

5.5 Sector 5: Mākara Peak



Key features/values:

- MākaraPeak (412 m asl) a rugged landmark in Karori
- World-class, nationally recognised mountain biking destination
- More than 40km of cross country mountain bike-priority tracks
- Community-led bike park/forest restoration project
- Part of the continuous Skyline Track route
- Significant further development planned.

Local communities:

Karori, Mākara

Local community volunteer activities include:

Track maintenance and building, pest animal control, restoration planting.

5.5.1 Overview

Sector 5 (342.4 ha) extends south from Mākara Road, taking in the Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park and contiguous Council-owned land further south in the Karori Stream Valley, which is currently designated for waste water treatment. This latter parcel of land was added to the Outer Green Belt in the review preceding this management plan. Note: The term 'Mākara Peak' is being used in this plan instead of the official name 'Mākara Hill', because it is the more commonly used name now, which most people recognise.

5.5.1.1 Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park

The mountain bike park is managed under the 10-year *Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park Master Plan 2017*, which comes under this over-arching OGBMP. Therefore, only the main features in the master plan are summarised here and readers wanting more detail are referred to the master plan itself, which is available online.

The mountain bike park was established in 1998. Since then it has been developed collaboratively by the Council and Mākara Peak Supporters Group. The combined mountain biking facility and nature conservation and restoration is a point of difference. By 2017, some 35km of mountain biking priority tracks had been developed and 35,000 native seedlings planted, much of it by volunteer effort. Mākara Peak has become a regionally significant mountain bike destination offering a world-class mountain biking experience for riders of different skill levels and experience, though mainly geared for the intermediate-advanced grades of rider. The area's development has paralleled steady growth in the mountain biking market and increasing demand for mountain biking opportunities.

The master plan was developed to plan for mountain biking growth and sustain the park's status as a world-class local and regional mountain biking destination while also addressing existing issues and ensuring the principles of long-term sustainability are clearly articulated. Its objectives, developed through engagement with key stakeholders, are in brief to be a regionally significant mountain biking facility and key component of the regional track network, to have tracks and facilities of a scope, scale and nature compatible with the regional status, to ensure adequate ongoing resourcing and funding, and to

tell the story of the ecological context and ongoing conservation efforts alongside the signage and track development.

The main proposals are:

- Sustainability framework: The framework sets out principles and objectives to ensure ongoing community benefits, landscape benefits, ecological restoration and increased biodiversity, relationships with iwi and consistent management guidelines to achieve high standards and minimise impacts
- Governance. The partnership between the Council and the supporters will continue, formalised under a renewed Memorandum of Understanding, and with a series of clear governance frameworks covering the key threads of management and development. Responsibilities for implementing the master plan are also set out under the auspices of a 'park manager' role, which could be undertaken by one or more people
- Track network: Developed to offer a mainly cross country experience with a wide range of route itineraries and loops appropriate for a regional facility including:
 - > Catering for novice, intermediate and advanced riders, especially for medium to advanced riders, who are the majority, and comparatively little for the technical grade five riders
 - > Achieving a track system that users will find easier to understand, aided by upgraded way-finding
 - > Better integrate the existing under-used tracks and develop new tracks in the southwest and north areas
 - > Enhanced access from the north, including a safe at-grade Mākara Road crossing, connecting to the Skyline Track and an enhanced loop track system centred on Karori Park
 - > Strengthened links to Wrights Hill and the south coast through the Outer Green Belt
 - > Eventually replace two-way sections of track with one-way opportunities
- Entrances and access: The main entrance/carpark
 on South Karori Road will continue to be the central
 hub. It will be improved and expanded to increase its
 capacity. The other secondary entrances from local
 streets will remain to offer more route choices for
 locals especially, but not expanded

- In-park visitor facilities: The master plan also proposes developing facilities within the park, mindful of providing for a range of visitors with varying degrees of experience and fitness over a track network that can take users to relatively remote and exposed places. Proposals include dedicated rest/picnic areas at nodes and destinations in the network, possible emergency shelters at key points, and the provision of drinking water at the Mākara Peak summit
- *Ecological restoration* is to continue alongside the track development.

