

## 5.4 SECTOR 4: OTARI-WILTON'S BUSH

### 5.4.1 OVERVIEW

The main feature of this sector is the large area of primary and secondary bush remnants that lie across the Te Mahanga branch of the Kaiwharawhara Stream system and against the eastern flanks of the Outer Green Belt. The importance of this area in any otherwise cleared landscape was recognised very early in the history of European settlement in Wellington. Five hundred hectares of land were set aside as Otari Native Reserve in 1847.<sup>1</sup> Following a series of further subdivisions and allocations, and changes of ownership, an area was set aside as Otari Scenic Reserve in 1906. This was followed, in 1925, by Council acquisition of the area that became Otari-Wilton's Bush. The concept of an open air plant museum developed around this time, and now the area has a dual identity reflected in the full name - Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve.

Otari Native Plant Museum has considerable historical significance for Wellington and New Zealand, due to its longevity and its role in the study, protection and display of New Zealand plants.

Otari-Wilton's Bush is the city's best remaining native forest remnant (podocarp/northern rata) and is at the heart of the present protected area. Surrounding areas of reserve contain mature forest, assumed to have been modified, and more extensive areas of secondary forest.

Lying above Otari-Wilton's Bush are the higher eastern slopes and the main ridgeline running through to Johnstons Hill. Kilmister Tops is a peneplain remnant which is high, broad and largely clear of tall vegetation. This is perceived most dramatically close-up, rather than at a distance, although the glimpses of green and golden pasture at the top of the hill are an attractive contrast to the dense bush below.

The Skyline Walkway has its southern end at Chartwell substation. Despite the existence of a paper road connecting Kilmister Tops and Karori (Parkvale Road), formal and practical public access along this section of the main ridge is not available at present. Achieving this link is a high priority. An extensive local network of tracks within Otari-Wilton's Bush requires formal connections to the main ridge, as and when these can be negotiated. An historic, pre-war access to Otari farms and Kilmister Tops existed from Parkvale Road.

The main access route used by Maori from the harbour to the West Coast lies through this area. The identification of the track's location is an issue for manawhenua, and it remains to be worked through with them as to how it is managed.

### 5.4.2 ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES

#### 5.4.2.1 Working with private landowners

A significant portion of the tops lie in private ownership and is managed as a commercial farm. There is considerable potential to work with the current landowners to obtain clear access along the ridgeline, access up to the ridgeline and to protect the ridgetop environment.

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<sup>1</sup> The history of this area is of significance mostly to the Te Atiawa hapu.

In addition, the former Transpower land which lies between the Kilmister Block and the Otari Native Botanic Garden land is subject to the outcomes of the land claims process. It is currently owned by Department of Conservation, pending a final decision about its future. It will be important to work with Te Atiawa as to the future use of this block if they declare an interest in it. The *Otari-Wilton's Bush Management Plan* recommends inclusion of this area into Otari-Wilton's Bush.

### **Objectives**

1. To work with the owners of Otari Farm to achieve public access and the protection of ridgetop values.
2. To work with the Crown and Te Atiawa to ensure appropriate management of relevant landholdings within the sector.

#### **5.4.2.2 Landscape**

The open pasture landscape of the Kilmister Tops, and the private land to the south, is a long-established and attractive landscape which complements the dense bush on the eastern slopes and valleys. Clear definition and fencing of these open areas should continue so that open pasture is separated from regenerating bush, and the two land types can be managed properly.

#### **Objective**

To retain the main ridgetops and hilltops in open pasture, where this is the present condition, while recognising the potential to encourage regeneration across to the western slopes lying outside the Outer Green Belt.

#### **5.4.2.3 Ecological linkages, streams and regeneration of bush.**

The primary and secondary remnants lying within Otari-Wilton's Bush and on Johnstons Hill are the most significant within the Outer Green Belt. They are an important source of seed for general regeneration across the city. The area is also part of the Kaiwharawhara catchment and plays a significant role in improving water quality after the stream has passed through the old landfill area in Ian Galloway Park.

In addition, the remnants play an important role in the potential regeneration of bush over the ridge and into the western part of the Outer Green Belt in this area. The 'temperate influence' ecodomain (domain eight) runs up through the Kaiwharawhara Stream corridor, across this ridge and down the Makara Stream valley.

The headwaters of the Makara Stream lie between the Outer Green Belt ridge and the ridge leading to the summit of British Peak. There is an opportunity to work with landowners to enhance this area, drawing on the 'reservoir' of Otari-Wilton's Bush. This would potentially create a more ecologically useful corridor than that which could be achieved between Johnstons Hill and Makara Peak via the main ridge.

