Environment and Climate Committee Workshop, 26 March 2026

Information considered in the public part of the workshop.

Greater Wellington
Te Pane Matua Taiao

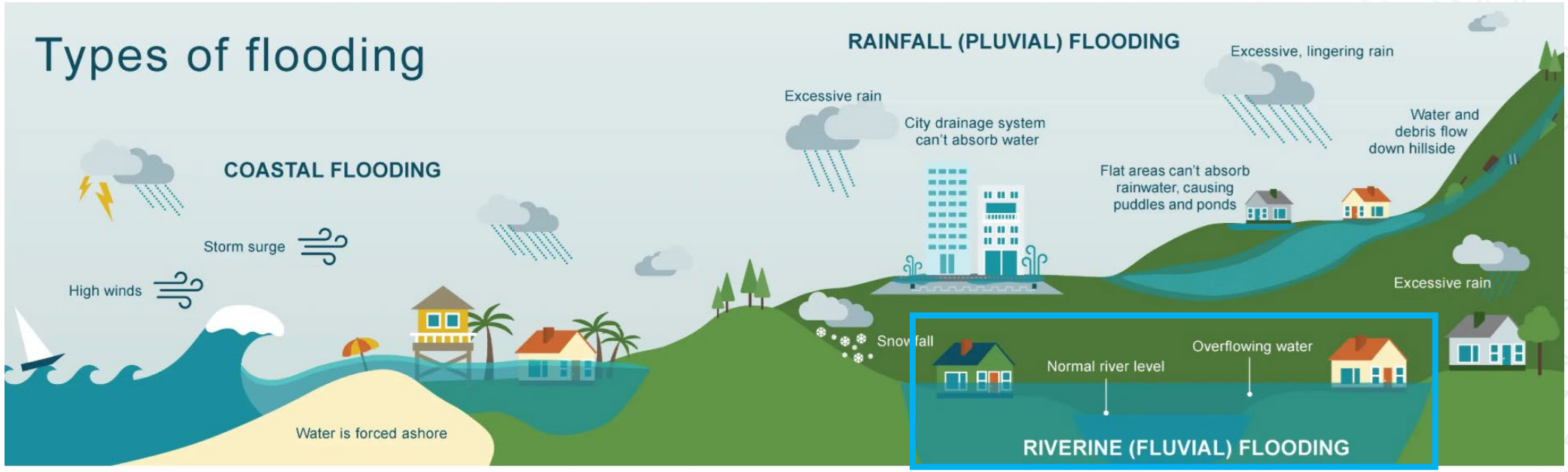
Regional Flood Risk & How it's Managed

Environment & Climate Change Committee Workshop
26th March, 2026

Greater Wellington
Te Pane Matua Taiao

Flooding

GW's responsibilities



Our Mandate

Related legislation & agreements

- Resource Management Act 1991;
- Building Act 2004 (and Building Code 1992);
- Local Government Act 2002;
- Land Drainage Act 1908;
- Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Act 1941;
- Rivers Board Act 1908; and
- Civil Defence Emergency Management Act 2002.
- Regional Watercourses Agreements

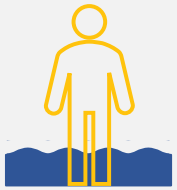
Regional Flood Risk Exposure

Buildings

Residential
73,000
31%

Commercial
4,000
69%

People



Total
197,000
31%

Emergency Service Sites

Total
11
24%

Transport

Road
1,000 km
20%

Rail
40 km
17%

Percentages relevant to present day regional total

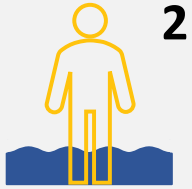
2110 Regional exposure to flooding

Buildings

2110 Residential
85,000
36%
+12,000 (5% increase)

2110 Commercial
4,200
72%
+200 (3% increase)

People



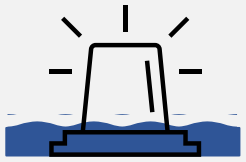
2110 Population
230,000
36%
+33,000 (5% increase)

Transport

2110 Road
1,200 km
21%
+200 km (1% increase)

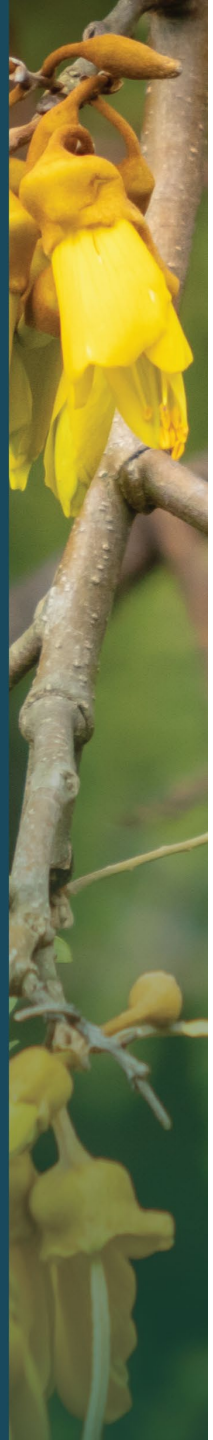
2110 Rail
46 km
24%
+6 km (7% increase)

Emergency Service Sites



2110 Total
14
30%
+3 (6% increase)

Percentages relevant to regional total



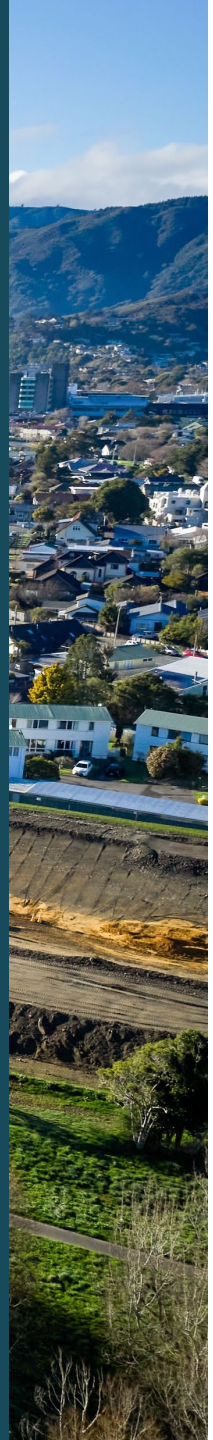
Summary by Territorial Authority

In the present day, all TA's have over 50% of commercial buildings exposed to flooding. Lower Hutt City has 90% of its commercial and 50% of its residential buildings exposed to flooding.

Although Carterton District only has approximately 100 commercial buildings exposed, this represents over 50% of the total buildings in the district. Similarly with South Wairarapa District and Porirua City with ~200 and ~300 commercial buildings exposed respectively representing over 50%.

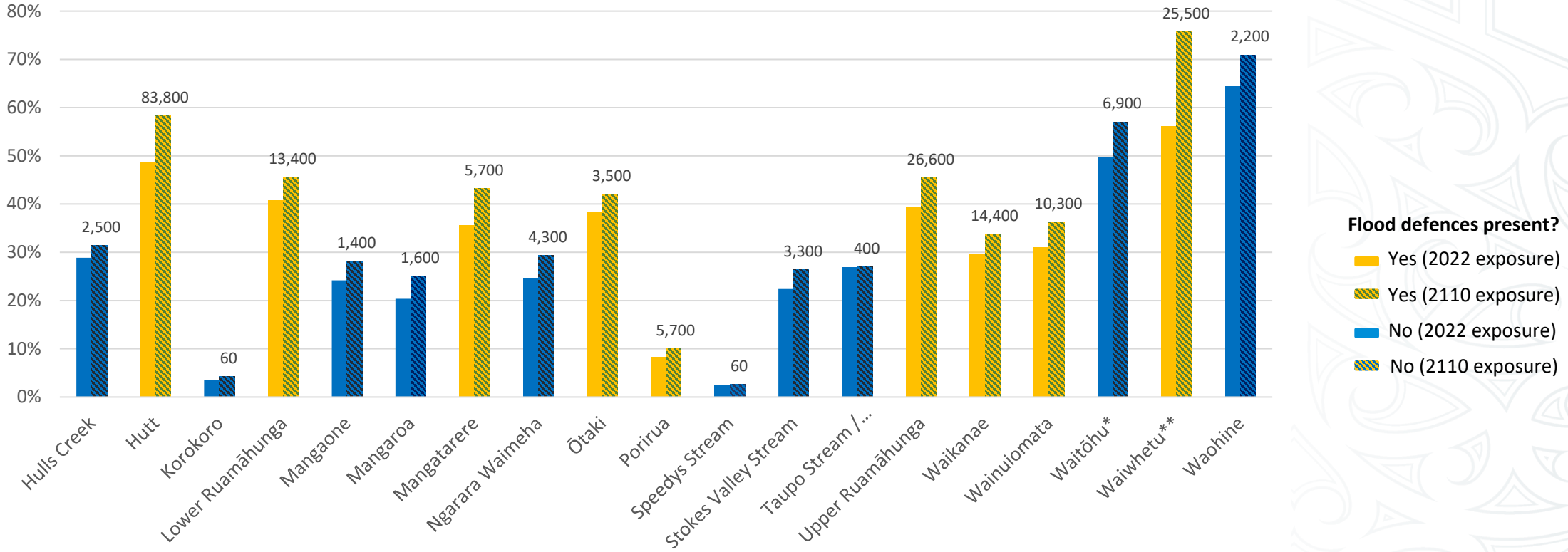
Across the TA's, there is a smaller proportion of residential buildings exposed with 50% exposed in Lower Hutt followed by Masterton District and Upper Hutt City respectively with 41% of all residential buildings.

TA	2022 1% AEP Undefended Commercial		2022 1% AEP Undefended Residential	
	Count	%	Count	%
Carterton District	100	55%	3,000	32%
Kapiti Coast District	400	63%	11,300	34%
Lower Hutt City	1,100	90%	24,200	50%
Masterton District	400	66%	9,000	41%
Porirua City	300	55%	1,800	8%
South Wairarapa District	200	55%	5,100	40%
Upper Hutt City	400	71%	9,200	41%
Wellington City	1,000	67%	9,700	15%



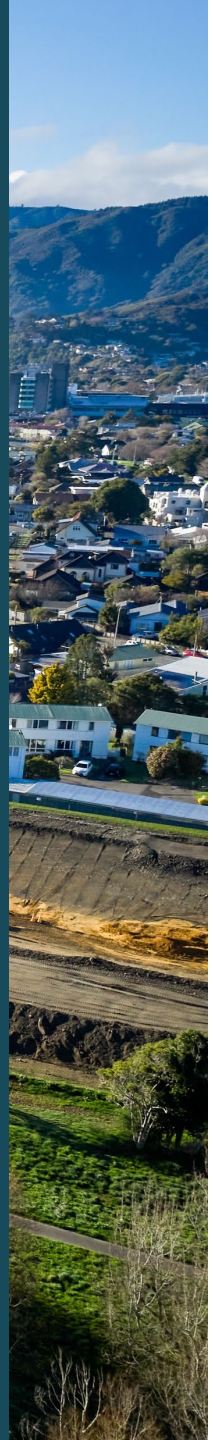
Catchments of interest change in exposure between 2022 and 2110

Percentage and count of population exposed to flooding across the catchments of interest showing change from 2022 to 2110 (using the undefended 1% AEP scenario)



Count indicating population exposed to flooding based on number of residential buildings exposed.

