

## 8.8 Sector 8 Hataitai Park



### **The recreation hub at Hataitai Park**

Note Badminton Hall at the top of picture and Velodrome at bottom centre.

#### **8.8.1 Character and use**

The sector occupies the east face of the Mt Victoria ridge. Its entire western boundary is formed by Alexandra Road, which runs along the top of the ridge. Ruahine Street and Hapua Road form much of the eastern boundary (Sector 8: context map).

The east-facing slope of Mt Victoria has two distinct parts. There is a distinct contrast between the southern area, subject to intense recreation use, and the northern part, a less-used more secluded area.

- The area between the Mt Victoria summit and the Mt Victoria Tunnel features undeveloped slopes containing regenerating native vegetation with scattered clusters of pine trees on the skyline.
- South of the tunnel the lower ground is occupied by a major sport and recreation park (Hataitai Park) mainly screened from view by landform and vegetation. The slopes above the park are forested with a mosaic of exotic species, with a native understorey developing in several places. Next to Ruahine Street is an open grass glade and clusters of ornamental trees and shrubs sloping down to the road.

The area is an important green backdrop to Hataitai and the eastern suburbs. Tree height on the skyline emphasises the landform. The south-east aspect is favourable to native and broadleaf exotic species.

The sector is a highly visible 'green space' between State Highway One (Ruahine Street) and Alexandra Road (the main road to the Mt Victoria lookout).

This area is mainly used for formal recreation – 44 percent of Wellington residents had used this area in the past six months, 23 percent had never visited. There is a large recreation hub with facilities for sports including softball, netball, tennis, football, rugby, badminton, gymnastics, darts and cycling.

A network of tracks, including part of the Southern Walkway<sup>57</sup>, provide varied walking opportunities through forest and open glades, many of which connect with the Town Belt and local streets in Hataitai. There is a bike skills area at the southern end as well as a dog exercise area.

## **8.8.2 Land addition and boundary rationalisation**

### **Policies – Land additions and boundary rationalisations**

8.8.2.1 The Council will continue working with NZTA to identify options for reducing or mitigating the impacts of State Highway 1 on the Town Belt and in particular Hataitai Park.

8.8.2.2 Also refer to policy 2.6.3 re: The Crown taking Town Belt land.

8.8.2.3 The Hataitai bus tunnel passing under the Town Belt land in this sector should be surveyed. Following the survey, the legal status of the subsoil, used for tunnel purposes, should be legally removed from the Town Belt and then gazetted road.

There are no proposed additions to the Town Belt in this sector. However the northern section of Ruahine Street is on the Town Belt. The area has never been removed from the Town Belt and declared legal road however it is designated as State Highway. In places this designation covers up to 10 metres into the existing grass slope on Town Belt. There is also a narrow strip of Town Belt land running from Goa Street to Wellington Road located between private properties and Ruahine Street. It contains a number of mature pohutukawa trees.

**State Highway 1:** In July-August 2011, the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) sought public feedback on *"The Inner City Transport Network: Improvements for a Successful Capital City"*. The proposal includes:

- a bridge to the north of the Basin Reserve to improve traffic flows and reduce journey times for public transport
- a second Mt Victoria Tunnel to the north of the existing one (two lanes east-bound)
- widening Ruahine Street and Wellington Road. In places, particularly near Badminton Hall, the encroachment into Town Belt could exceed the existing designation boundary
- a new pedestrian and cycle path between Cobham Drive and the Basin Reserve.

The Council's position is that:

- It supports the alignment of the Mt Victoria tunnel to the north of the existing tunnel.
- While it has various impacts that need to be considered, the option of widening Ruahine Street to the west (requiring the compulsory acquisition of Town Belt land) is preferable to widening into the residential area to the east.
- It will seek to minimise the widening of the street on to the Town Belt.