5.5.1.2 Land administration

Scenic reserve rather than recreation reserve classification is considered appropriate in this sector, even though the area is managed as a mountain bike park. The park track network is being developed in parallel with nature conservation and restoration. In the long term, native forest cover will be restored and the track network will enable the public to use and enjoy the restored scenic and natural values.

The Council owns an area of about 106 ha down South Karori Road, which is currently designated for waste water treatment. Only a small proportion is required for this purpose, being the Council's Western Waste Water Treatment Plant, access road and the corridor that carries the sewer main into the treatment plant and the treated waste water out of it. The Council intends to reclassify most of the land as scenic reserve and manage it as part of the Outer Green Belt. The land containing the waste water treatment infrastructure and any other areas for future infrastructure needs will be surveyed off and will continue to be managed for waste water purposes. The area of proposed reserve land is former farmland covered in regenerating scrub and secondary native forest, and includes some kānuka/mānuka forest on the east side of the Karori Stream with high natural value, which will usefully connect to Long Gully Reserve and Zealandia beyond. Most of the area is registered as a permanent forest sink and it will be managed as part of the wider Outer Green Belt ecological corridor, with the west side potentially added to the mountain bike park.

There are other utility uses on Mākara Peak also - transmission lines, a telecommunication tower near

the summit and a water reservoir close to Mākara Road saddle. The utility operators have access to maintain their infrastructure.



5.5.1.3 Nature

This was once pastoral farmland, cleared of native forest except for some remnants at the south end and in steep gullies, but has not been grazed for many years. The succession of the former pasture to scrub (mainly gorse and Darwin's barberry) to secondary forest has been aided by restoration planting and pest animal control largely carried out by volunteers. Today, the regenerating scrub and native forest includes māpou, kāmahi, tawa, porokaiwhiri (pigeonwood), rewarewa, hīnau and nīkau (planted). The recently added areas of kānuka/mānuka forest on the east side of the Karori Stream are valuable as they often have higher species diversity than other shrublands, for example,. the presence of ground orchids. An interesting feature of the flora on Mākara Peak are some hillsides where tree ferns and astelias are prominent. This feature is also seen at Te Kopahou, perhaps reflecting more of a shared coastal influence in these two areas.

The ecological restoration outlined in the *Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park Master Plan 2017*, is aligned with the conservation and ecological aspirations in this OGBMP and Our Natural Capital. Activities will include ongoing pest control, stabilising and replanting disturbed ground as soon as possible, and continuing with restoration planting to assist natural regeneration and diversify species. The restoration planting is doing well and Mākara Peak promises to be another hub in the Outer Green Belt ecological corridor in future, well aligned with the Capital Kiwi programme of predator control and future kiwi reintroduction in the Terawhiti/south Mākara rural area to the south and west.

Most of Mākara Peak is registered as a permanent forest sink. The developing vegetation cover is also helping to protect the upper catchment of tributary streams to Karori Stream. Karori Stream is badly polluted from the urban area of Karori, which makes maintaining the health and water quality of the tributary streams even more important.



5.5.1.4 Landscape and land use

Mākara Peak is the dominant land form and landmark at the south end of Karori, rising to an elevation of 412 m asl. It is a steep landscape covered mainly in regenerating scrub and native forest. The skyline is mainly clear of structures, except for a telecommunications tower close to the summit and transmission pylons that cross on the south flank. Though the track network is extensive, it has little visual impact from Karori as it is increasingly concealed by the advancing vegetation.

The landscape experience within Mākara Peak itself is changing. Tracks lower down the flanks and in gullies are becoming more sheltered and enclosed by vegetation. High up on the more rugged exposed tops, the vegetation is still low and wind-shorn, allowing visitors to experience the exhilarating climatic extremes and the spectacular 3600 views, across the Mākara windfarm to the Marlborough Sounds and Kaikoura Ranges of the South Island as well as Wellington's city, harbour and mountains beyond to the east. In future, popular viewpoints will need to be kept clear as the forest restoration and regeneration progress.