*Population exposed is potentially an overestimate as buildings may have been incorrectly assumed as 'residential'
**Flood defences are present however not to the 1% AEP level of service

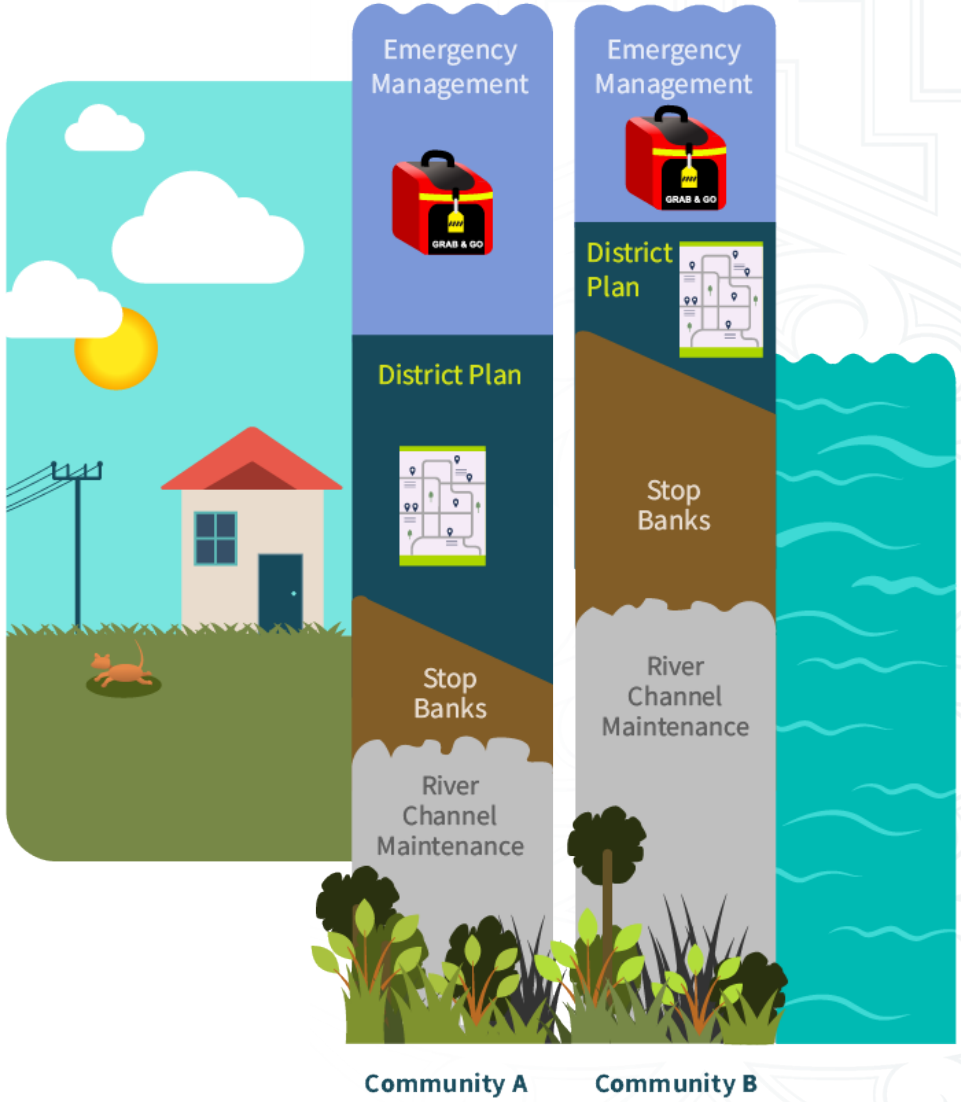


Un-monitored Catchments

	Flood Exposure Area	Location	Administering Authority	Exposed population
1	**Black Creek**	Wainuiomata	Hutt City	4200
2	**Stokes Valley Stream**	Lower Hutt	Hutt City	2000
3	**Waiwhetu Stream (Upper Catchment)**	Lower Hutt	GWRC	8400
4	**Stokes Valley Stream Tributary**	Lower Hutt	Hutt City	900
5	**Black Creek Tributary**	Wainuiomata	Hutt City	1400
6	**Porirua Stream (above GW flow monitoring site)**	Porirua	GWRC	125
7	**Silverstream**	Upper Hutt	Upper Hutt	1100
8	**Pinehaven Stream**	Upper Hutt	GWRC / Upper Hutt	350
9	**Mazengarb Stream**	Paraparaumu	KCDC	970
10	**Makara Stream**	Makara	WCC	200

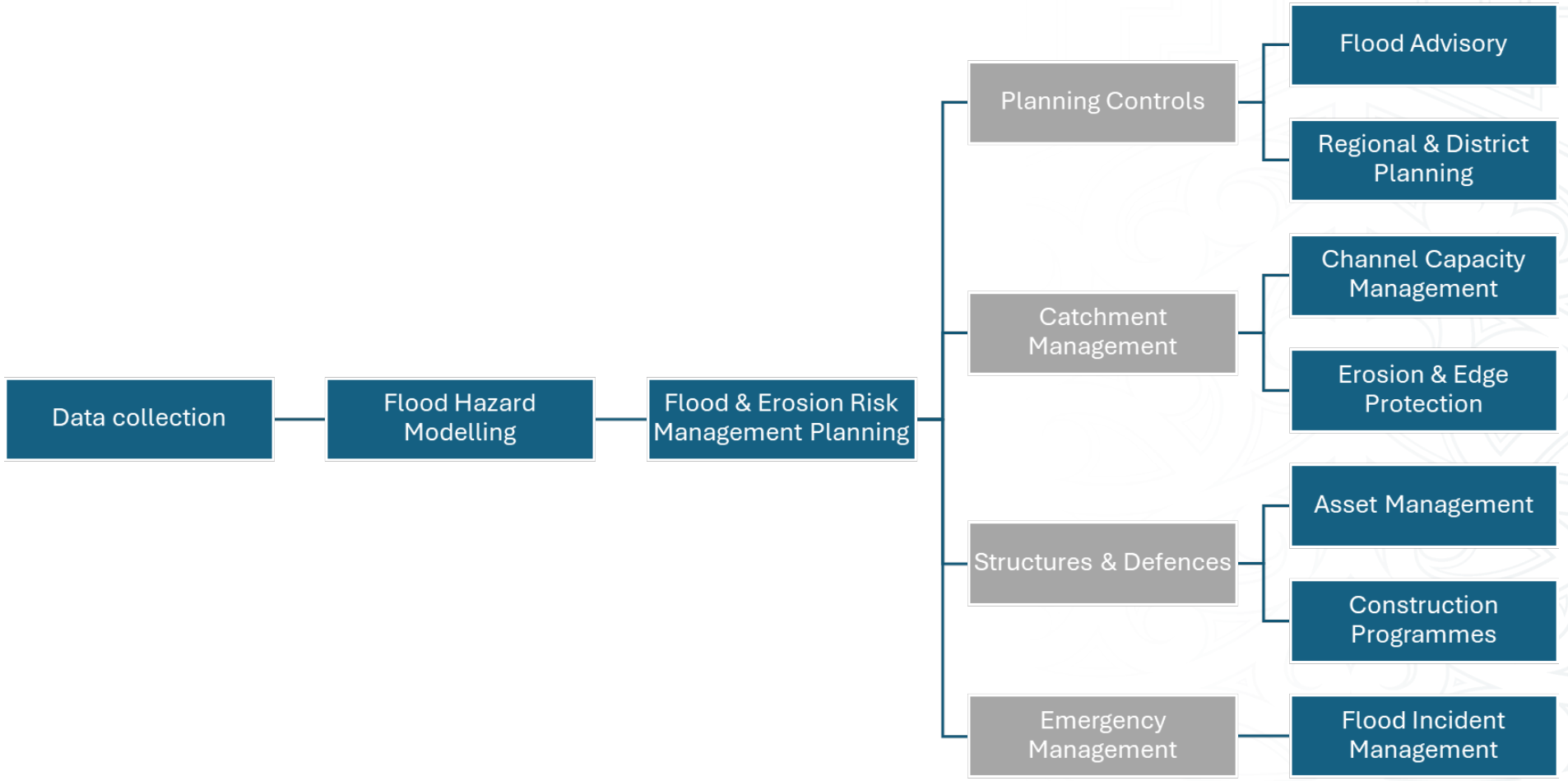
Our Approach

Greater Wellington's Principles of Flood Risk Management
Principle 1: Avoid building in areas at high risk of flood hazard
Principle 2: Only consider new flood protection infrastructure where existing development is at risk
Principle 3: Establish standards of flood protection relative to the degree of risk
Principle 4: Plan for climate change in assessing the degree of flood hazard risk and in determining an appropriate response