### **Objectives**

1. To maintain and enhance the sector as:
  - a key junction point with the Kaiwharawhara Stream ecological corridor
  - a potential linkage across the ridge and into the Makara Stream valley system
  - as a major linkage to the Karori Wildlife Sanctuary, particularly in terms of habitat for native bird species.
2. To continue to achieve extensive regeneration of the bush along the eastern slopes.
3. To continue to recognise the central role of the Otari Native Botanic Garden and Otari-Wilton's Bush in vision for the Outer Green Belt ecosystem.
4. To continue to improve the protection of native vegetation and manage plant and animal pests throughout Wellington City Council lands in this area.

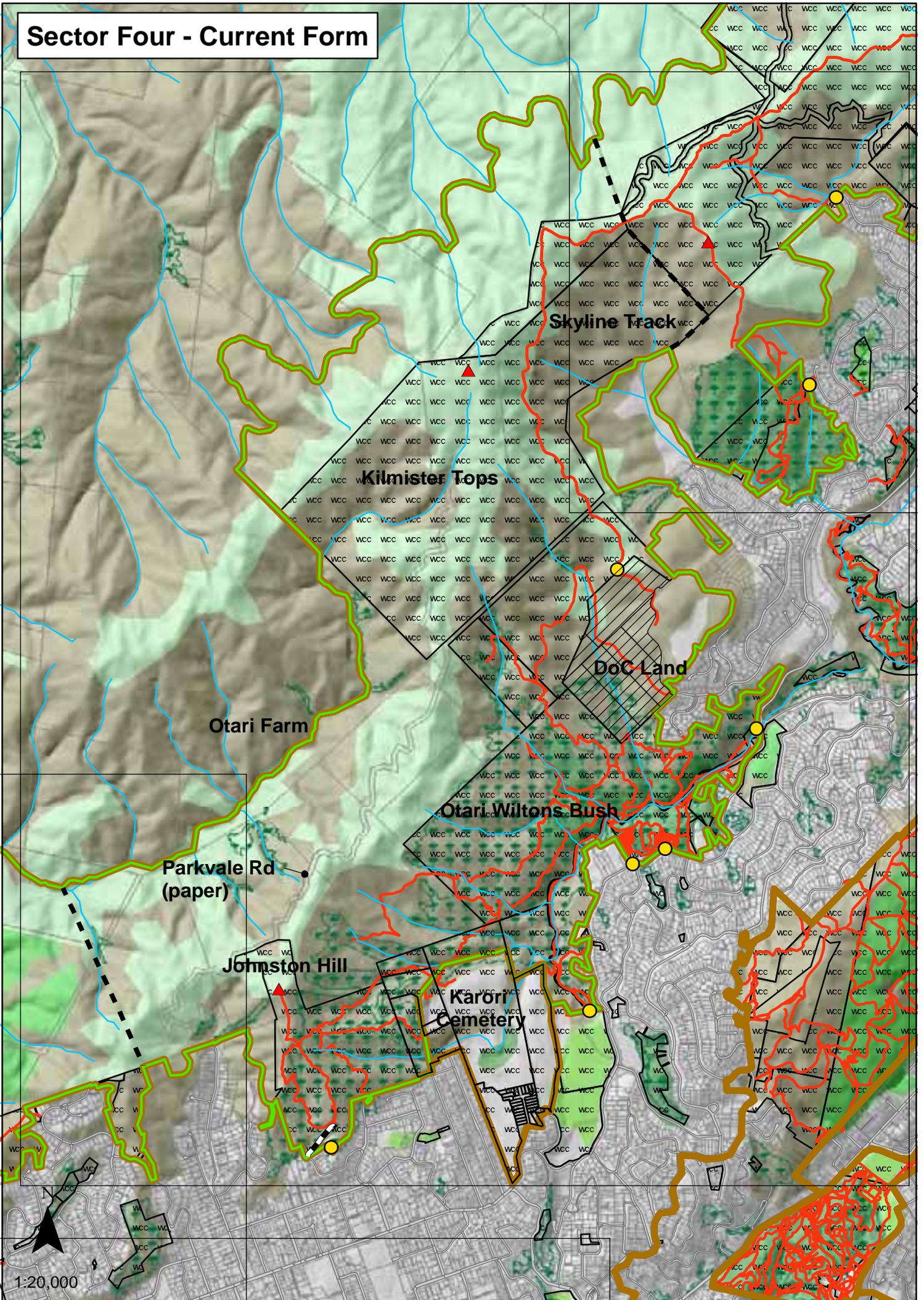
#### **5.4.2.4 Access**

The track system is relatively well developed on Wellington City Council land within this sector. Otari-Wilton's Bush provides an excellent 'front-country' amenity area with relatively easy access which then leads to the steeper eastern slopes. In addition to achieving formal public access along the remainder of the main ridge in this area, and linkages to Otari-Wilton's Bush, improvements in terms of track design and construction are needed, along with better track information for visitors.