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<sup>57</sup> An 11km walkway from Oriental Bay to Island Bay

- If the second Mt Victoria Tunnel and widening of Ruahine Street goes ahead, the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) will need to acquire part of the Town Belt, which is held in trust by the Council. During that process the Council will need to make decisions on its role as trustee under the Town Belt Deed 1873.<sup>58</sup>

The impacts of the proposal on the Town Belt include:

- the loss of land
- landscape impacts
- loss of amenity and changes to the character of parts of the Town Belt next to Ruahine Street
- displacement of recreational activities, particularly badminton and the dog exercise area, and the displacement of Hataitai Kindergarten
- loss of mature trees and indigenous vegetation
- improved vehicle access at Goa Street
- changes to parking in Ruahine Street and traffic impacts in Moxham Avenue that are likely to impact on the demand for parking at Hataitai Park
- temporary affects associated with the construction which could include closure of some parts of the park, periodic access issues and so on.

### **8.8.3 Landscape and ecological management**

#### **Policies**

- 8.8.3.1 Return the northern wedge to native coastal forest and gradually remove the mature conifers on the eastern side of Alexandra Road.
- 8.8.3.2 Perpetuate and diversify the mixed forest in and around Hataitai Park as both a visual backdrop and a recreational environment, in particular preserving the mature-tree framework.
- 8.8.3.3 Retain conifers on the skyline to emphasise the landform, provide shelter and integrate with vegetation types on the west side.
- 8.8.3.4 Continue with animal pest control and the control of weeds.

The vegetation and its visual qualities need to be carefully managed as this is a highly visible area, especially the boundary with Alexandra Road and along State Highway 1.

The landscape has changed little over the past 15 years with few tree removals apart from the recent removal of a line of macrocarpas adjacent to the sportsfield field and Wellington Football Club. The large mature conifers next to Alexandra Road have undergone major pruning. In addition there have been revegetation plantings on the Hataitai to City Walkway.

The northern area, between the road tunnel and Mt Victoria faces east and native shrubland is regenerating well. Along the ridgeline are a number of mature conifers that provide a backdrop to the ridgeline and will be retained as long as practicable (Sector 8: landscape and existing vegetation map).

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<sup>58</sup> The Council holds the Town Belt in trust and any negotiation around sale or exchange of land for roading needs to be carefully managed and the legal issues fully considered. It is noted that NZTA has the power to compulsorily purchase the land required from the Council.

The mixed planting around Hataitai Park and the native regeneration above the park provide a green framework for the recreation facilities and need to be retained and enhanced to mitigate the visual effects of this hub.

#### 8.8.4 Recreation

##### Policies

8.8.4.1 Establish a Hataitai Park Advisory Group of sporting organisations to develop a long-term master plan for the park, which includes:

- retaining the landscape character of the park while allowing flexibility for sporting development
- developing a landscape plan for the changed Ruahine Street frontage to reflect its amenity value and prominent location
- Working with NZTA regarding potential changes to access and parking as a result of the state highway development
- rationalisation and/or sharing of sporting infrastructure and buildings wherever possible. In particular, an assessment over the future maintenance and resurfacing of the velodrome
- working with Wellington Badminton and NZTA to look for suitable alternative locations for Badminton Hall if it is confirmed that the hall will be affected by the state highway development
- Alexandra Road will not be used as alternative vehicular access (except for utility vehicles) to/from Hataitai Park.

8.8.4.2 Protect the natural character of Alexandra Road, as an important scenic route through the Town Belt.

Hataitai Park is one of the largest recreation hubs in the city and has facilities for formal recreation, including two playing fields, softball diamonds, the Velodrome cycle track and 14 netball/tennis courts (Sector 8: current uses map). There are a number of associated pavilion buildings and clubrooms, including two club-owned gymnasiums. Facilities are leased to:

- **Harbour City Gym Sports**, which owns and manages the indoor gym behind the Wellington Football club building
- **Marist St Pats Rugby Football Club** clubrooms next to the Velodrome (note their home ground is Evans Bay Park)
- **Netball Wellington Centre** administration building
- **St George Softball Club**
- **Wellington Football Club**, with a sub-lease to darts
- **Port Nicholson Poneke (PNP) Cycling Club** has an agreement to use the Velodrome over the summer months for training and events and rents a storage shed on the lower park to store bikes and provide space for winter training.
- **Wellington Badminton Association** owns an eight-court facility with associated pro shop and has a ground lease covering the building and adjacent car park.