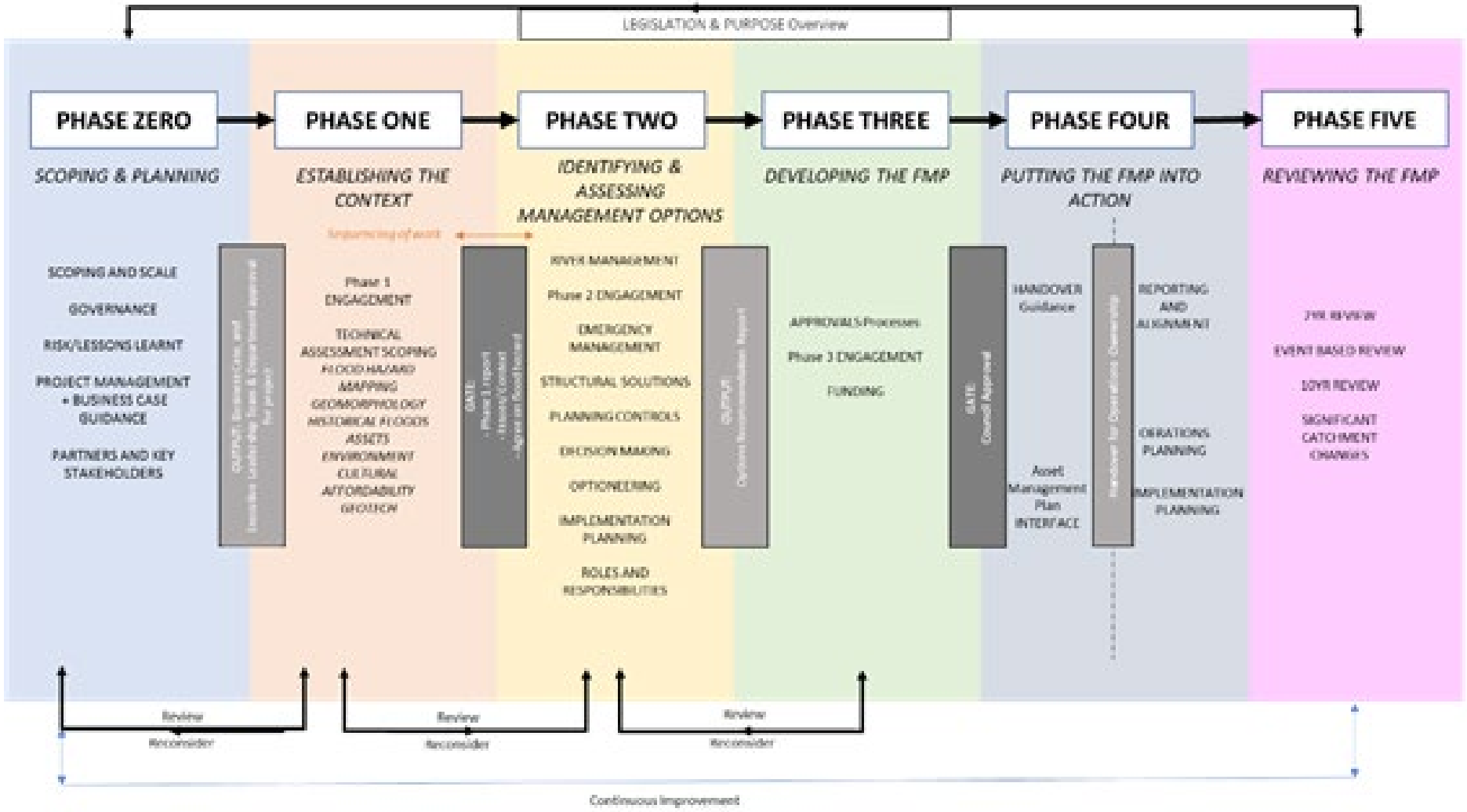
Flood Risk Management

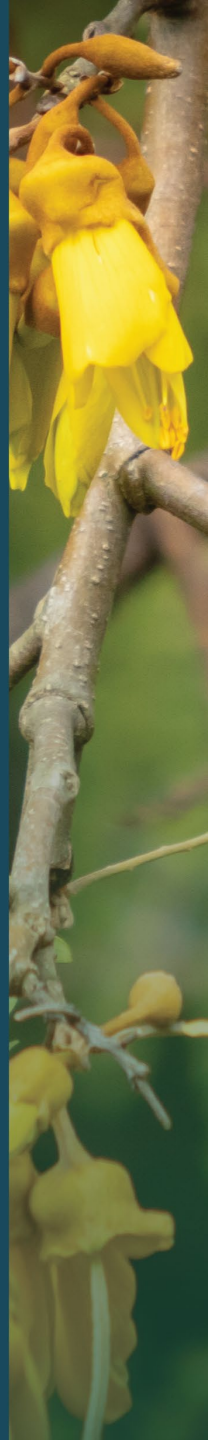
Approach and tools available



Flood Risk Management Planning

Process and phase

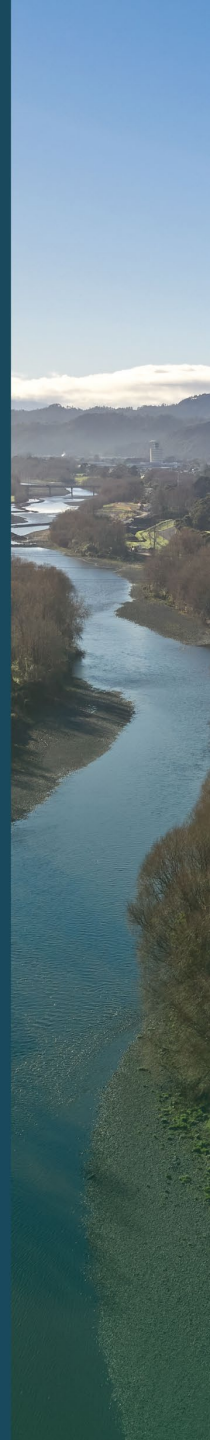




Floodplain Management Plans

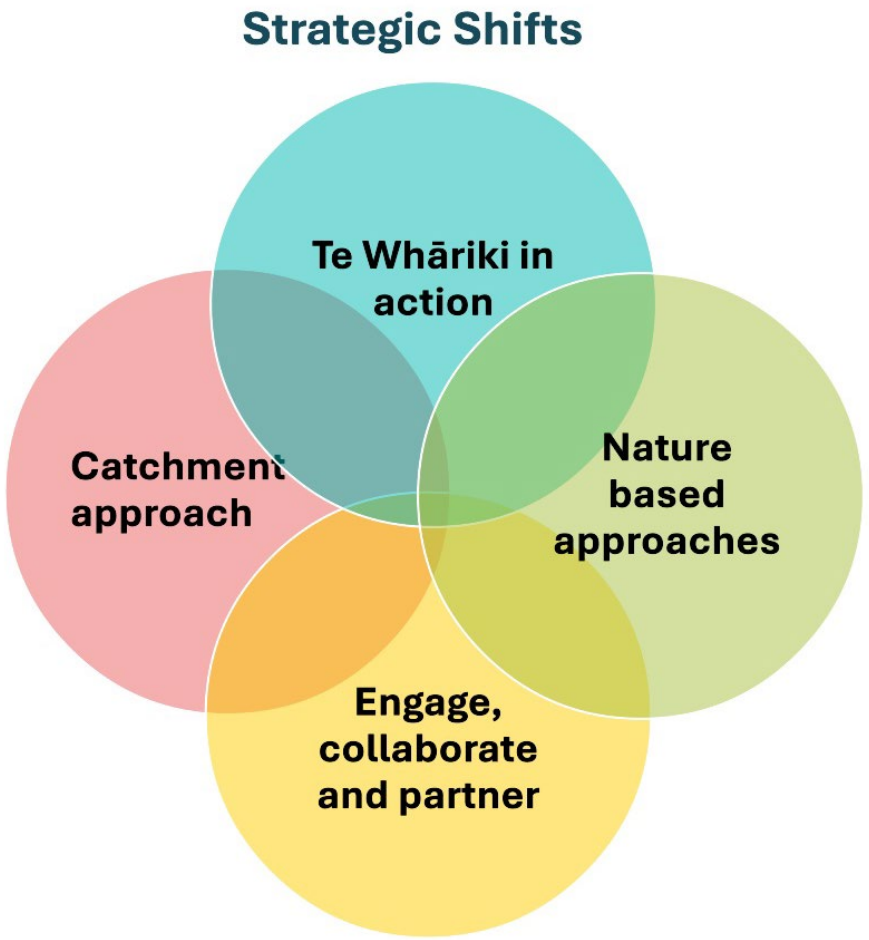
Current status

FMP	Date Adopted	Status	Remarks
Ōtaki	1998	Being implemented	Modelling is being updated now. FMP to be reviewed on completion.
Waikanae	1997	Being implemented	Modelling is being updated now. FMP to be reviewed on completion.
Hutt	2001	Being implemented	Riverlink major project. Remaining works being assessed with updated flood modelling.
Pinehaven	2016	Implementation approach under review	Review in progress.
Te Kauru	2019	Being implemented	Advisory Body in place to monitor and advise on FMP implementation. Funding boosted by the ‘Before the Deluge’ programme.
Waiohine	2022	Being implemented	Advisory Body in place to monitor and advise on FMP implementation. Funding boosted by the ‘Before the Deluge’ programme.
Waiwhetū	-	In progress	Modelling complete. Interaction with Hutt City and Wellington Water underway.
Lower Wairarapa	-	In progress	Advisory Body in place to advise on operational plans. LWVDS Review (scope including flood protection amongst other things) including modelling and supporting investigations in progress.
Porirua	-	Initial Assessment	Initial assessment of data availability and gaps ahead of future risk management plan development.
Waitohu	-	On hold	
Wainuiomata	-	Planned	Long-term aspiration.
Mangatārere	-	Planned	Modelling complete



Environment Group Strategic Shifts

The four shifts



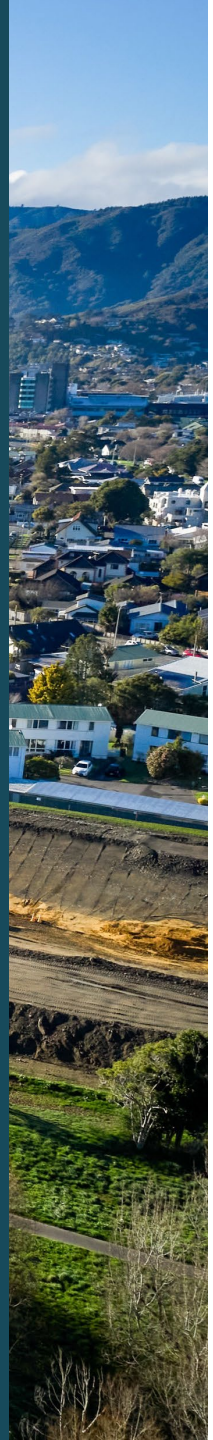
Changes to how we work

Deliver integrated catchment approaches that lead to holistic local outcomes

Improve outcomes for mana whenua and Māori

Think collectively and work collaboratively to maximise impacts for the environment and people

Increase the balance of nature-based approaches in our work



Any questions?

Next session – management methods

- Infrastructure and asset management
- Maintenance and river management
- Land use planning
- Introduction to flood emergency management

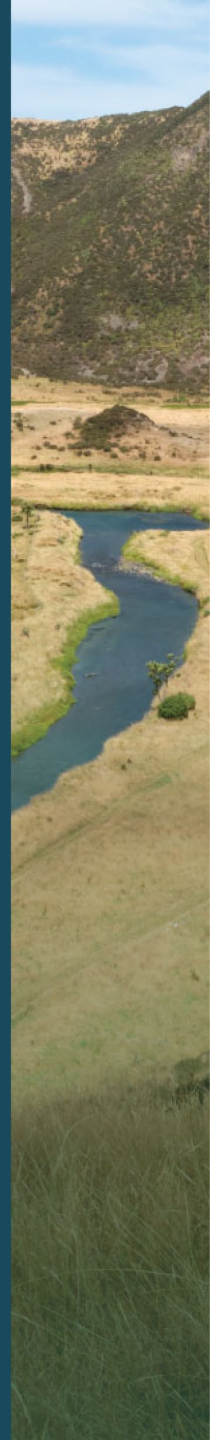
Regional Pest Management Plan

Context and review requirements

Greater Wellington
Te Pane Matua Taiao

Agenda

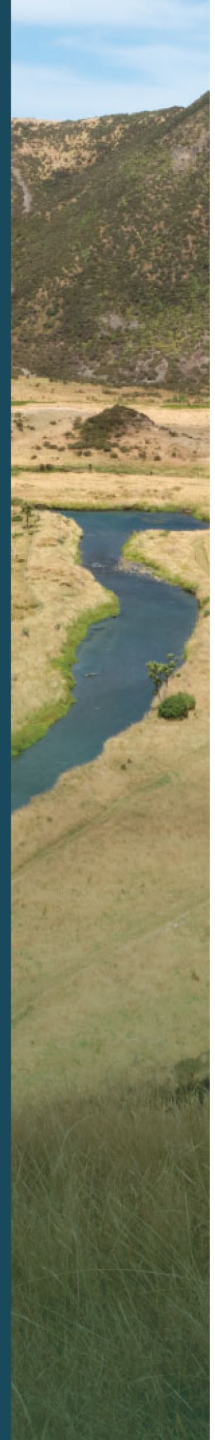
- Our pest management work
- What is a Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP)?
- Why review?
- Why now?
- Process for review
- Potential options



Our pest management work

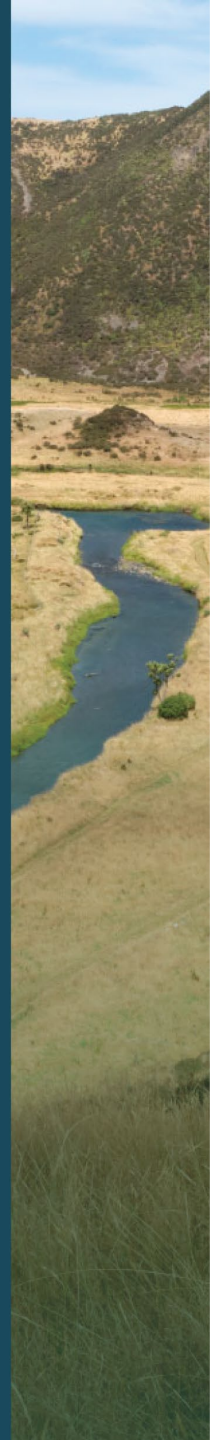
LTP Community Outcome: **Thriving Environment**
Rōpū Taiao Outcome: **Te taiao is enabled to thrive**

Key pest control programmes	Implements RPMP?
Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP)	✅
Key Native Ecosystem Programme	✅
Regional Predator Control Programme	✅
WOWCAZUP *(Wainuiomata Water catchment Zero Ungulates Programme)*	✅
Biosecurity Services Programme	✅
Predator Free Wellington	✅
Capital Kiwi	✅
Check Clean Dry	❌
National Interest Pest Response Programme (Manchurian Wild Rice)	❌
National Pest Plant Accord	❌
Biocontrol Programme	✅



What is a Regional Pest Management Plan (RPMP)?

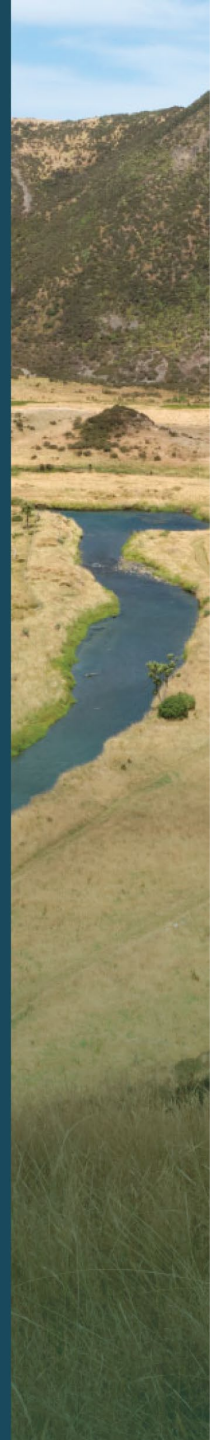
- RPMP is a statutory plan prepared by regional council under the Biosecurity Act 1993.
- An RPMP:
  - identifies organisms considered to be pests in that region;
  - specifies the harm caused by those pests; and
  - sets out objectives, strategies, and rules to manage those organisms.
- RPMPs also include monitoring and enforcement provisions (among other things).