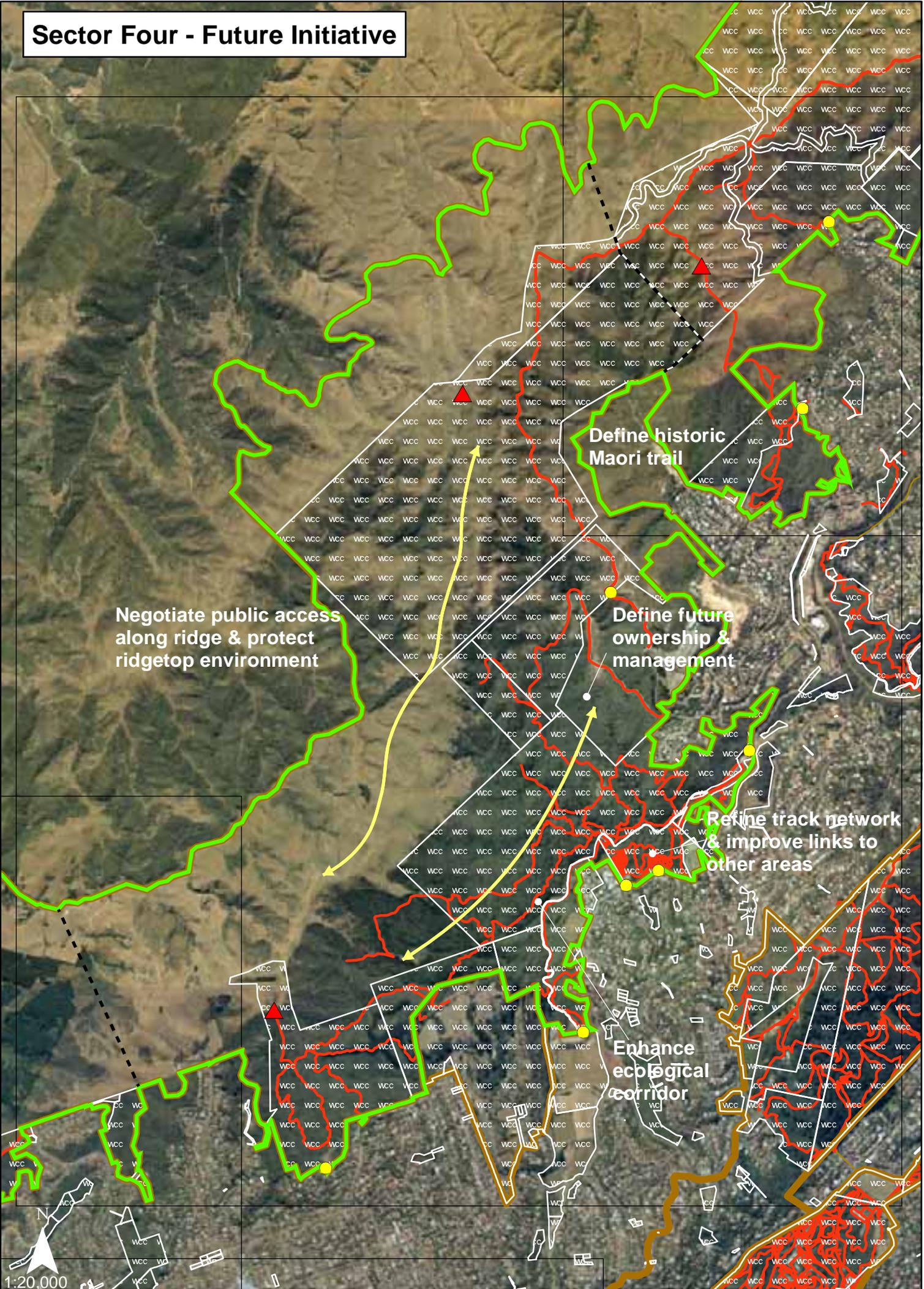
### **Objectives**

1. To achieve formal public access along the main ridgeline from the Kilmister tops to Karori, and connections to this ridge from the existing Otari-Wilton's Bush and Johnstons Hill track networks.
2. To negotiate access from this area westward into the rural environment.
3. To improve the existing track network in terms of design and construction, according to agreed track standards.