Wellington Badminton Club has proposed to build an extension to Badminton Hall to add five courts. This proposal was declined by planning commissioners in 2010 and appealed to the Environment Court by the club in 2011. The development was approved by the Environment Court. However, Action for the Environment appealed the decision to the High Court. The appeal was

heard in May 2012. On 13 July 2012 the High Court dismissed the appeal. The club has not yet applied for landowner approval for this extension through a variation to their current lease.

In addition the **Hataitai Kindergarten** occupies an elevated site just south of the Mt Victoria tunnel portal off Taurima Street.

The Southern Walkway goes through this area and there is a bike skills area at the southern end. A dog exercise area is also provided.

A 2007 report identified several issues with Hataitai Park:

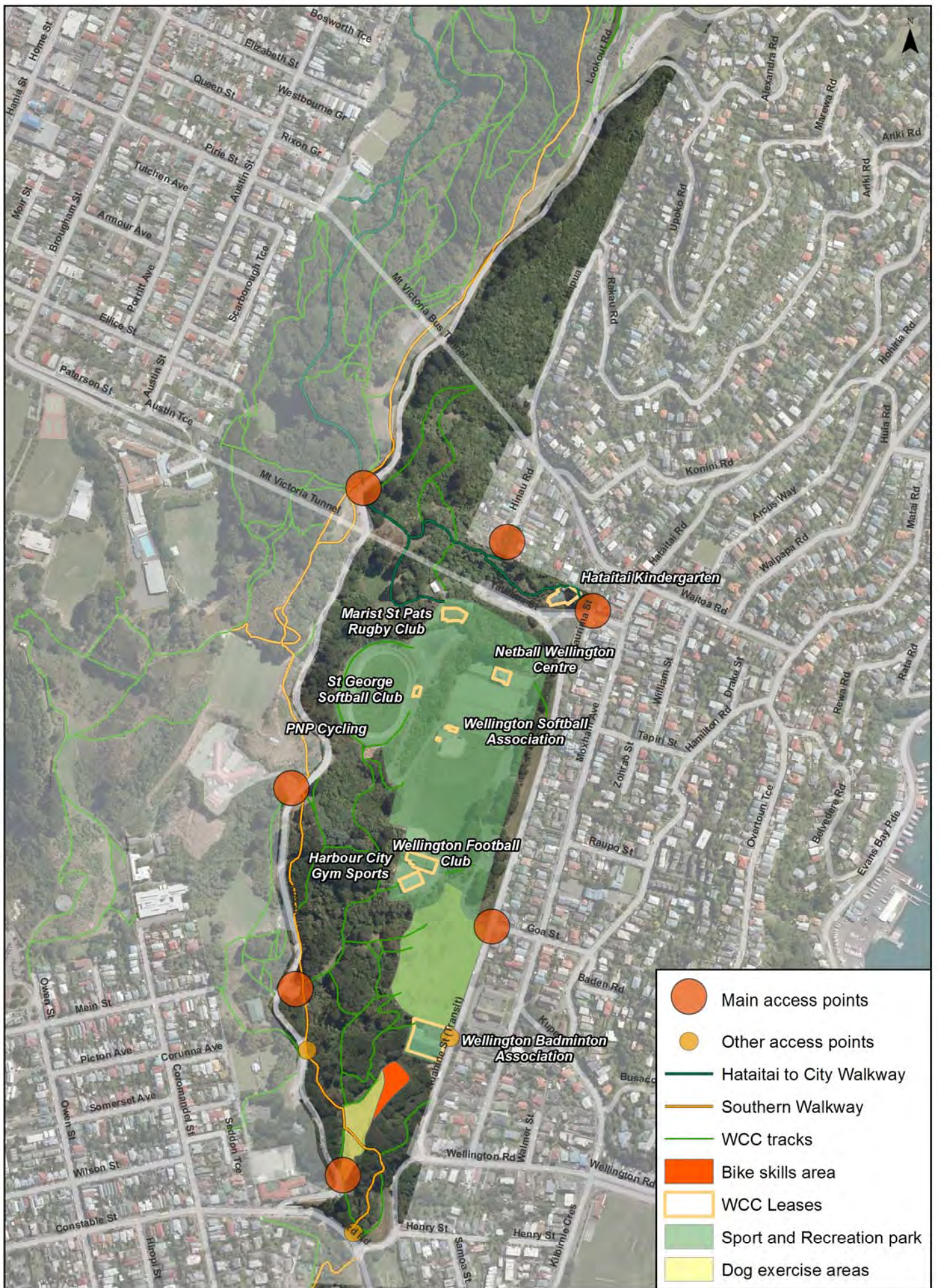
- The number and configuration of buildings on the park does not meet the needs of the various organisations using or leasing facilities on the park.
- There is only one vehicle entrance off Ruahine Street (which is part of State Highway 1). Some sports activities create high volume of vehicles wishing to enter and leave the park, particularly netball.
- There is an insufficient number of car parks to cope with the large number of users at peak times.