5.5.1.5 Recreation and access

Walkers and runners in the mountain bike park

All tracks in the mountain bike park are prioritised for mountain biking use (Open Space Action Plan), meaning that walkers and runners on the shared tracks are expected to give way to bikers. Some of the tracks are further designated for downhill mountain biking use only for safety reasons. The master plan comments on the benefit of being a 'bike priority facility' without the challenges associated with other mixed-use areas in the open space network. Nevertheless, it also seeks to encourage other recreational users, including local residents, to use the park and participate in associated activities. So, it will be important to ensure the signage, information and way-finding clearly communicates user behaviour codes and directs non-bikers to the most suitable tracks for avoiding potential conflict.

At least one through-route -the Skyline Track - will be designated shared use (not bike priority) and clearly marked as such. While some Skyline Track walkers and runners might prefer to avoid the mountain bike park altogether (see alternative route proposed in Management Sector 4) the Skyline Track was conceived as a continuous route along the ridgetops of the Outer Green Belt - it should traverse Mākara Peak and enable walkers to experience and appreciate the park's unique story as well as its regenerating natural values. A suitable route needs to be marked.

Events

Events are an important part of the value of the park and provide a significant benefit to the city. A balance needs to be struck between providing for general use and enjoyment and the ability to appropriately manage an event through partial or full closure of the park to the general public.

Toilets and water supply

An issue that isn't addressed in the master plan is the potential need to provide toilets within the park, as well as at the main entrance. As visitor numbers build, soiling could become a problem (as has happened at the Mt Kaukau summit) and, so, future options should be investigated. Closely related is the question in the master plan of how to reliably supply drinking water to at least the Mākara Peak summit to reduce risk of dehydration in unprepared riders.

Relationship with Karori Park

Two proposals in the master plan are related to Karori Park: (i) To look into the feasibility of creating a safe road crossing at the Mākara Road saddle, and (ii) to at the same time look into the feasibility of developing safe and sustainable linking tracks between Mākara Peak and Karori Park. Both these matters are relevant to the larger scale of the Outer Green Belt as follows.

 As noted in Management Sector 4, there have been issues in the 'wild side' of Karori Park with track proliferation and conflicts between different user groups. A plan⁶⁵ was commissioned to assist community consultation on these issues and the

⁶⁵ The Wild Side of Karori Park, Dog Exercise and Trail Plan 2015

agreed initiatives are being implemented, including rationalisation of and closure of some tracks and better demarcation for different users. Mountain bike tracks (except for the existing grade five 98 downhill track) are aimed at providing an easy trail for children and beginner riders, to complement the more advanced trails in the Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park. However, the potential was noted for a new 'climb and descend' loop bike track to be developed from the beginners' trail to the Mākara Road saddle quite separately from the existing network in the 'wild side'. The development of such a new loop would be enhanced by a safe crossing at the top.

 The Skyline Track is a key continuous feature in the Outer Green Belt and, so, a safe road crossing at Mākara Road would be desirable for all walkers, runners and bikers on the route, as well as people specifically using the mountain bike park.

Outer Green Belt main entrance

Main entrances along the Outer Green are being planned at regular intervals, with toilet and drinking water facilities (see general policy 4.5.2.3). In this sector a main entrance already exists on South Karori Road where the main entrance to the MākaraPeak Mountain Bike Park is located. Close by in Sector 4, Karori Park provides another main entrance which Skyline Track users can use via a short downhill detour. If toilets and/or water are provided at the Mākara Peak summit, Skyline Track users could then choose to carry on to those facilities or take an alternative route through Karori Park.

Expansion of the mountain bike park/track network south

The master plan provides for the Mākara Peak track network to extend into the waste water treatment facility land down South Karori Road. Most of that land is to become reserve (see 5.5.1.2), opening up opportunities to extend the existing track network further south, including finding an alternative to the existing Bail Out track on private land. A new shared track connection to the start of the proposed south coast link from the end of South Karori Road⁶⁶ would open up a range of long distance walking, running and biking opportunities.



5.5.1.6 Community and identity

The Council and Mākara Peak Supporters Group have developed a strong collaborative working relationship over time, which is formalised in a Memorandum of Understanding. The supporters' group has also worked hard to develop a positive relationship with the Karori community and is keen to encourage participation in shared activities, including nature conservation and track work, as well as mountain biking. Mākara Peak is used by Karori residents quite compatibly for walking and dog exercise in off-peak biking times (e.g. midweek) and/or by using the wider tracks more suited to shared use.