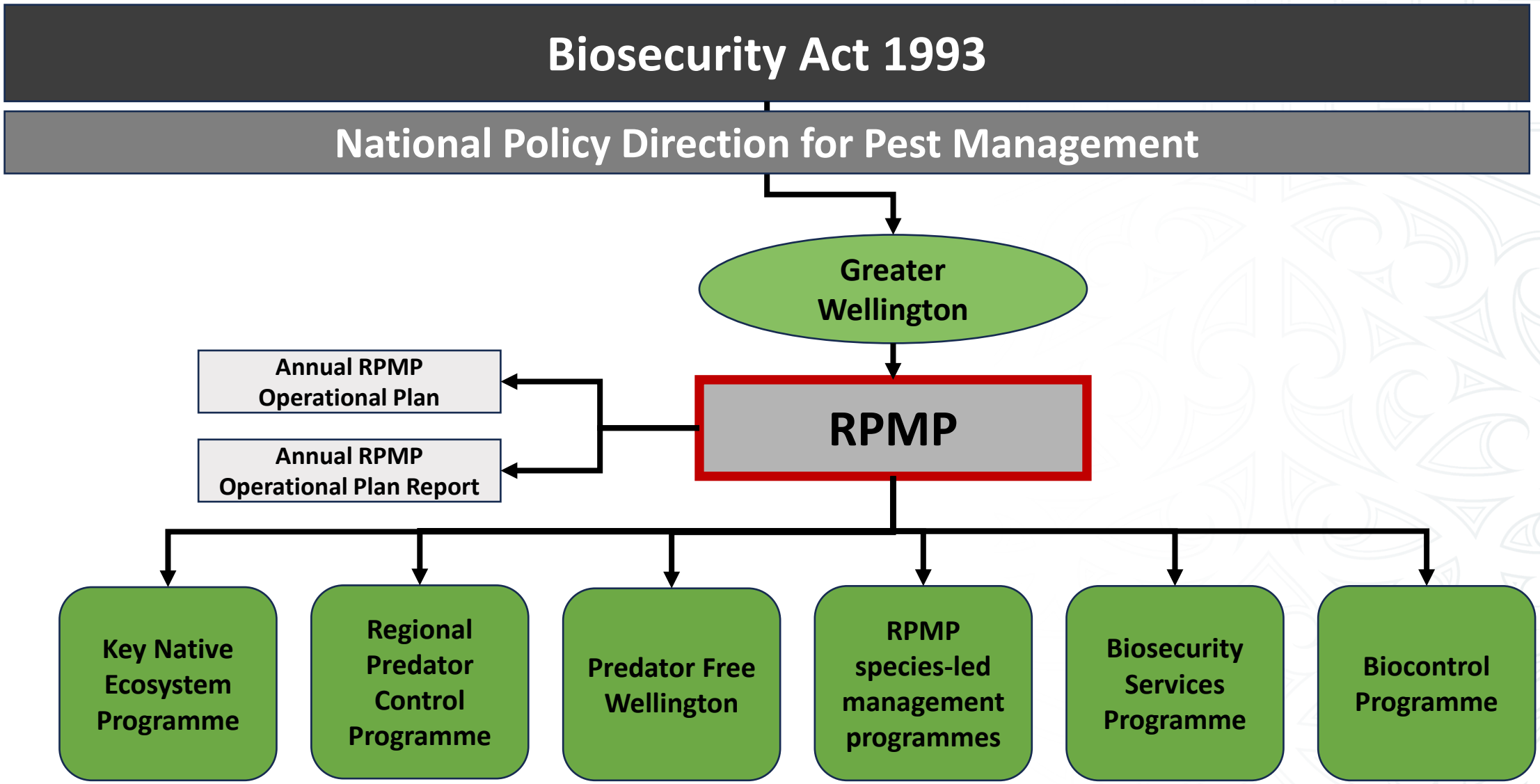


Greater Wellington's RPMP 2019-2039

- Became operational in July 2019
- Our RPMP contains:
  - 12 pest animal species groups
  - 17 pest plant species groups
  - No marine pests
- Pests are classified under National Policy Direction designations:
  - Exclusion programme
  - Eradication programme
  - Progressive containment programme
  - Sustained control programme
  - Site lead programmes

Greater Wellington's RPMP 2019-2039





Why review the RPMP?

- Statutory requirement (section 100D of the Biosecurity Act 1993)
- GW may review its RPMP if:
  - There is reason to believe that the plan is not achieving its objectives; or
  - If any relevant circumstances have changed since the plan has been operative.
- GW must review its RPMP if:
  - It has been more than 10 years since the last full review of the RPMP; or
  - A national policy direction requires that a review be conducted.
- 10 yr review must start by Council approving a proposal document before July 2029.
- The decision to initiate the review is a Council decision.

Why now?

Managing threats from marine pests

- Mediterranean fanworm and clubbed tunicate – increased risk of incursion.
- Vessel surveillance in 2024 and 2025 found mediterranean fanworm at Seaview and Mana marinas.
- No marine pest species in our RPMP.
- Obligations with the Top of the South Marine Biosecurity Partnership.

Mediterranean fanworm found on vessel hulls during 2024 regional marine pest surveys ***at Seaview Marina (above) and Mana Marina (below)***

Process for a review

Evaluation of operative RPMP's effectiveness

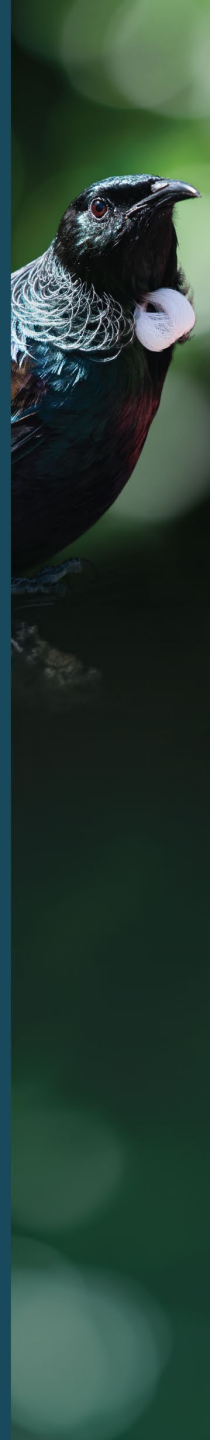
Discussion document

Pre-engagement

Biosecurity Act 1993

Section 70	First step: plan initiated by proposal
Section 71	Second step: satisfaction on requirements
Section 72	Third step: satisfaction with consultation or requirement of more consultation*
Section 73	Fourth step: approval of preparation of plan and decision on management agency
Section 74	Fifth step: satisfaction on contents of plan and requirements
Section 75	Sixth step: decision on plan

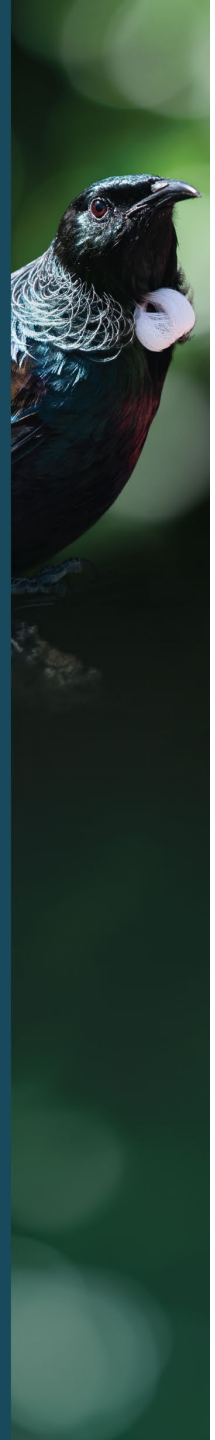
*Under section 72(5) of the Act the Council must determine the appropriate extent of consultation



Different tools under the Act

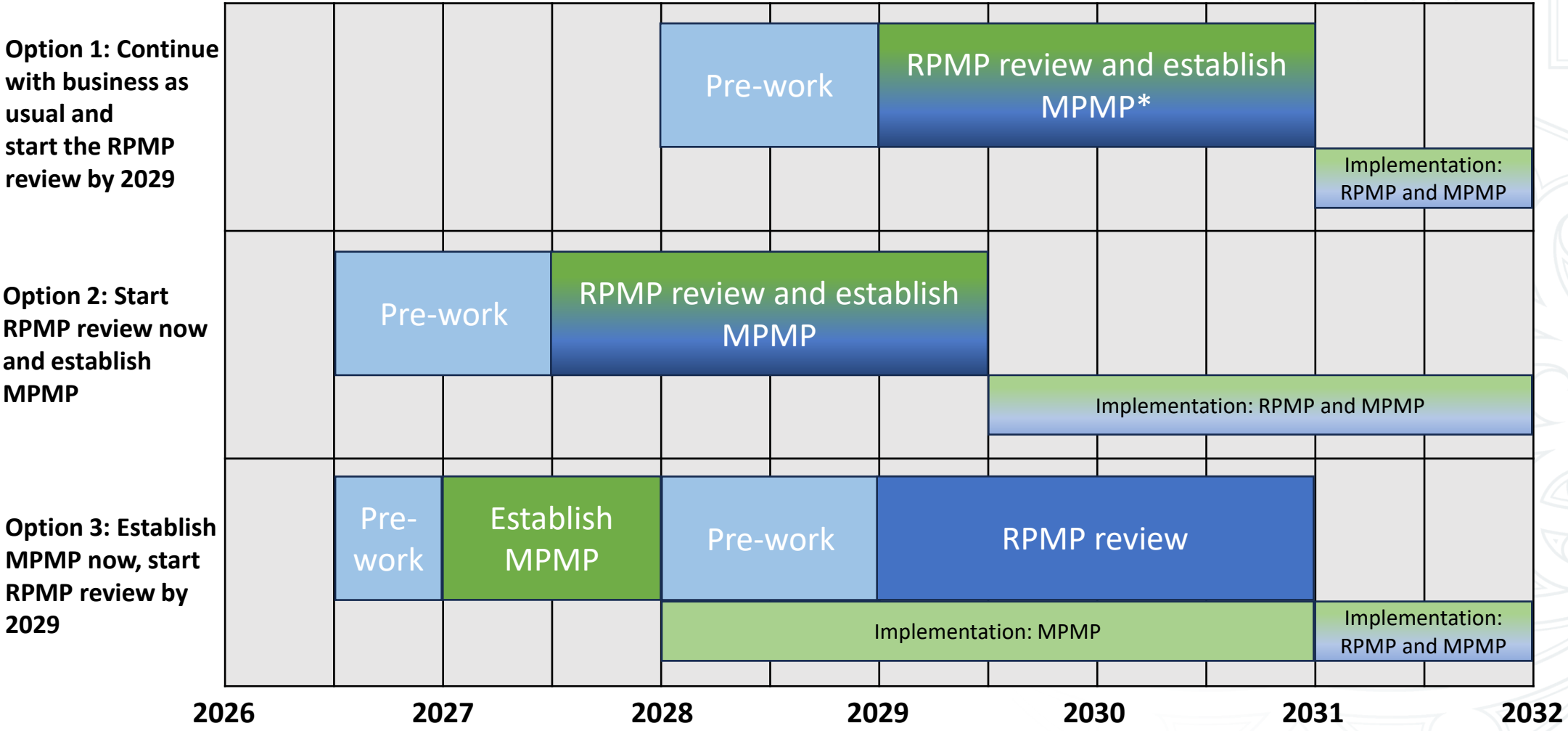
The Act provides two tools outside of an RPMP to manage pests:

Tool	Purpose	Key features	Duration
Regional Pest Management Plan	Manage identified pests	Enforceable rules for containment, control or eradication Mandates control of listed pests	Long term
Pathway Management Plan	Manage pathways that spread pests (vessels, equipment)	Rules regulating movement/cleanliness of pathways; Prevent spread via vectors Directs actions to reduce risk of spread	Long term
Small-Scale Management Programme	Rapid action for localised incursion of a new pest	Localised, early intervention, eradication or containment achievable within 3 years	Medium term



Potential options

Policy options for managing threats from marine pests



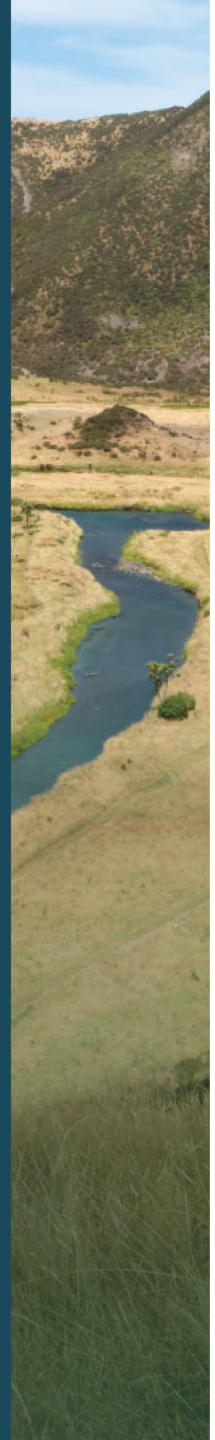
*MPMP = Marine pathway management plan

Optional additional slides

Biosecurity Act 1993 amendments

Proposed amendments to the Biosecurity Act 1993

- MPI anticipates an Amendment Bill being introduced mid-2026, with the Bill becoming law from late 2027.
- Likely amendments:
  - Duplicative RPMP review requirements removed.
  - Easier to establish infringement notice powers for RPMP rule breaches.
  - Enable RPMPs and regional pathway management plans to be integrated/merged.
- Implementing amended legislation may require RPMP review.
- **No certainty on:**
  - Exact form of MPI's amendments and impact on the RPMP.
  - Timing of the bill being introduced and becoming law.