Improvements to parking, lighting and access have been undertaken. Some of the demand from netball on Saturdays has been removed with the opening of the ASB Community Sports Centre at Kilbirnie. However, Netball Wellington may move its satellite leagues to Hataitai Park.

The Wellington Darts Club building has been sold to Harbour City Gym Sports.

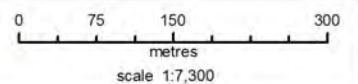
The 2007 report recommended the preparation of a plan to develop this park as a recreation and sport hub. The report also recommended a landscape plan be developed for the Ruahine Street (SH1) frontage to reflect the amenity value and prominent location as part of the 'city gateway' from the airport to the Central Business District.

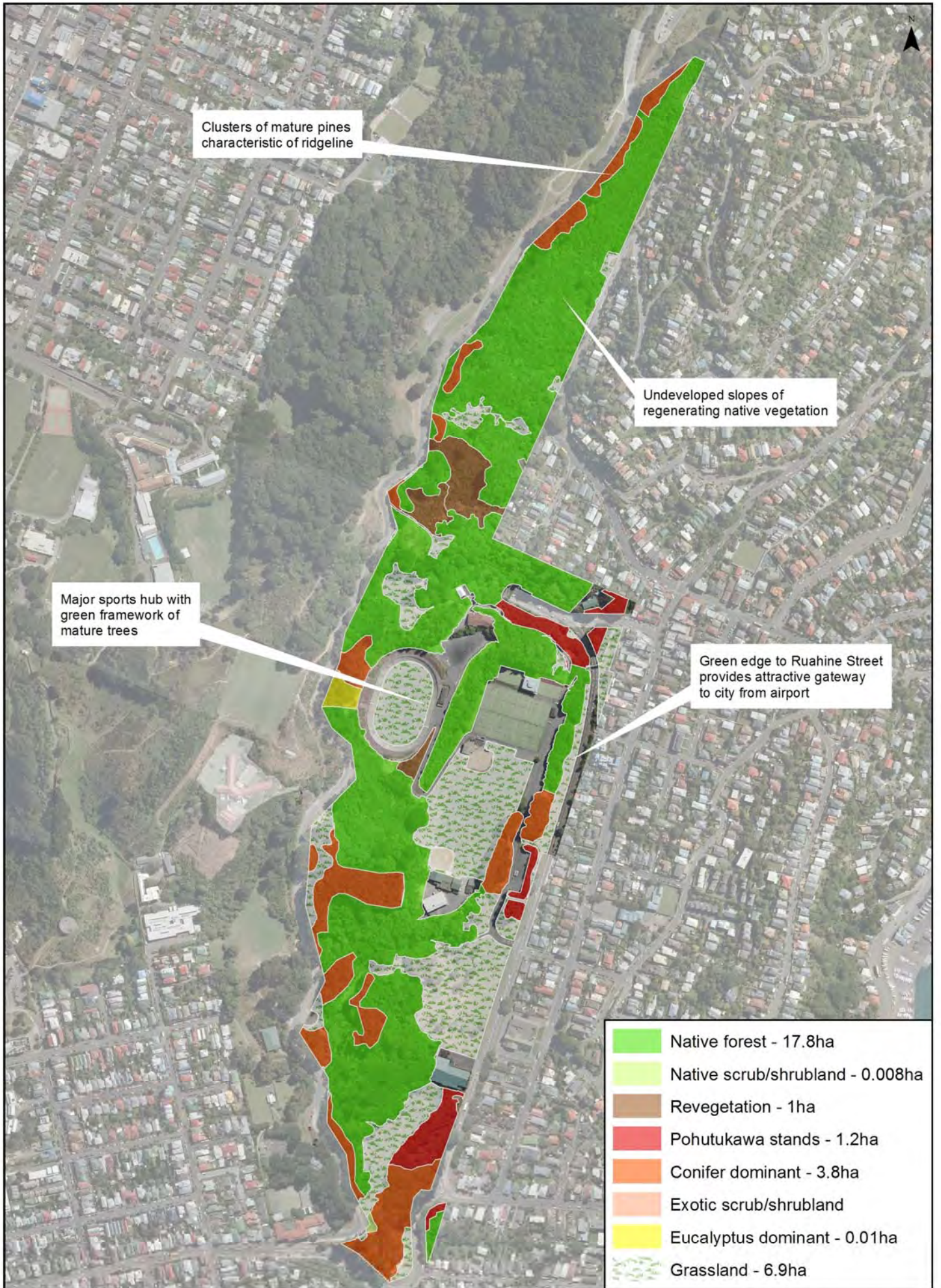




**Sector 8 - Hataitai Park**  
Current uses

Other data has been compiled from a variety of sources and its accuracy may vary, but is generally +/- 1m.





Clusters of mature pines characteristic of ridgeline

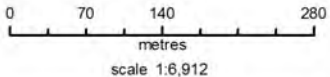
Undeveloped slopes of regenerating native vegetation

Major sports hub with green framework of mature trees

Green edge to Ruahine Street provides attractive gateway to city from airport

- Native forest - 17.8ha
- Native scrub/shrubland - 0.008ha
- Revegetation - 1ha
- Pohutukawa stands - 1.2ha
- Conifer dominant - 3.8ha
- Exotic scrub/shrubland
- Eucalyptus dominant - 0.01ha
- Grassland - 6.9ha

**Sector 8 - Hataitai Park**  
Landscape and existing vegetation

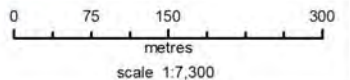


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**Sector 8 - Hataitai Park**  
 Management and proposed future changes



Other data has been compiled from a variety of sources and its accuracy may vary, but is generally +/- 1m.