⁶⁶ See *Open Space Access Plan* 2016, 7.5 - link from the end of South Mākara Road to the coast.

5.5.2 Actions

N = New initiative; E = Existing; Ex = Expand existing

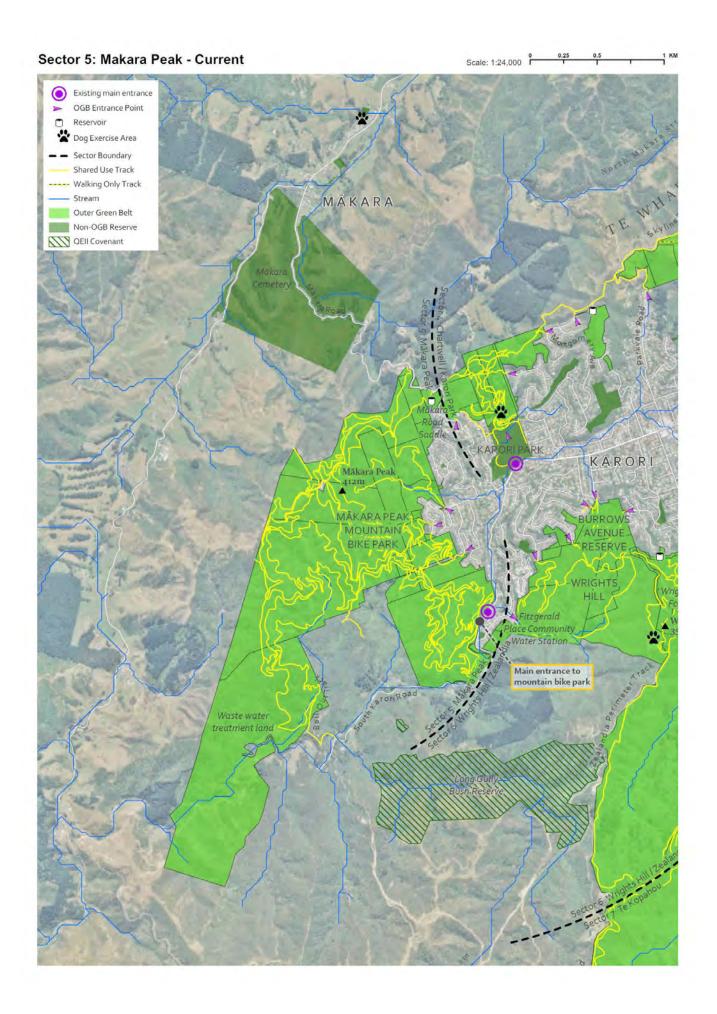
(Notes: (i) Some 'new' projects come within larger funded programmes but have not yet been started. (ii) Implementation depends on budget allocations).