Greater Wellington's RPMP 2019-2039

2025/26 budget for implementing our RPMP

Species or Site led	Programme	Pest Animals or Pest Plants	GW Funding	Budget
Species led	RPMP	Pest Animals	100% (general rates)	$3,278,858
		Pest Plants	100% (general rates)	$2,340,066
Site led	Predator Free Wellington	Pest Animals	17% (general rates)	$3,489,465 (total operation budget)
	Regional Predator Control Programme	Pest Animals	100% (general rates)	$2,004,914
	Biosecurity services*	Pest Animals	N/a (Funded by cost recovery)	$280,634
	Key Native Ecosystem Programme	Both	100% (general rates)	$1,813,789

*Pest management services on private property and the sale of pest management equipment (e.g. traps) at cost

Belmont Regional Park, Toitū te Whenua implementation

Greater Wellington
Te Pane Matua Taiao

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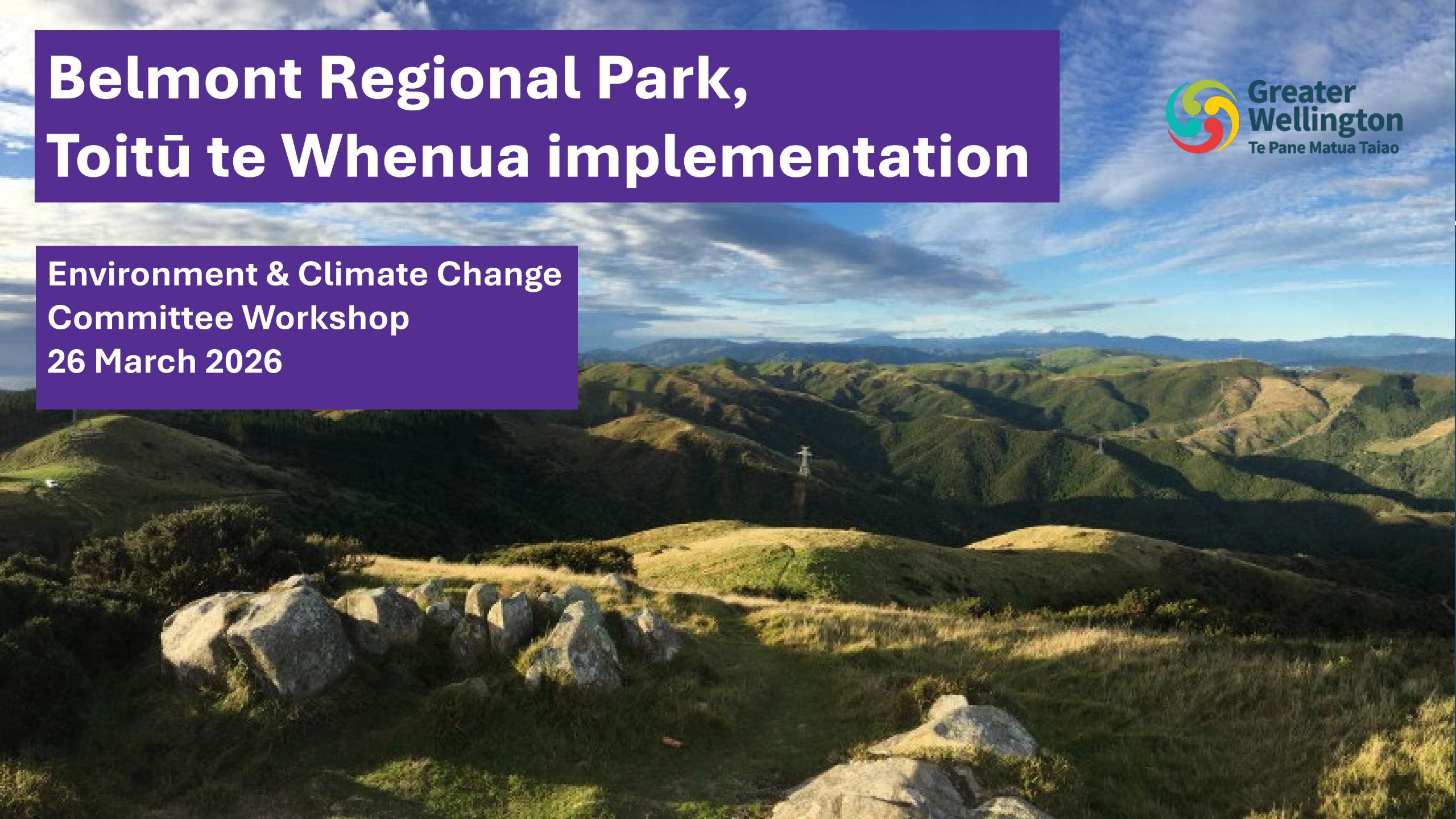
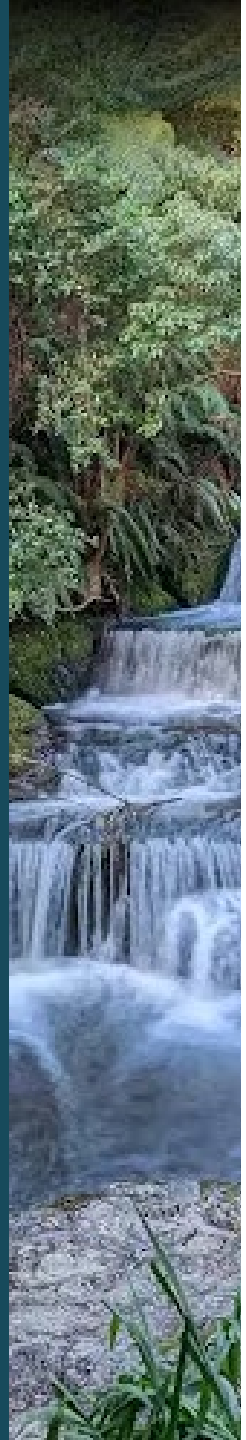




Outline

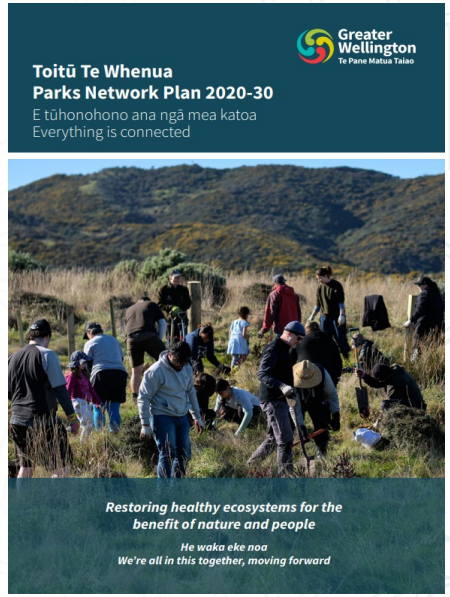
A quick walkthrough of the masterplanning process and key discussion points

Taking the paper as read – focusing on the Masterplanning process

- **What** is Masterplanning / Te Mahere and **why** do one?
- **Where** it fits strategically
- The scope of these masterplans & the “wiggle room”
- **How** we will do it
- Next steps

What is a masterplan/ Te Mahere?

Translating Toitū Te Whenua into spatial, on-the-ground outcomes



What it is

- A spatial planning process that turns strategy into maps and place-based decisions
- It shows:
  - Where recreation and access go
  - What key destinations are prioritised
  - How different parts of the park change over time

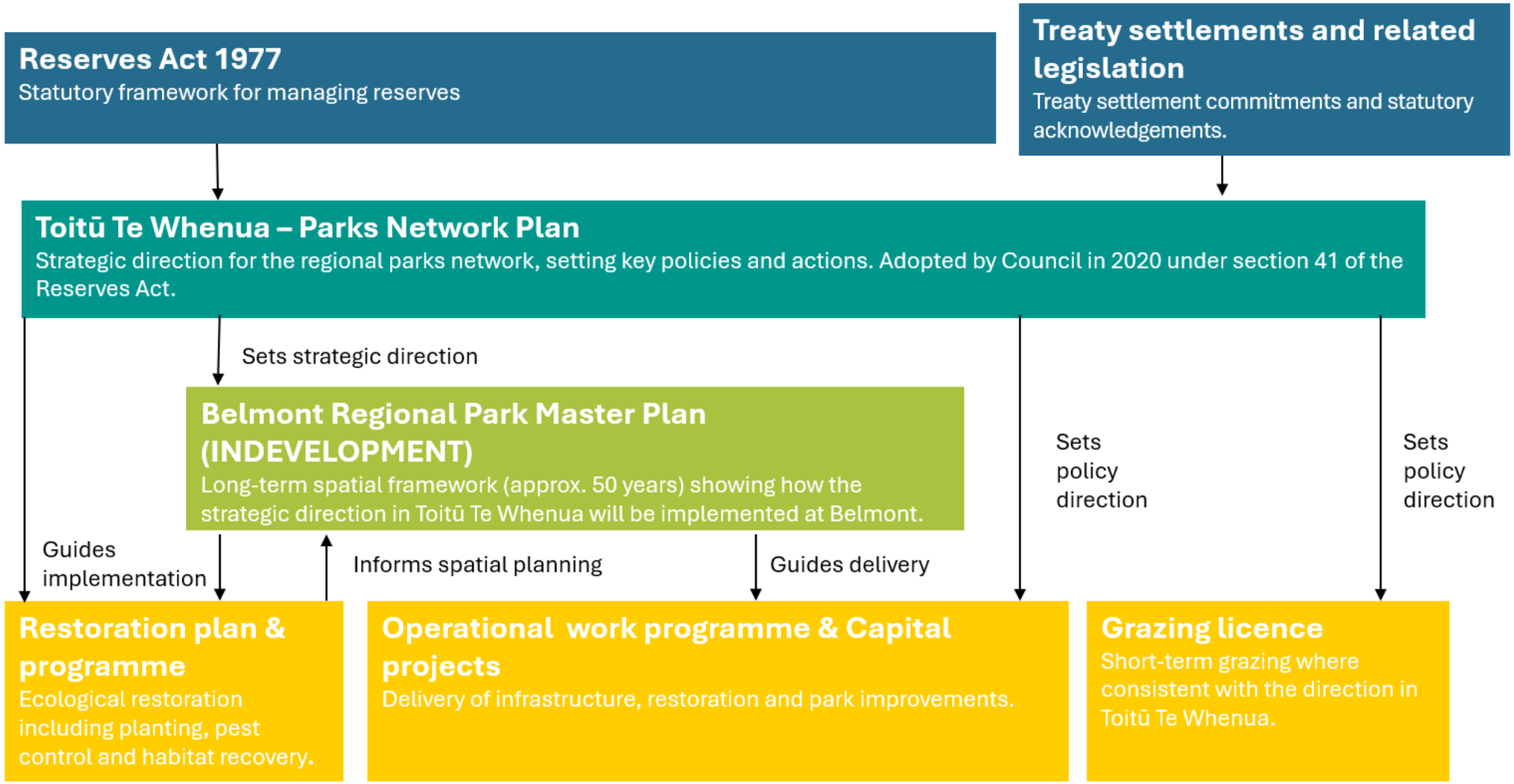
Why we do it

- To resolve real trade-offs on the ground(restoration, recreation, grazing, access)
- To guide long-term investment and staging of change
- To bring together mana whenua, community and stakeholders in shaping the park
- To shape what happens where — and when