**Table 8: Town Belt additions and boundary rationalisation – Hataitai sector**

Site name	Legal description and area	Description, location, current use	Previous policy	Discussion, criteria assessment	Recommendation	Land covered by this TBMP
Pohutukawa strip next to Ruahine Street	This land is legally defined as Town Belt and contained in CT 48B/341.	This is a narrow strip of land running from Goa Street to Wellington Road, between private residential properties and Ruahine Street, Hataitai.	The TBMP 1995 recommends that this land be transferred to road reserve and have its Town Belt status removed.	Refer to Ruahine Street below.	Refer to Ruahine Street below.	Yes
Ruahine Street	Area marked green on DP 81724, being part of the land in CT 48B/341.	The stretch of Ruahine Street, from Taurima to Raupo streets is still Town Belt land. This portion of Ruahine Street has never formally been made legal road.  This land is subject to the New Zealand Transport Agency's roading project "The Inner City Transport Network: Improvements for a Successful Capital City".	The TBMP 1995 states:  To regularise (making inconsistent legal and physical boundaries consistent) the legal status of Ruahine Street and, if necessary, make provision for an isolation strip on the east side of Ruahine Street (part 2, page 33).	The Inner City Transport Network: Improvements for a Successful Capital City proposal includes:  A second Mt Victoria Tunnel to the north of the existing one (two lanes east-bound).  Widening Ruahine Street and Wellington Road.  An option is to widen Ruahine Street to the west into the Town Belt.	The Council will continue working with NZTA to identify options for reducing or mitigating the impacts of the State Highway 1 on the Town Belt and, in particular, Hataitai Park.  In situations where the Council proposes to take Town Belt land for a public work, then the Council will pursue its replacement with Crown Land of equal value.	Yes