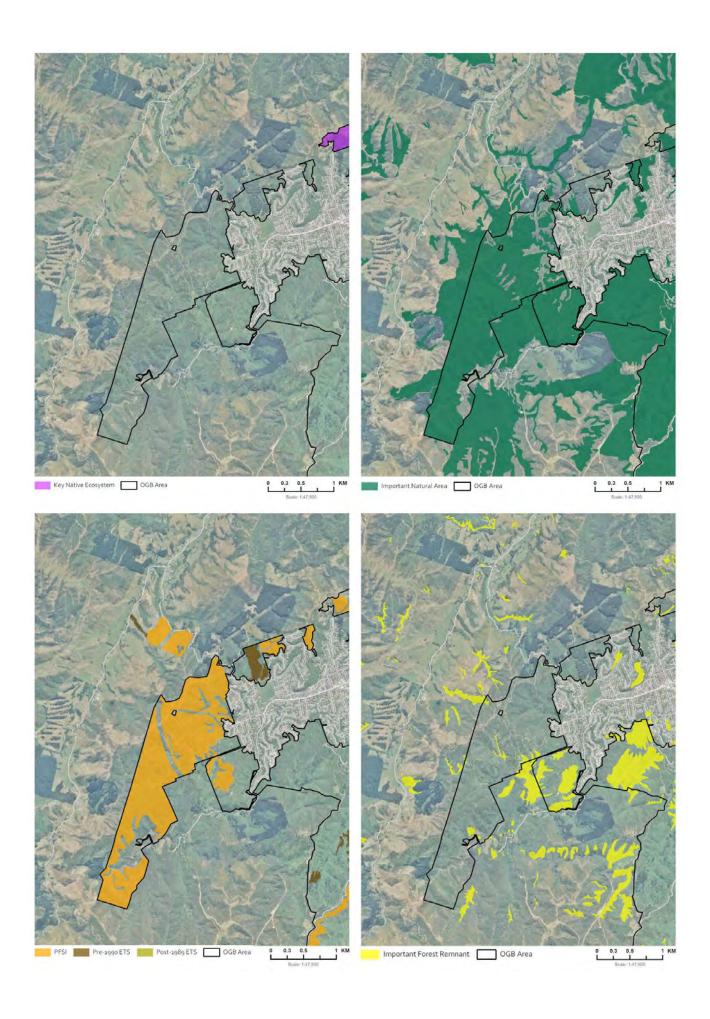
5.5.2.1 Land administration

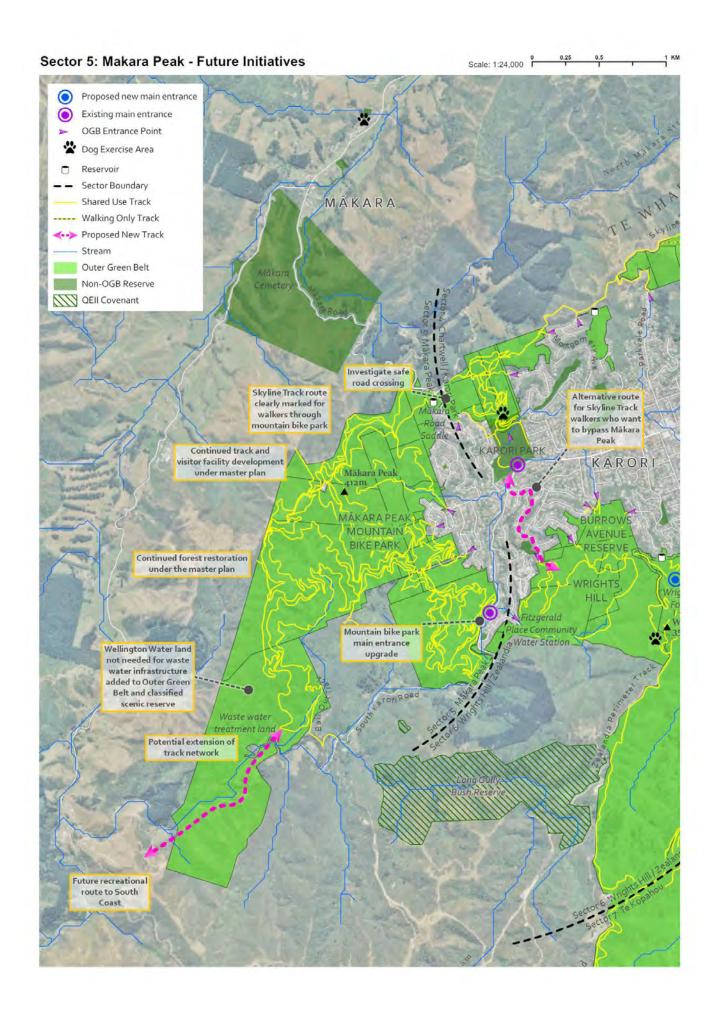
	Survey off from the land designated for 'Waste water Treatment Conveyance and Drainage Purposes' along South Karori Road all the land not required for the Council's waste water	N	1-2 yrs						
	treatment infrastructure and reclassify it as scenic reserve to be managed as part of the								
	Outer Green Belt reserves.								
2.	Initiate the process required to stop the legal road through Mākara Peak to facilitate its primary use	N	3-5 yrs						
	for recreation.								
3.	Monitor progress with implementing the Mākara Peak Master Plan, including outcomes and impacts of initiatives as they are developed (for example, the new entrance and carpark facilities).								
5.5.2.2	Nature								
Caring fo	or nature								
1.	Protect and restore the biodiversity values of Mākara Peak by implementing the conservation and biodiversity policies in the master plan.	Ex	Ongoing						
Streams									
2.	Manage the tributary streams and potential effects on streams from track building and maintenance activities within this sector in accordance with the 'waterways and receiving environments' approach outlined in the <i>Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park Master Plan</i> (where they are superior to regional, national and local policies in terms of protecting environmental values).								
Indigend	ous flora and planting								
3.	Continue restoration planting on Mākara Peak of a wide variety of indigenous species, with a focus on planting emergent tree species.	Ex	ongoing						
4.	Protect and encourage the spread of the tree fern/astelia plant communities that are a feature in places on Mākara Peak.	E	ongoing						
Weeds a	nd pest animals								
5.	Implement the weed and pest animal control programmes for the Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park outlined in the master plan.	Ex	ongoing						
6.	Work with the national Bio-control Collective to monitor the effectiveness of the Darwin's barberry weevil as a bio-control agent at Mākara Peak and Chartwell to guide improved bio-control of Darwin's	Е	ongoing						