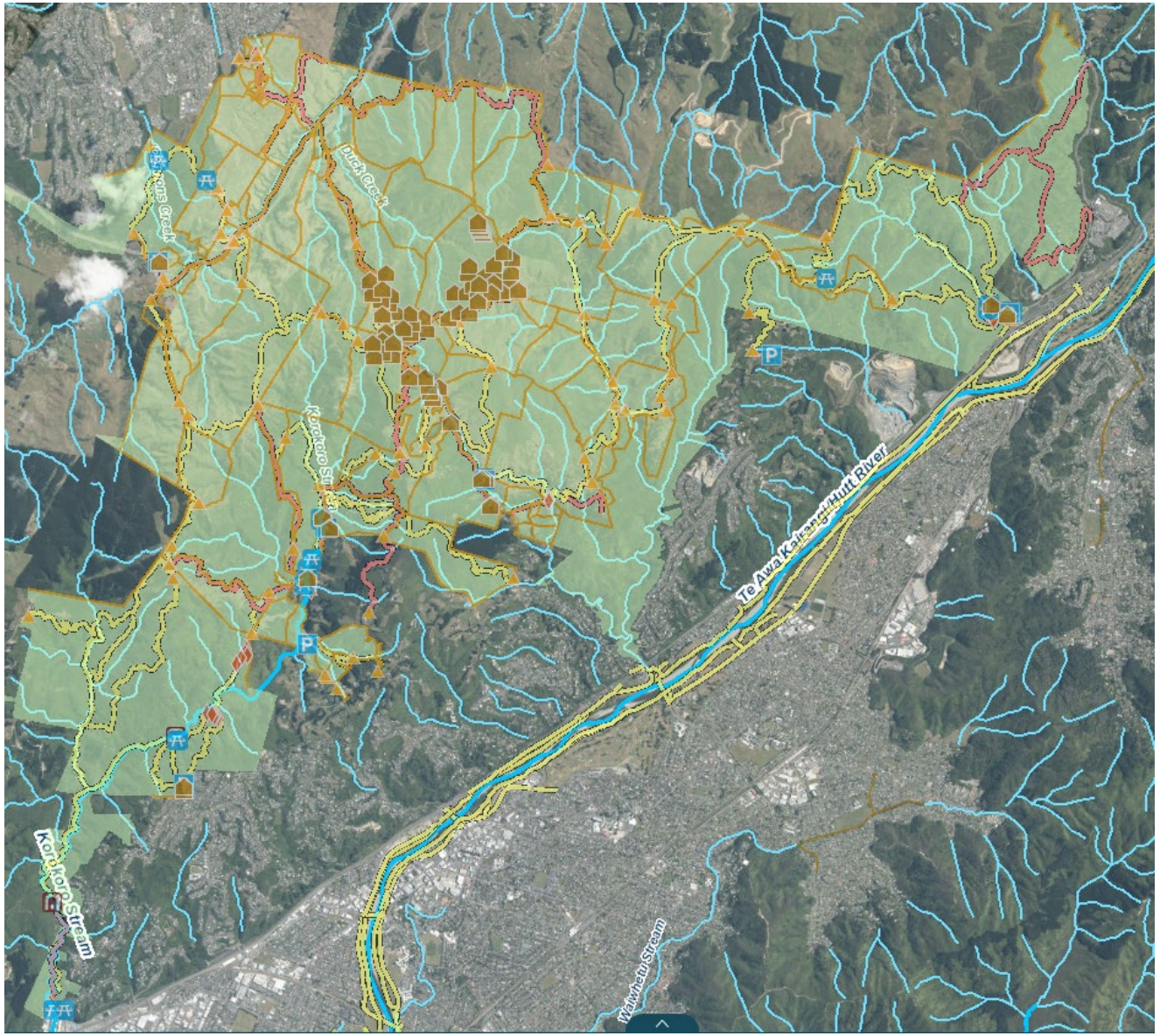
Toitū te Whenua tells us what — masterplanning decides where, how and when

Strategic Context

Where the Belmont masterplans fits

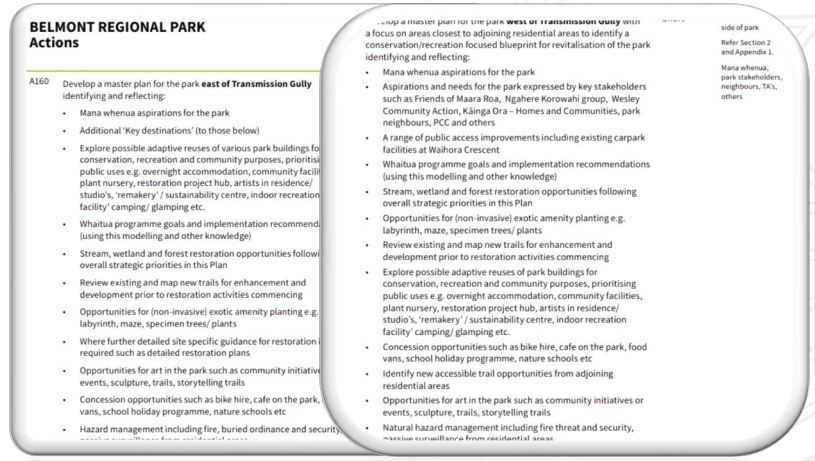


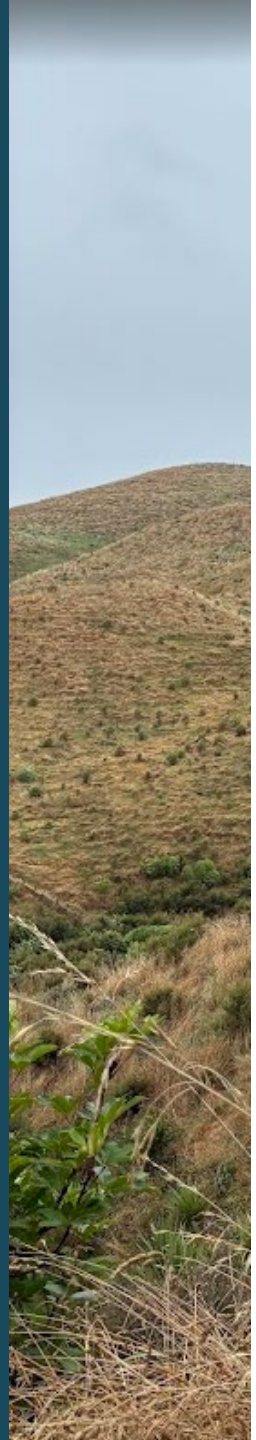
Scope of Belmont Regional Park Masterplan



A large, complex landscape

- 3,500 hectares of interconnected landscape
- 50 Year vision
- Complex existing land uses, contested visions and viewpoints
- Shaped through partnership with mana whenua and stakeholders
- A number of consideration and directions to investigation through Toitū te Whenua





The "Wiggle Room“ on Grazing

Where is the discretion within the direction?

Current grazing → **Long-term restoration**

Starting point — *Decision space* — *Direction*

Defined within Toitū te Whenua (Policy 17P)

- Grazing phased out unless there is clear net benefit
- Must support recreation, conservation or community outcomes

What this means in practice

- Targeted, small-scale grazing may be appropriate at Belmont *(e.g. open space management, ridgelines, viewing areas)*
- Used where it supports park experience or landscape outcomes
- Can act as a transitional tool over time
- We will work through this with mana whenua, community and stakeholders as part of the masterplanning process.

How?: Our approach to delivering masterplans

Progress
Queen Elizabeth Park Masterplan: Stage 3 - Draft
Belmont Regional Park Masterplan: Stage 2 - Engage

▲ = Councillor involvement

Key elements:

- Co-design with mana whenua from the outset
- Targeted engagement to inform the draft
- Iterative process: test → refine → final plan
- Councillor input at key stages

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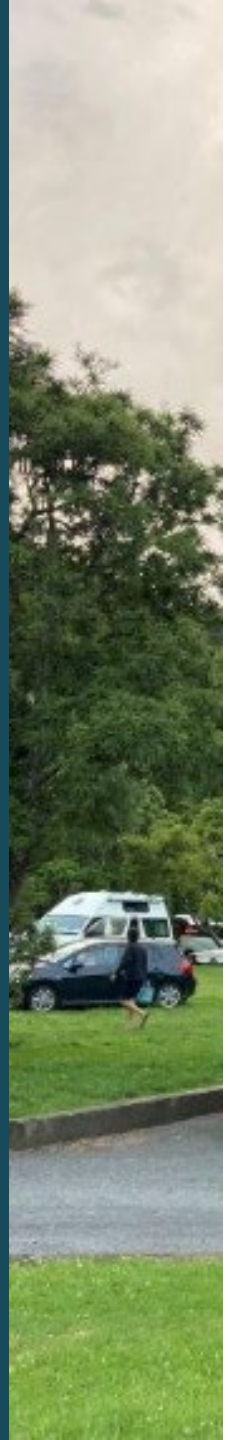


Next steps on Belmont Masterplan

- Targeted stakeholder engagement (Starting April)
    - A mix of facilitated workshops to explore priorities, trade-offs and opportunities
    - One to ones
- Continued partnership with Taranaki Whānui and Ngāti Toa working through elements of the plan.
- Looking at a site visit and discussion at Belmont Park with (May).
- Draft masterplan developed for councillor input.

Environment and Climate Change Committee
26 March 2026

Workshop

Belmont Regional Park, Toitū te Whenua implementation

Te take mō te pūrongo
Purpose

1. To provide information to support a discussion on:
   a The implementation of Toitū te Whenua at Belmont Regional Park, including ensuring a mutual understanding of the Environment and Climate Committee resolutions of 26 February 2026; and
   b Next steps relating to grazing licence arrangements, restoration and master planning.

Summary of matters for discussion

2. At its meeting on 26 February 2026, the Environment and Climate Committee (the Committee) considered a report on grazing and restoration at Belmont Regional Park and resolved that the proposed restoration of Belmont Regional Park, including grazing, for the period 2026–2030 is consistent with Toitū Te Whenua – Parks Network Plan 2020–2030.
3. In addition to this resolution, the Committee made a number of recommendations and notes relating to the design of the grazing licence and restoration programme and consultation process for Toitū te Whenua. This paper outlines officers' interpretation of those recommendations and notes, the actions being taken in response, and seeks to support a shared understanding between councillors and officers about how these recommendations can be addressed in practice.
4. The paper also provides context on the relationship between key planning tools affecting Belmont Regional Park, including the Belmont Regional Park masterplan, Toitū Te Whenua, and the grazing licence arrangements. It outlines the statutory consultation process used to develop Toitū Te Whenua, explains the scope of the master planning process, and discusses the implications if Council wished to reconsider the grazing direction established through that plan.

Implementation of Committee recommendations from 26 February

5. Following the Committee's resolution and recommendations of 26 February 2026, officers responded with the design of the Belmont grazing licence and

associated restoration management. The following sections summarise the Committee's recommendations and notes and how they have been addressed in practice, to support a shared understanding between councillors and officers.

***Recommendation 3(a) –That Greater Wellington offer a 5-year grazing licence that emphasises low impact grazing and public access*.**

6. Officers have taken "low impact grazing" recommendation into account in developing the grazing licence design.

7. The licence is currently being structured with a term of four years. This reflects the likelihood that stock exclusion requirements from waterbodies will involve the use of a collar-based livestock management system. This system employs GPS technology to control and move cattle using virtual fencing rather than traditional fences. The leading supplier of this stock exclusion technology is Halter[1], and they operate on two-year contract cycles, with farmers typically committing to two consecutive cycles (four years) when investing in the technology. This may represent a significant cost for the grazier. Aligning the licence term with this four-year investment cycle provides sufficient certainty for the grazier while allowing Greater Wellington to review the arrangement at the end of that period.

8. Halter technology also supports the Committee's objective of low-impact grazing, as it enables virtual fencing, more precise stock control, and flexible management of grazing areas without the need for extensive physical fencing. This can help manage stock movements around sensitive areas, waterways, restoration planting and public access routes.