# Sector Four - Current Form



# Sector Four - Future Initiative



Negotiate public access along ridge & protect ridgetop environment

Define historic Maori trail

Define future ownership & management

Refine track network & improve links to other areas

Enhance ecological corridor

1:20,000

### 5.4.3 MANAGEMENT AREA POLICIES

#### Area 4.1 - Kilmister Tops

##### Long-term vision

- Maintain as a major area of open ridgetop and hilltop landscapes with regenerating bush on lower slopes.

##### Land status

Please refer to the accompanying map and table.

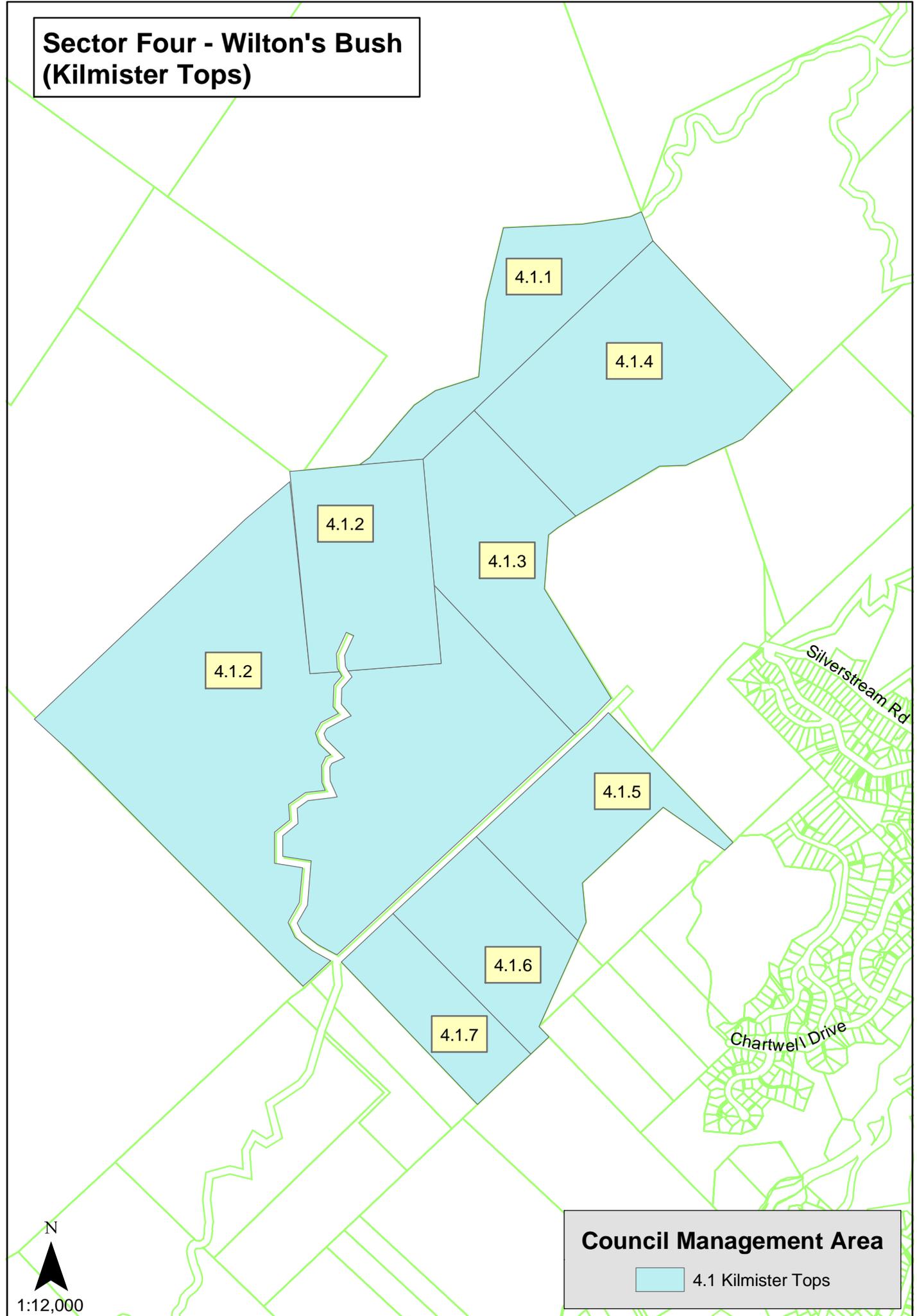
##### Management Programme

- Clearly define areas to be grazed, and fence accordingly.
- Provide clear and well constructed tracks from key entrances and from Otari-Wilton's Bush to the Kilmister Tops and main ridge areas. Note: clear open areas of the main ridgeline may only need a route, identified by signs and markers.
- Manage plant pests in grazed and regenerating bush areas.
- Develop appropriate entrance facilities once the future of the Crown land at Crofton Downs has been defined.