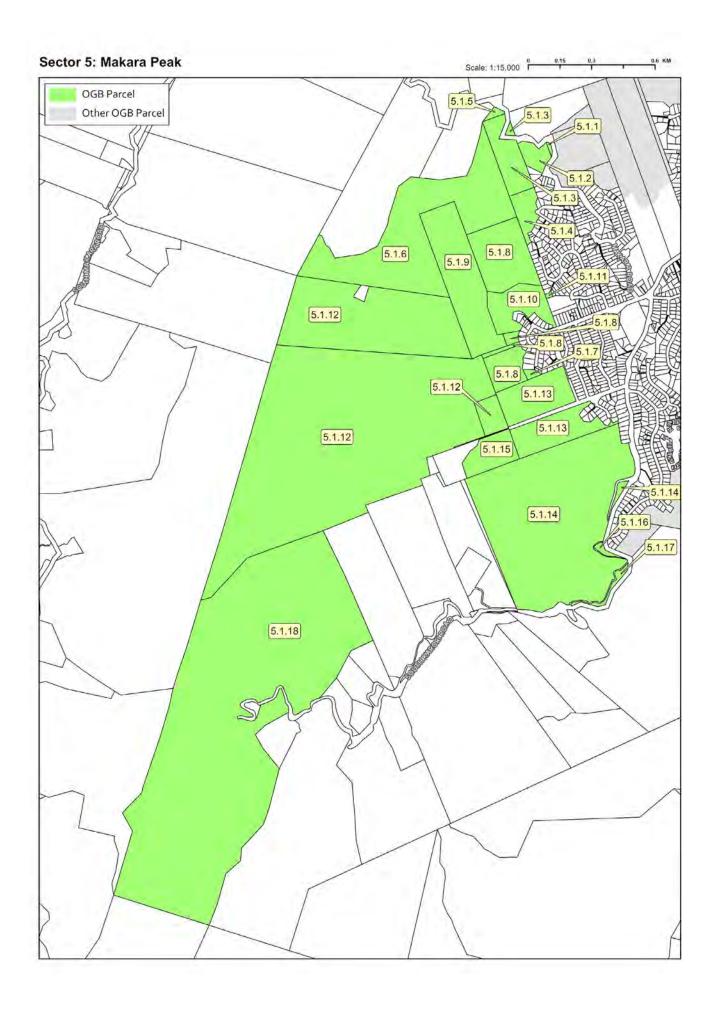
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Research			
7.	Support research into the factors limiting the dispersal of threatened or locally significant bird species from Zealandia, such as tieke (saddleback), kākāriki (red-crowned parakeet), korimako (bellbird) and toutouwai (North Island robin).	Ex	ongoinį
5.5.2.3	Landscape and land use		
Landsca	pe character and views		
1.	Manage vegetation to maintain open views from the Mākara Peak summit and other memorable viewpoints, in conjunction with providing the rest places proposed in the master plan, where appropriate.	Е	ongoing
2.	Locate recreational buildings and structures, such as water supply storage, toilets and emergency shelters, unobtrusively, in accordance with general policy 4.3.2.4, to maintain Mākara Peak's relatively undeveloped landscape character.	E	ongoinį
5.5.2.4	Culture and heritage		
Interpre	tation		
1.	Support telling the unique story of community volunteering to both develop a world-class mountain biking park and restore natural values, as proposed in the master plan, and integrate that story into the proposed overall Outer Green Belt interpretation plan (see 4.6.2.5).	N	5-10 yrs
5.5.2.5	Recreation and access		
l.	Consider the feasibility of extending the track network through the additional reserve land along South Karori Road, especially to provide an alternative 'Bail Out' exit point and a link to a potential shared use route down Karori Stream to the south coast, taking into account how it would connect with the existing track network and potentially diversify the type of recreational experiences in this sector.	N	ongoinę
2.	In consultation with the Mākara Peak Supporters, work out the best route for the shared use	Е	ongoin