***Recommendation 3(b)* That no further areas are retired during this period except for the headwaters of the Korokoro and Speedy's streams, significant wetlands, and erosion prone hills within the Porirua Harbour catchment.**

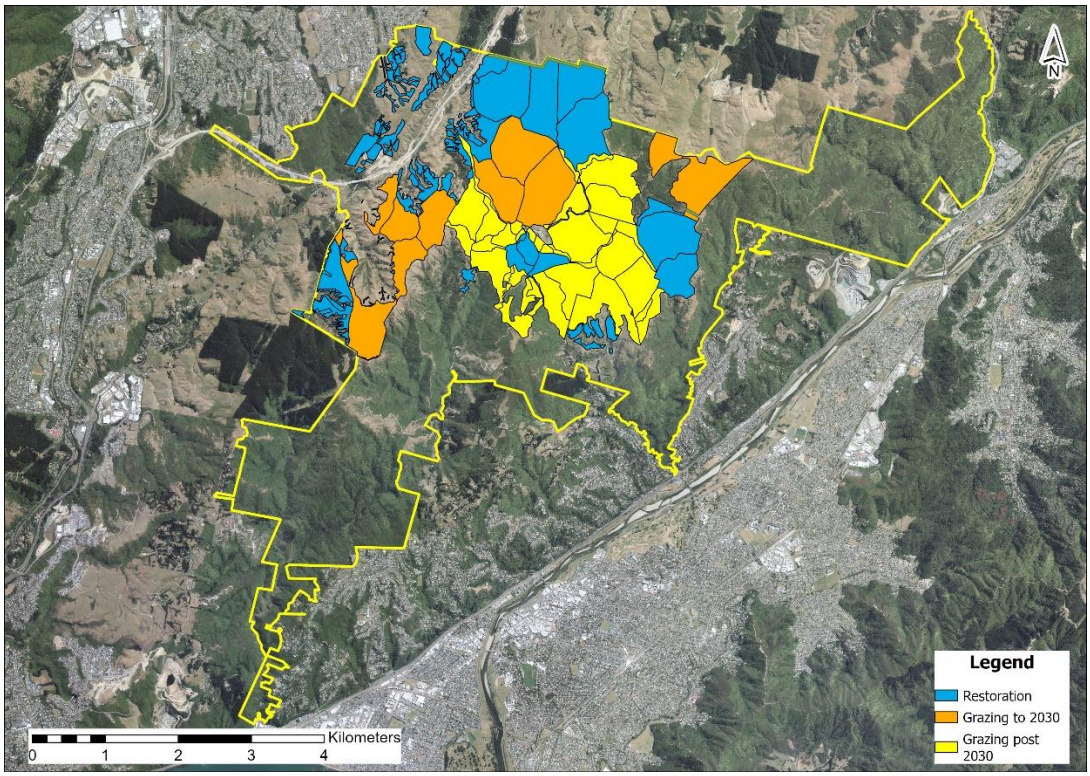
9. Officers have taken the following interpretations and actions of recommendation 3(b):

   a The reference "no further areas" has been interpreted as meaning, 'no additional grazing retirement beyond the initial 300 hectares' described in the February paper (Belmont Regional Park – restoration implementation and grazing requirements to 2030 – report reference 26.7). To that end, the described additional grazing retirements of about 100 hectares annually, from years two to four of the proposed license term, will not be guaranteed in the license design.

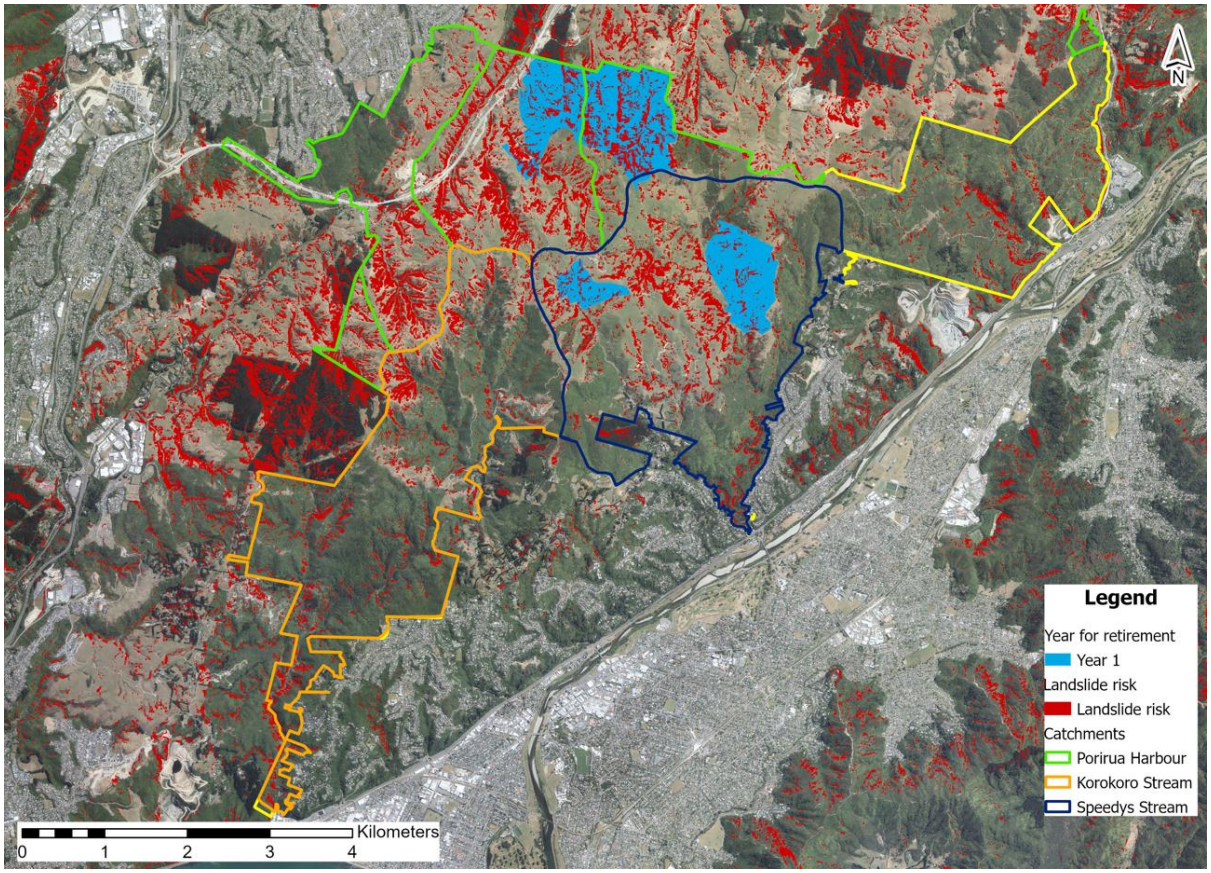
   b The grazing license will involve an effective area of about 650 hectares and will provide for the possibility of further area retirements, but not a certainty of further grazing retirements. The committee's concerns about affordability and not taking on excessive restoration land too soon have been addressed by this change.

[1] Halter® | Virtual Fencing and Pasture Management

c The map below was shown to the committee in February. With the proposed restoration described in February the area labelled “Grazing to 2030” in orange was going to be retired between 2026 and 2030. With recent changes in direction following the February committee meeting, the orange area may remain in grazing during the four-year license period but retirement will be possible if determined as a result of master planning or mutual agreement between Greater Wellington and the grazier, for example, to retire erosion prone land that is marginally productive and suitable for taking on more restoration area.



d The areas identified in Recommendation 3(b) including the Korokoro and Speedy’s stream headwaters, wetlands and erosion-prone hills, remain priority restoration areas. The focus areas to prioritise grazing retirement noted in recommendation 3(b) are shown in the map below:



10. Erosion prone land classification has been derived from the newly developed (2025) *'Rain induced shallow landslide risk'* model produced by Manaaki Whenua on behalf of Greater Wellington. The model is based on data inputs from over 130,000 NZ landslides caused by rain events (40,000 from the Wellington region).

Recommendation 3(c) That Greater Wellington's focus for the next five years is maintaining and nurturing the retired areas including weed and pest control.

11. Officers have taken the following interpretations and actions of recommendation 3(c):

    a Retired areas of the park will be maintained through a mix of active patch planting and natural/passive regeneration. Some paddocks will be planted using a 'patch planting/seed island' technique, where patches of natives are planted in groups of roughly 400-600 plants each, with patches roughly 100 metres apart. In between the patches within these paddocks, some particularly invasive weeds such as blackberry will be controlled regularly, while other weeds such as gorse will be left as a nurse crop, to shade out the grass and allow natural germination of native seed between the patches. Pest animals will also be controlled to limit browsing of native plants. This technique of planting in patches or seed islands is utilised regularly around the country with good results and is more cost effective than full 'establishment planting' where the entire paddock is actively planted.

    b Where natural regeneration is relied upon, this will entail relatively little intervention. Officers will monitor for any particularly invasive weeds, and

pest animals will be controlled, though at a lesser rate than in the planted areas. The natural succession pattern in these areas will likely involve a transition to gorse, which will shade out the grass and allow native seeds to germinate. The gorse will provide shelter while the natives get established. Once the natives outgrow the gorse, the gorse will be shaded out and the native forest will dominate, usually with a predominance of mānuka, kānuka and māhoe. This process has been observed in many areas in Belmont, usually resulting in a native canopy within 20 to 30 years.

c The retirement and restoration plan for Belmont has been planned and costed to ensure it is manageable and stays within currently-allocated budgets.

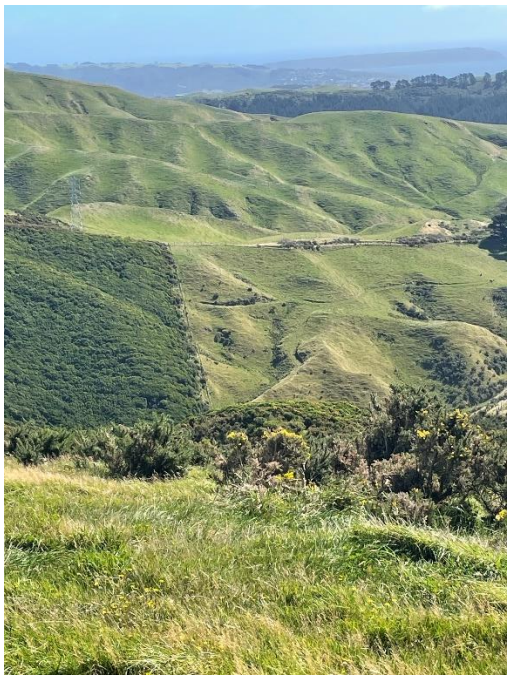
Recommendation 3(d) –That Greater Wellington put emphasis on being a good neighbour including preventing weed incursion across land boundaries

12. Officers have taken the following interpretations and actions of recommendation 3(d):

a The park has approximately 12km of boundary, mainly on the north eastern and northern boundaries of the park, with neighbours that either farm or have large open paddocks

b Greater wellington will continue to work with its neighbours and keep boundaries free of gorse. Officers will continue to look for opportunities to spray and maintain park boundaries with a clear understanding of Greater Wellington's duty of care to keep boundary fences free of gorse and weeds so that they can be easily fixed and stock incursions can be spotted.

c Pictures below show clean boundaries where park land has been retired on one side and neighbours have grazed on the other.



d Greater Wellington has also proactively replaced boundary fences over the last 15 years. Greater Wellington has replaced fences in retired areas where the neighbour is still farming to avoid stock getting into park land.

e Officers have allowed gates to be installed in the fences to enable neighbours to retrieve rogue stock. Greater Wellington has also allowed smaller pedestrian gates to allow neighbours to have easier access to recreation from their properties.

Note 2a- That during the Toitū Te Whenua public consultation process, for whatever reason, GWRC failed to engage with the group of park users that wish to preserve the majority of the park as grazed farmland.

13. Officers have reviewed the consultation record and confirm that the statutory consultation process required under section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 was undertaken between 2018 and 2020. This included a multiyear process of early engagement, formal consultation on a draft plan, and hearings before Council adopted Toitū Te Whenua in 2020. The key stages of this process are summarised in the table below. Officers note that the Preserve Belmont Farm Park / Save Our Farm group had not yet formed during this period and therefore could not have participated in these consultation stages.

14. Toitū Te Whenua was developed through the statutory consultation process required under the Reserves Act 1977. Summary information about the consultation process is in the table below.

Consultation & committee stages on Toitū te Whenua		
Date	**Stage**	**Summary**
2018	Early engagement to identify issues and values (Report 18.307)	Belmont Regional Park was identified early in engagement planning as a park likely to attract significant public interest and was therefore treated as an area requiring intensive engagement. Public feedback was open for six weeks (extended by two weeks). Engagement activities included an online survey, freepost forms, social media input, stakeholder workshops, drop-in sessions, and meetings with territorial authorities and community groups. More than 345 people provided feedback directly, with additional input received through workshops and online engagement. Belmont-related stakeholders such as grazing licensees, the Belmont Pony Club, BAMBA, Friends of Belmont Regional Park and local community groups were included in engagement activities. The Preserve Belmont Farm Park / Save Our Farm campaign group did not exist at this time. The Parks Planning team's engagement approach during the Parks Network Plan review was recognised through the "For the People, By the People" award at the 2019 Great Work Awards, acknowledging efforts to engage widely with stakeholders and the community.