##### Public use and enjoyment

- Public access for walking, horse riding and mountain biking will be provided for as the main recreation activities.
- Special permission may be granted on a one-off basis for properly organised tours in off-road vehicles along the main ridge, subject to the general policies in this Plan and any assessment criteria or conditions the Council may wish to impose.

**Sector Four - Wilton's Bush  
(Kilmister Tops)**



**Council Management Area**

4.1 Kilmister Tops

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1:12,000

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
4.1	Kilimister Tops	4.1.1	2306	Lot 2 DP 81286	47C/980	12.5003 ha	Recreation Reserve	Vested as reserve on deposit of DP 81286	Open Space B	The district plan maps show transmission lines crossing this land. The old Maori Ohariu/Thomdon Track also crosses over this land. Transpower have a current access agreement with WCC over this land to access their utilities, dated 21/8/2000.	Reclassify as scenic reserve. Consider amalgamating this land and other titles in this group as one scenic reserve
		4.1.2	2342	Secs 54, 56, Pts Sec 52 & 58 Makara District shown as part of the land on Plan A3196 & Lot 1 DP 5398	287/283	194.5147 ha	Not a reserve		Rural	The land is held as Council owned freehold land, it has no reserve status. The old Maori Ohariu/Thomdon Track also crosses over this land. Transpower have a current access agreement with WCC over this land to access their utilities, dated 21/8/2000.	Rezone as Open space B. Protect as scenic reserve
		4.1.3	2342	Pt Sec 57 Makara District	22B/793	18.1284 ha	Not a reserve		Rural	The district plan maps show transmission lines crossing this land. The old Maori Ohariu/Thomdon Track also crosses over this land. The land is held as Council owned freehold land, it has no reserve status. Transpower have a current access agreement with WCC over this land to access their utilities, dated 21/8/2000.	Rezone as Open space B. Protect as scenic reserve
		4.1.4	2342	Pt Sec 11 Kaiwharawhara District	22B/443	28.0585 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	The district plan maps show transmission lines crossing this land. The old Maori Ohariu/Thomdon Track also crosses over this land. The land is held as Council owned freehold land, it has no reserve status. Transpower have a current access agreement with WCC over this land to access their utilities, dated 21/8/2000.	Protect as scenic reserve
		4.1.5	2342	PTA2 Ohari Block	94/29	13.4823 ha	Not a reserve		Rural	The district plan maps show transmission lines crossing this land. The land is held as Council owned freehold land, it has no reserve status. Transpower have a current access agreement with WCC over this land to access their utilities, dated 21/8/2000.	Rezone as Open space B. Protect as scenic reserve
		4.1.6	2342	PTA3 Ohari Block	115/275	11.9091 ha	Not a reserve		Conservation 5G	The land is held as Council owned freehold land, it has no reserve status. Transpower have a current access agreement with WCC over this land to access their utilities, dated 21/8/2000.	Protect as scenic reserve
		4.1.7	190	A4-Otari Block	19C/1301	8.6122 ha	Recreation Reserve	NZ Gazette 1988/68	Conservation 5G		Reclassify as scenic reserve.

## Area 4.2 - Otari-Wilton's Bush

### Long-term vision

- Continue to manage Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve in accordance with the *Otari Native Botanic Garden Management Plan, 1996* until such time as this plan is reviewed.

The role of Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve is:

- *To maintain and develop a native botanic garden:*
  - i for the conservation of native plants*
  - ii as a resource for scientific studies and education in natural sciences, conservation and native plant horticulture.*
- *To protect the forest area, taking into account Otari's role as a key link in the Kaiwharawhara catchment ecological corridor.*
- *To provide a recreation area where the natural environment can be enjoyed, subject to necessary measures protecting the environment.*
- Interpret and implement the management plan to reflect the full name of the area – *Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve*, and its relationship with adjoining reserves and the Outer Green Belt, in accordance with the objectives of this Plan.

### Land status

Please refer to the accompanying map and table.