Entrance	es, facilities and way-finding								
3.	Clearly signpost the Skyline Track walking/running route through the mountain bike park to ensure Skyline users, travelling in either direction, can easily find their way.								
4.	Investigate the inter-related questions of where and how to locate toilets and drinking water supply within the Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park and at suitable intervals along the Skyline Track in this sector.								
5.	Install signage at the Mākara Road saddle that makes clear the Outer Green Belt is on both sides of the road, with recreational opportunities.	E	ongoing						
6.	As part of the comprehensive review of signage and way-finding proposed in the master plan, ensure standard symbols and warning signs are unambiguous, the shared or bike priority status of tracks is clearly marked and key messages communicated to walkers and runners as well as riders, about codes of behaviour and safety on tracks, to ensure all feel welcome while also understanding their responsibilities.	N	ongoing						
7.	Ensure that dog walkers and riders with dogs in the mountain bike park are aware of their responsibility to keep dogs on a leash and under control on bike priority tracks.	E	ongoing						
Events									
8.	Limit the number of mountain biking events held in Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park, to ensure all users have good access to the mountain bike park, while allowing sufficient events to reflect the park's significance as a mountain bike destination.	N	ongoing						
9.	Investigate the types of events that are, and could be, held at the bike park and what reasonable limits might be set to achieve the right balance with community use and general public access to the tracks networks. Set limits as required and include in the master plan.	N	ongoing						
5.5.2.6	Community and identity								
Work wit	th volunteers								
1.	Continue to support and partner with the Mākara Peak Supporters Group to implement the Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park Master Plan.	E	ongoing						
Work wit	th neighbours								
2.	Continue to encourage and support neighbouring land owners to participate in local pest management/weed control/restoration planting on their land, especially where it will help protect streams or important native bush remnants or connect up or extend the restored forest on Mākara Peak.	Ex	ongoing						









Management Sector 5: Mākara Peak: Land schedule (Map 1)

Gazette Reserve Name (may differ from WCC name)**	Mapping Reference	WCC Site number	Legal Description	Record of Title / Parcel Id	Land Area	Reserve Description	NZ Gazette Notice Reference	District Plan Zoning	Notes	Actions needed
Mākara Hill Mountain Bike Park	5.1.1	2464	Pt Sec 41 Karori District	WND1/1318	0.0760 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013, p 3957	Open Space B		
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.2	101	Pt Sec 42 Karori District and being also Pt Lot 1 Plan A/2142	WN942/12	1.4292 ha	Local Purpose (Water Reservoir) Reserve	Gaz 2013 p1554	Open Space B		
Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park	5.1.3	1205	Lots 1 & 2 DP 49848	WN28B/896	4.3123 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p3955 (LINZ regis # 9561291.3)	Open Space B		
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.4	2074	Lot 1 DP 48353	WN20B/198	2.0477 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p1554 (LINZ regis # 1555 9)	Open Space B		
Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park	5.1.5	2003	Lot 6 DP 68315	WN41D/286	0.2905 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p3955 (LINZ regis # 9561291.3)	Open Space B	Telecommunication rights and right of way over part of land in favour of Telecom Networks (transfer B.248575.7).	
Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park	5.1.6	2003	Lot 5 DP 68315	WN41D/285	26.7760 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p3955 (LINZ regis # 9561291.3)	Open Space B	Telecommunication rights and right of way over part of land in favour of Telecom Networks (transfer B.248575.7). Subject to an easement to convey telecommunication signals to Transpower (transfer B788750.1).	
Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park	5.1.7	2073	Lot 2 386195	344982	0.2607 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013, p 3957	OpenSpace B		
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.8	2073	Pt Lot 2 Plan A/2142 and Pt Lot 2 Plan A/2539 and Pt Sec 85 Karori District	WN49C/58O	11.5491 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p1554 (LINZ regis # 1555 9)	Open Space B	This land is subject to a right of way created by transfer866267.3 Subject to rights of way, right to install and maintain water supply tanks and right to convey water created by transfer B225616.1.	
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.9	2073	Pt Sec 49 Makara District	WN49C/579	12.3213 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p1554	Open Space B		
Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park	5.1.10	2073	Lot 12 DP 82980	WN49C/578	4.8487 ha	Not Classified		Open Space B	Subject to Section 243(c) of the Resource Management Act 1991. B221575.1 Compensation Certificate under S.19Public Works Act 1981. B597533.8 Transfer grant of rights to lay and maintain electric cables & to convey electric energy. B597533.9 Easement certificate for water, sewage, gas, ROW, electricity & telephone with adjoining properties. B.597533.11 Memorandum of Encumbrance to WCC	Proposed Classification Scenic Reserve (b)

