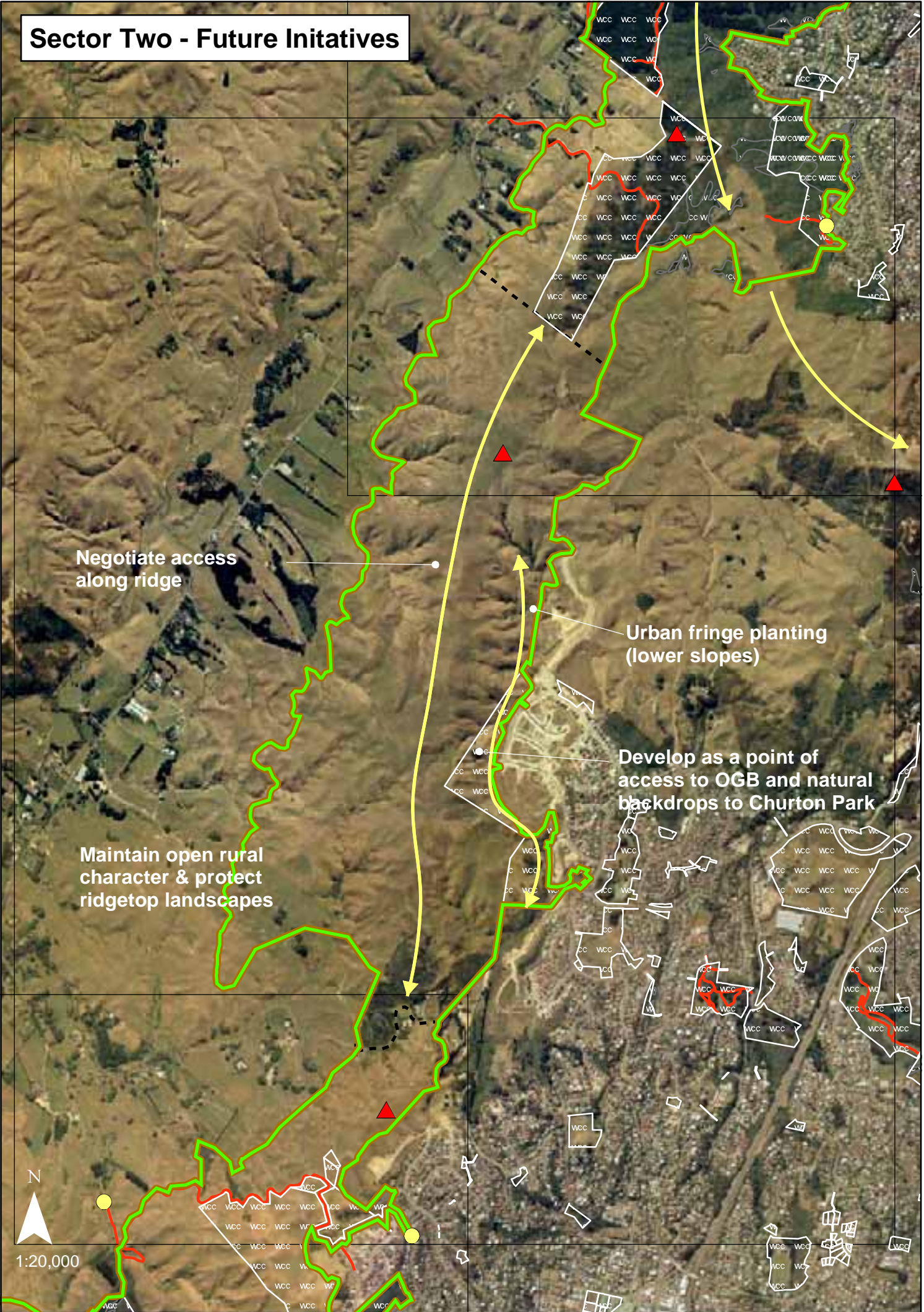
Objective

Discourage or limit the development of plantation forestry within the area because of the negative effects this will have on existing landscape values.

Sector Two - Current Form



Sector Two - Future Initiatives



Negotiate access along ridge

Urban fringe planting (lower slopes)

Develop as a point of access to OGB and natural backdrops to Churton Park

Maintain open rural character & protect ridgetop landscapes



5.2.3 MANAGEMENT AREA POLICIES

Area 2.1 – Churton Park Reserves

Note: This cluster of reserves lying within the Outer Green Belt will be developed within the overall framework set out above once they come under formal Wellington City Council control. Detailed management provisions set out in the *Churton Park Reserves Network: Development Strategy, Maintenance and Capital Development Plan* (an informal, non-statutory plan and not Wellington City Council policy), will be used where appropriate, subject to Wellington City Council priorities and further landscape planning.

Long term vision

- Develop as a point of access to Sector 2 of the Outer Green Belt for the residents of Churton Park and as a natural backdrop to the local urban environment.

Land status

Please refer to the accompanying map and table.

Management programme

- Develop lower slopes as a natural and attractive buffer to the urban landscape.
- Provide recreational amenities (tracks, etc) consistent with the Outer Green Belt character and purpose.
- Extend access from these reserves to other areas as opportunities arise.
- Maintain the open rural character of the upper slopes.
- Enhance biodiversity mainly by planting in gullies and protecting existing bush remnants.
- Implement specific recommendations of the *Churton Park Reserves Network: Development Strategy, Maintenance and Capital Development Plan* where appropriate.

Public use and enjoyment

- Public access for walking, horse riding and mountain biking will be provided for as the main recreation activities.

Sector Two - Bests Ridge

2.1.1

2.1.2

Erlestoke Cres

Amesbury Drive

Westchester Drive



1:6,000

Council Management Areas

 2.1 Churton Park Reserves

Management Area	Site Name	Mapping Reference	WCC Site number	Legal Description	CT Reference	Land Area	Reserve Description	Gazette Reference	District Plan Zoning	Notes	Actions needed
2.1	Churton Park hill reserve 1	2.1.1					Proposed reserve		Open Space A	Reserve to vest in accordance with Churton Park subdivision consent and reserves agreement. Open Space B would be more appropriate. Council has not received title.	Monitor progress of reserves agreement. Change zoning to open space B
	Churton Park hill reserve 2	2.1.2					Proposed reserve		Open Space A	Reserve to vest in accordance with Churton Park subdivision consent and reserves agreement. Open Space B would be more appropriate. Council has not received title.	Monitor progress of reserves agreement. Change zoning to open space B