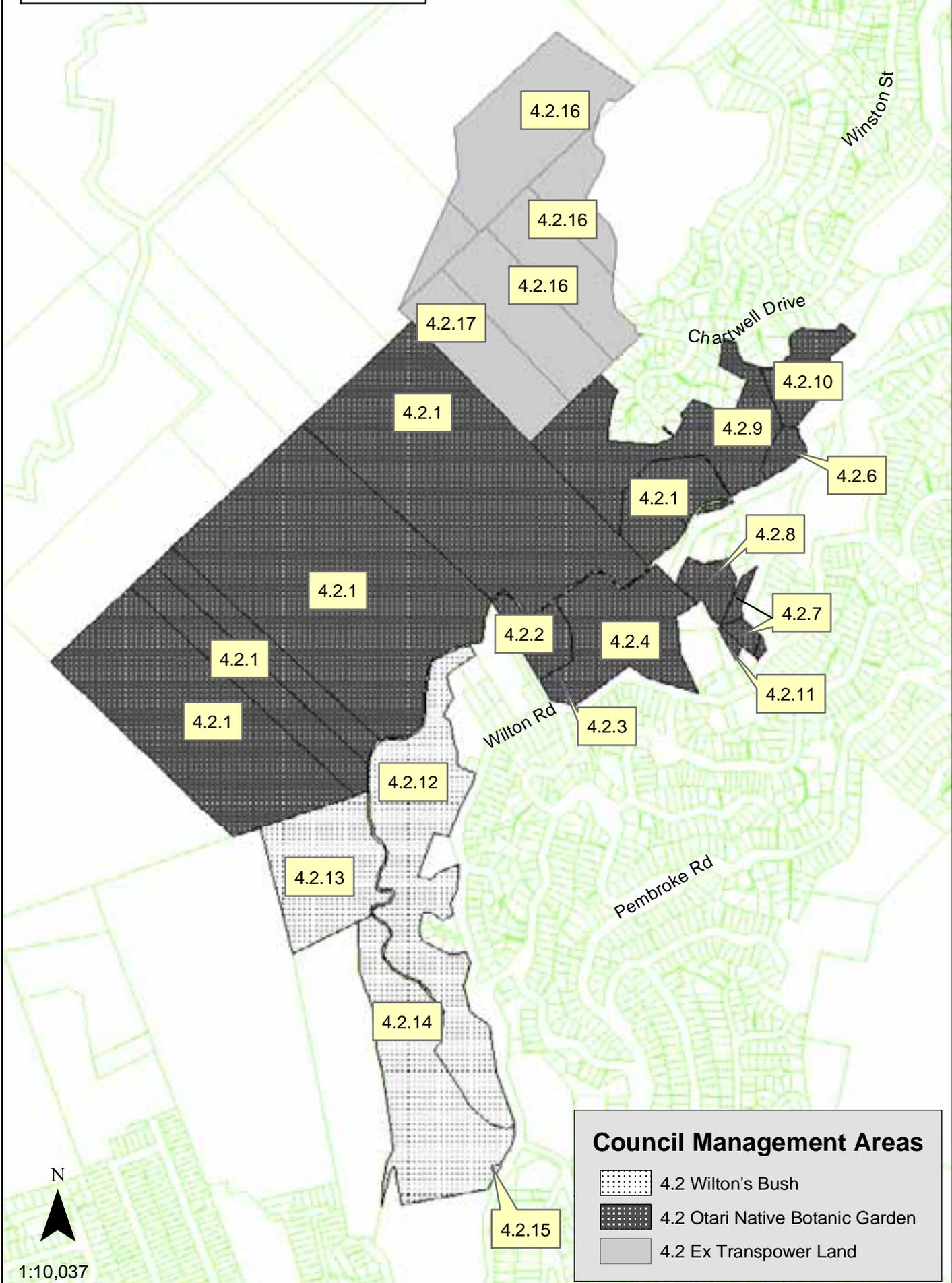
### Management Programme

- Please refer to the specific objectives and policies in the *Otari Native Botanic Garden Management Plan, 1996*.
- Review the management plan by 2006.
- Improve the track network and provide better linkages with adjoining areas.
- Continue to focus on the protection and enhancement of the forest ecosystem.
- Continue to focus on the maintenance and improvement of the botanical displays and entrance / amenity areas.
- Ensure forest margins are properly fenced from adjoining grazed areas on Wellington City Council and other properties.

### Public use and enjoyment

- Public access for walking, nature appreciation and picnicking will be provided for as the main recreation activities, and the area will be used for as a gateway to the Outer Green Belt for longer walks and tramps.
- The use of mountain bikes, horses and off-road vehicles is not allowed in this area.

# Sector Four - Wilton's Bush (Wilton's Bush)



**Council Management Areas**

-  4.2 Wilton's Bush
-  4.2 Otari Native Botanic Garden
-  4.2 Ex Transpower Land