^{*} Land schedule information is as at November 2019

[&]quot; The reserve name that appeared in the NZ Gazette notice was the name used for the particular land parcel at the time of gazetting. It may or may not match the name WCC uses for a group of adjoining reserves, in on-site signs or in other WCC information systems.

Management Sector 5: Mākara Peak: Land schedule (Map 1 cont'd)

Gazette Reserve Name (may differ from WCC name)***	Mapping Reference	WCC Site number	Legal Description	Record of Title / Parcel Id	Land Area	Reserve Description	NZ Gazette Notice Reference	District Plan Zoning	Notes	Actions needed
Mākara Peak	5.1.11	1351	Lot 3 DP 43187	WN39A/511	0.0811 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p3955	Open Space A	Reclassified from public to scenic reserve in 2016.	
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.12	2076	Pt Sec 47 & 48 Makara District and Pt Sec 53 Karori District	WN31A/318	109.7403 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p1554 (LINZ regis # 1555 9)	Open Space B	The land transferred to WCC in 1994 (ex-Ivanoff land. It is zoned Open Space B. Transmission Lines cross through the middle of this land. The land is also subject to the following:7251711.1 Compensation Certificate under S19 PWAct1981. 866267.3 Transfer grant of Right of Way. Subject to an easement to convey Telecommunication signals over part of the land to Transpower, by transfer B788750.1.	
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.13	1320	Pt Sec 43 Karori District	WN46B/836	5.6059 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p1554 (LINZ regis # 1555 9)	Open Space B	New addition since 2004	
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.14	1320	Pt Sec 45, Karori District	Part of WN46B/837	Approx 45 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p1554 (LINZ regis # 1555 9)	Open Space B	Gazetted as Mākara Peak / Park / Wrights Hill together with land in Management Sector 5 (map ref 6.1.2). Transmission lines cross over part of this land. Subject to an easement to convey Telecommunication signals over Part Section 45 Karori District. Compensation certificates, reference 170815.1 & 230179.1 against part of the land under Section 17 Public Works Amendment Act 1948.	
Mākara Peak Park	5.1.15	2514	Lot 1 DP 16122	WN648/13	3.75 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 1554 (LINZ regis # 1555 9)		New addition since 2004	
Karori Stream	5.1.16	1322	Lot 4 DP 51083	WN20C/396	0.2900 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p3955	Open Space B	Adjoins Karori Stream,	
Karori Stream	5.1.17	1322	Lot 3 DP 51083	WN20C/395	0.5480 ha	Scenic Reserve (b)	Gaz 2013 p3955	Open Space B	Adjoins Karori Stream,	
To be determined	5.1.18	1191	Sec 1 SO 37211	WN46C/762	106.21 ha	Wastewater Treatment Conveyance and Drainage Purposes	Gaz 1995/ p1289	Rural		Propose surveying the area and protect the majority of the open space as scenic reservethose areas not currently used for Wastewater Treatment Conveyance and Drainage Purposes Propose rezoning Open Space B

^{***} The reserve name that appeared in the NZ Gazette notice was the name used for the particular land parcel at the time of gazetting. It may or may not match the name WCC uses for a group of adjoining reserves, in on-site signs or in other WCC information systems.