4.2	Ex-Transpower Land	4.2.16	Not WCC owned, Crown owned land, owned by DOC	Pt Olari A2 & A3, Pt Lots VI & VII Kaiwharawhara District, Pt Sec 1 SO 35925	No CT	17.8447 ha	Not a reserve	NZ Gazette 1999/1550	Part Open Space B and Part Conservation 5G	This land is Crown owned land, it was originally administered by Transpower, in relation to the Wilton substation at the end of Charwell Drive. Subsequently the land was set apart for Conservation purposes, under the Conservation Act 1987 (NZ Gazette 1999/1550) and the Public Works Act 1981 (NZ Gazette 2000/2282). The Department of Conservation currently has responsibility for this land. Pursuant to a longstanding Reserves Agreement between WCC and DOC the intention is for DOC to appoint WCC to control and manage the land as part of the Olari Reserve and Outer Green Belt. This has been delayed in recognition of the still unresolved Treaty Claims by various iwi in the Wellington area. If this area is vested in WCC to Control and Manage, DOC will classify it as Scenic Reserve, pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977. Transpower have a current access agreement with WCC over this land to access their utilities, dated 2/18/2000.	Continue to manage area pending decisions about its future status. If this area is vested with Wellington City Council to control and manage, its status and management should reflect not only the association with Olari-Wilton's Bush but also the more direct association with the Kilmister Tops (Management Area 4.1)
		4.2.17	Not WCC	Pt Lot VII Kaiwharawhara District.	No CT	4.2596 ha	Not a reserve	NZ Gazette 1999/1550	Conservation 5G	Same status as for 4.2.16	As for 4.2.16

## Area 4.3 - Johnstons Hill

### Long-term vision

- Johnstons Hill is the southern end of Te Wharangi Ridge and in time will be managed in close association with Otari-Wilton's Bush and Kilmister Tops as a major ridgetop landscape and key native ecosystem.

### Land status

Please refer to the accompanying map and table.

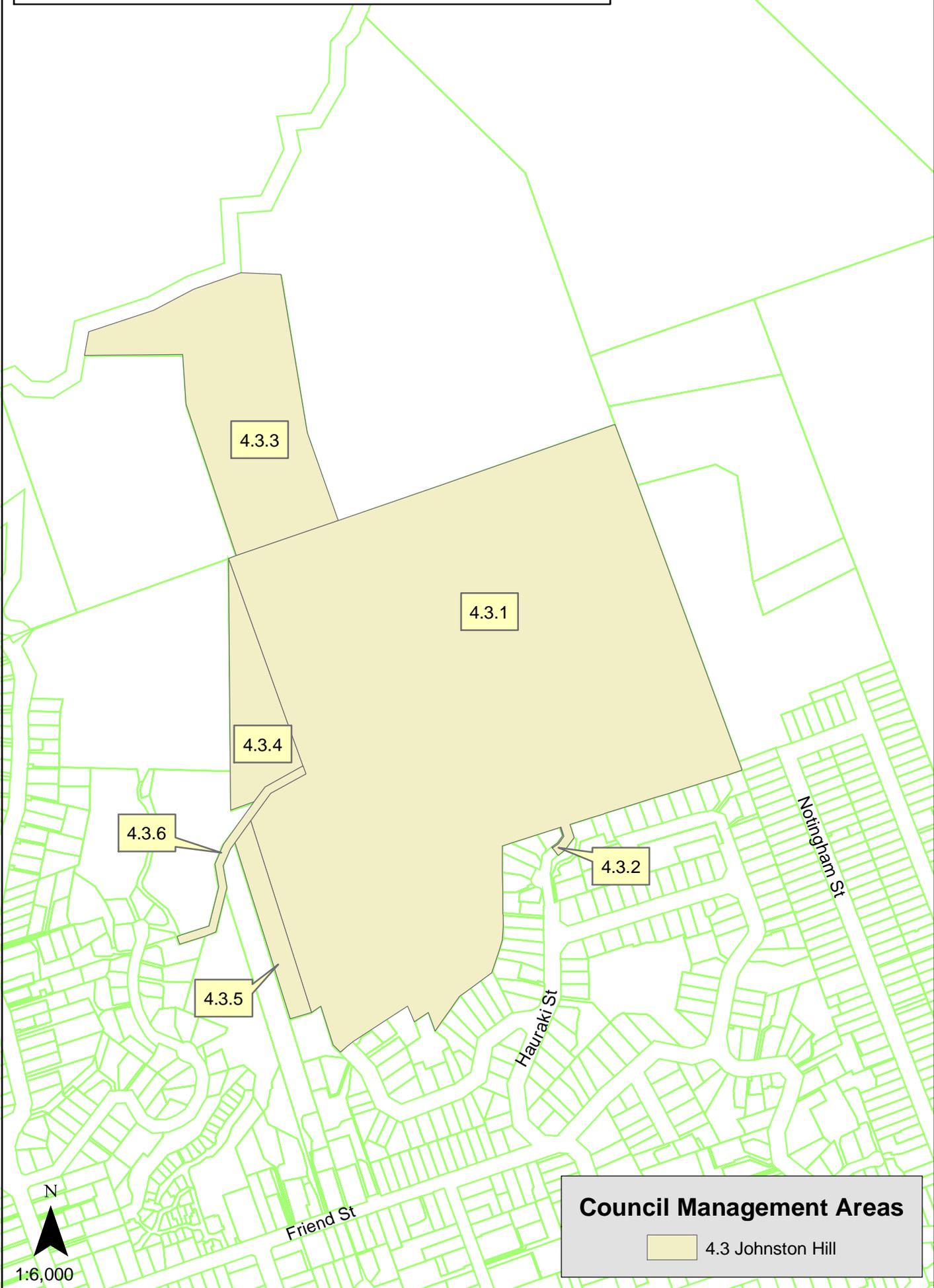
### Management programme

- Provide and maintain easy and safe walking tracks to the summit of Johnstons Hill from the main entrance.
- Improve recreational linkages between Johnstons Hill, Otari-Wilton's Bush and Kilmister Tops.
- Protect and enhance forest ecosystems mainly through on-going pest control and the fencing of bush margins from adjoining grazed areas.
- Encourage ecological enhancement of adjoining private land on the western slopes of Johnstons Hill.

### Public use and enjoyment

- Public access for walking will be provided for as the main recreation activity.
- Achievement of a practical and legal walking link from Johnstons Hill to the main ridgeline and other reserves to the north and west of this high point is a high priority.
- Future access to the main ridge in the vicinity of Johnstons Hill will be via Parkvale Road in Karori, subject to any land owner approvals that may be needed.
- Access for vehicles within this management area will be confined to management purposes.

# Sector Four - Wilton's Bush (Johnston Hill)



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
4.3	Johnston Hill Scenic Reserve	4.3.1	472	Pt Lot 1 DP 12348	488/4	26.9134	Scenic Reserve	NZ Gazette 1989/4485	Open Space B	Johnston Hill Reserve is Crown owned land (Conservation) but WCC was granted authority to control and manage under Gazette notice 1941/3755 & subsequent gazette notices 1957/588, 1953/1740 & 1957/588 confirmed as Domain to be administered by WCC – as Johnston Hill Domain Board. It was then gazetted as Scenic Reserve Gaz 1989/4485. The appointment of WCC to control and Manage the land (NZ Gaz 1941/3755 is not registered on CT 488/4, this needs to be actioned).	Update CT references as indicated.
		4.3.2	472	Lot 10 DP 35300	18A/857	0.0045 ha	Recreation Reserve		Open Space B	This land is WCC owned land. Transfer 230469.2 Grant of batter easement over part lot 7 on plan 35300.	
		4.3.3	472	Lot 1 DP 18143	No CT	4.6127 ha	Scenic Reserve	NZ Gazette 1989/4485	Open Space B	This part of Johnston Hill Reserve is Crown owned land (Conservation) but WCC was granted authority to control and manage under Gazette notice 1957/588 as a Public Domain, to be administered by WCC – as Johnston Hill Domain Board. It was then gazetted as Scenic Reserve Gaz 1989/4485. This land has no current CT, it may be useful to have a CT issued, with all the relevant Gazette references included.	Update CT references as indicated.
		4.3.4	472	Sec 61 Karori District	No CT	1.3517 ha	Scenic Reserve	NZ Gazette 1989/4485	Open Space B	This part of Johnston Hill Reserve is Crown owned land (Conservation) but WCC was granted authority to control and manage under Gazette notice 1957/588 as a Public Domain to be administered by WCC – as Johnston Hill Domain Board. It was then gazetted as Scenic Reserve Gaz 1989/4485. This land has no current CT, it may be useful to have a CT issued, with all the relevant Gazette references included.	Update CT references as indicated.
		4.3.5	472	Lot 1 DP 14695	No CT	0.6416 ha	Scenic Reserve	NZ Gazette 1989/4485	Open Space B	This part of Johnston Hill Reserve is Crown owned land (Conservation) but WCC was granted authority to control and manage under Gazette notice 1953/1740 to be part of Johnston Hill Domain, to be administered by WCC – as Johnston Hill Domain Board. It was then gazetted as Scenic Reserve Gaz 1989/4485. This land has no current CT, it may be useful to have a CT issued, with all the relevant Gazette references included.	Update CT references as indicated.
		4.3.6	472	Pt Sec 37 Karori	20B/1256	Unknown	Not a reserve		Open Space B	This land is identified in the WCC Property system as being part of the Johnston Hill Scenic Reserve. Linking from the reserve to David Crescent. It is zoned Open Space B in the District Plan. It is Council freehold land held for Housing purposes. Reserve classification is required for this land and for clearer definition of the land area etc a new CT should be issued.	Protect as scenic or recreation reserve.