April 2020	Council endorsement of draft direction (Report 20.89)	Council considered the feedback from early engagement and endorsed the draft strategic direction for the regional parks network.
June 2020	Draft plan approved for public consultation (Report 20.177)	Council approved the Draft Parks Network Plan for formal public notification under the Reserves Act 1977.
Aug–Oct 2020	Formal submissions period	Public consultation was open for more than two months, with 390 submissions received across the regional parks network. Drop-in sessions and meeting with stakeholder groups were held. Submissions covered a range of topics including restoration, recreation and grazing. Some submitters raised concerns about the proposed reduction of grazing. These issues were considered through the consultation process. In the consultation we asked people whether they supported the key shifts in the plan, including the shift: *Focusing on restoring natural values including wetlands and phasing out most livestock grazing activities in parks to enable this*. 73.5% of respondents either definitely or somewhat agreed with this shift. 9.7% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 16.8% either definitely or somewhat disagreed.
Nov 2020	Hearings (Report 20.372)	The Hearing Subcommittee heard 56 oral submitters and considered all written submissions before recommending minor amendments to the draft plan.
Dec 2020	Plan adopted by Council (Report 20.493)	Council adopted Toitū Te Whenua – Parks Network Plan 2020–2030 following completion of the statutory consultation and hearing process.

15. Following adoption of Toitū Te Whenua, Council committed to engaging with the Preserve Belmont Farm group on future planning for Belmont Regional Park after they presented a petition in 2023. Officers intend to honour this commitment through the Belmont Regional Park master planning engagement process.

16. The Preserve Belmont Farm Park / Save Our Farm group has not been excluded from any Greater Wellington hosted meetings or engagements on park restoration. Recent community engagements relating to the development of the restoration plan described at the February committee meeting were hosted by other community groups and Greater Wellington officers attended as an invitee, not the organiser.

Note 5 that Greater Wellington may not reach its 2030 emission targets if these measures are adopted.

17. Livestock emissions from park grazing represent a significant component of the Council's operational emissions. Reductions in grazing area are therefore an important part of the pathway toward achieving the organisation's emissions targets.

18. Current analysis indicates that approximately 300 hectares of grazing retirement is required to achieve Greater Wellington's organisational emissions target for 2030. If no further grazing retirement occurred beyond this point, the Council's 2035 emissions target would still likely be achieved, but the currently endorsed (though not yet fully adopted) 2040 target would likely not be met.

19. If grazing retirement across regional parks continued from 2031 at a rate of approximately 100 hectares per year, while maintaining minimum grazing areas required for farm park functions and land management purposes, Greater Wellington would move closer to achieving its endorsed 2040 target. However, additional reductions in emissions from other areas of Council activity would still be required.

Operational progress on grazing licence design since February

20. Following the Committee's recommendations relating to the grazing licence and restoration programme, officers are progressing the operational design of the Belmont grazing licence.

21. Officers have not delayed the Expression of Interest and grazier selection process. Officers have completed the EOI information gathering process and are now working to finalise the selection process.

22. It is expected that a temporary grazing agreement of three months will be put in place as a final operative license will take approximately three months to complete while staff – supported by external farming experts – and the grazier will design workable license conditions.

23. A temporary agreement will allow the grazier to graze Belmont in a managed way while officers work through the details of the four-year license, including:

    a Stock classes and grazing management approach

    b Water reticulation requirements and infrastructure upgrades

    c Fence removal and boundary adjustments required to support restoration and access

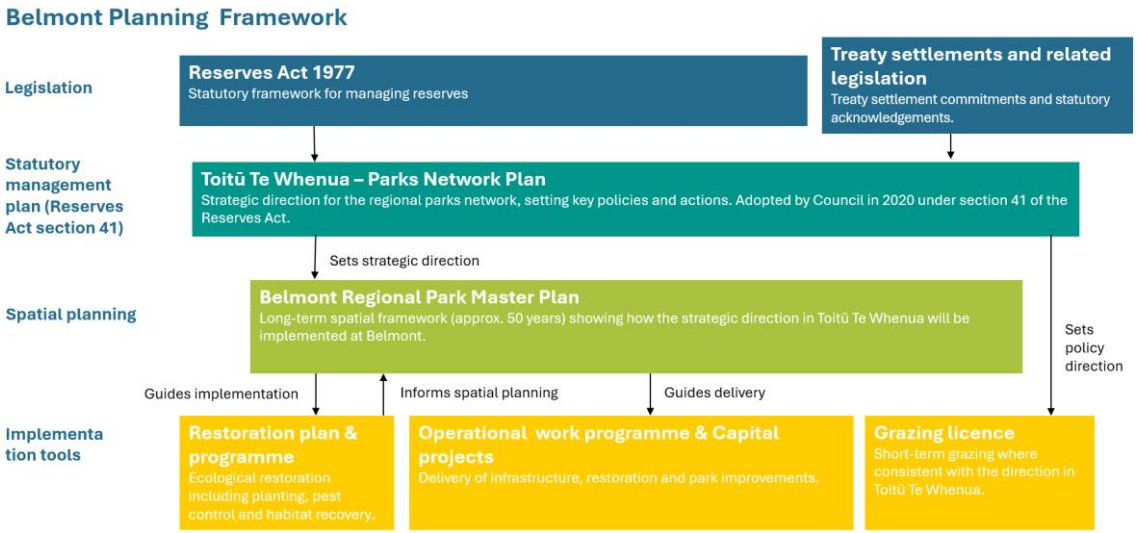
    d Potential use of collar-based livestock management technology (such as Halter)

    e The grazing licence fee

24. Officers involved BakerAg Farm consultants in the restoration strategy that was presented to the Environment Committee in July 2025. BakerAg has also been involved in the EOI process to assist officers with the selection process and they will be relied upon, where needed, for support in the license design.

Belmont Regional Park Planning framework

25. Belmont Regional Park is currently being managed and planned through a number of related statutory, strategic and operational tools. The diagram below illustrates how these tools relate to each other, including the role of Toitū Te Whenua, the Belmont Regional Park master plan, and implementation tools such as restoration planning, operational work programmes and grazing licences.



26. Toitū Te Whenua establishes the strategic and statutory direction for the regional parks network, the Belmont Regional Park masterplan translates that direction into a spatial plan for the park, and operational tools such as grazing licences and restoration programmes implement that direction on the ground. Information from restoration planning and operational work also informs the spatial planning undertaken through the masterplan.

27. The direction established through Toitū Te Whenua in 2020 represents a network-wide shift toward ecological restoration across Greater Wellington's regional parks. This includes the progressive reduction of livestock grazing over time as land transitions toward restoration, recreation and biodiversity outcomes.

28. This direction aligns with wider regional restoration initiatives, including programmes such as Recloaking Papatūānuku and Greater Wellington's climate and biodiversity objectives. Across several regional parks, including Belmont Regional Park, Queen Elizabeth Park and Baring Head / Ōrua-pouanui, land that has historically been used for grazing is progressively transitioning toward ecological restoration.

Master planning framework

29. Toitū Te Whenua is a statutory management plan adopted under section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977. As a result, the strategic direction established through the plan cannot be changed through a Council resolution or through the Belmont Regional Park master planning process. However, there is room for interpretation and discretion around the key shift relating to grazing with the intentions of Toitū te Whena being to phase out <u>most</u> livestock grazing activities

30. Developing park masterplans is a key action identified in Toitū Te Whenua. Masterplans translate this strategic direction into place-specific spatial plans for individual parks, guiding restoration priorities, recreation opportunities, infrastructure and visitor experience over time.

31. These master plans are being developed as long-term (50-year) spatial plans. This timeframe reflects the scale of ecological restoration, landscape transition and recreation development anticipated across the regional parks network.

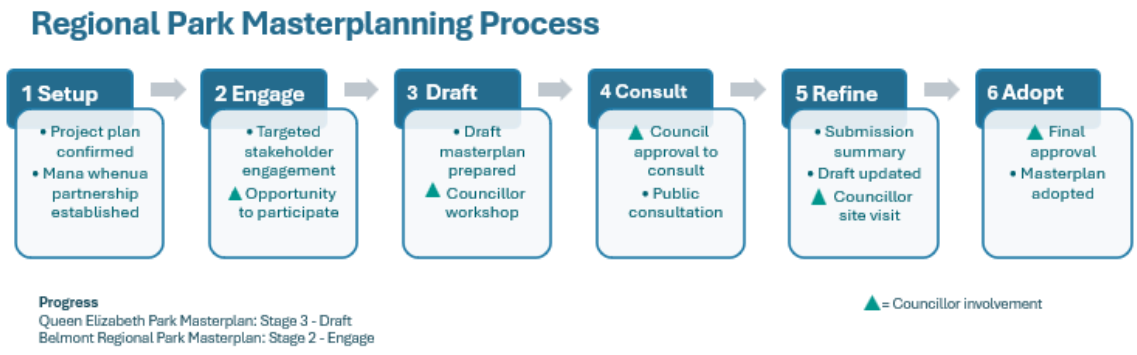
32. Masterplans are implementation tools and do not alter the strategic direction established through Toitū Te Whenua. Instead, they identify how that direction is applied to a particular park through spatial planning and staged delivery of projects and restoration work.

33. Within this framework, the Belmont Regional Park master planning process can explore how the direction established through Toitū Te Whenua is implemented at a park-specific level. This includes identifying where grazing transitions over time, where restoration becomes the primary land use, and where limited or transitional grazing may continue where it supports land management, recreation, landscape character or community outcomes.

34. The master planning process therefore provides scope to consider how grazing may continue in a more targeted or limited form within Belmont Regional Park, provided it remains consistent with the long-term direction of Toitū Te Whenua. This may include considering areas where grazing supports park management objectives, recreation values, or landscape maintenance, while other areas transition toward restoration.

35. However, the masterplan cannot change the overall strategic direction established through Toitū Te Whenua. A significant shift toward maintaining Belmont primarily as a grazed park would require a statutory variation to the Toitū Te Whenua under section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977. This is discussed further later in this paper.

36. Within these parameters, the Belmont Regional Park master planning process is progressing as part of Greater Wellington's wider regional parks master planning programme. The regional parks master planning programme is being delivered through a six-stage process, which is implementing the restoration and recreation direction established through Toitū Te Whenua. The diagram below outlines these stages and the key points where councillors are involved.



37. Belmont Regional Park is progressing alongside the Queen Elizabeth Park masterplan as part of Greater Wellington's regional parks master planning programme. The Queen Elizabeth Park masterplan is further advanced in the process, with councillors expected to review a working draft in May/June.

Belmont Regional Park Masterplan

Work Completed

38. Belmont Regional Park has moved to Stage 2 (Engage) of the master planning process. Work completed to date includes:

    a **Project setup**: Engagement and design consultants have been engaged to support delivery of the Belmont Regional Park masterplan.

    b **Mana whenua partnership**: Early partnership discussions with mana whenua have begun. Two site visits and two workshops have been held with Ngāti Toa Rangatira and Taranaki Whānui. These discussions have explored cultural values, historic landscapes, restoration aspirations and the overall character of different parts of the park. They have also helped establish how we will continue working together throughout the masterplanning process.

    Developing the masterplan in partnership with mana whenua is a key aspiration of this work and outcome directed by Toitū te Whenua. Time is therefore being invested early in the process to build a strong partnership foundation and ensure cultural perspectives are appropriately reflected in the spatial direction of the plan.

    c **Programme development and site analysis**: The project plan and programme have been established, and initial background research and spatial analysis of the park has begun. This includes early mapping and technical review to better understand the landscape, restoration opportunities and existing park uses.

Next steps

39. The next stage of work will focus on targeted stakeholder engagement, beginning in April 2026. This will include workshops and targeted meetings to gather place-based input before a draft masterplan is prepared. Engagement activities will include:

    - recreation workshops with key user groups
    - community and environmental stakeholder meetings
    - meetings with councils, agencies and infrastructure providers

40. Engagement sessions will focus on gathering stakeholder views on several key themes to help inform the spatial design of the Belmont Regional Park masterplan. This includes understanding how recreation, ecological restoration and ongoing land management activities, including grazing, may be best managed across different parts of the park. In particular, stakeholders will be asked to provide input on the following questions:

- **Strengths** - What places, landscapes, habitats or experiences in Belmont Regional Park are most important to protect or strengthen, and how should the masterplan support and enhance these?
- **Opportunities for the future** - What opportunities should the masterplan explore to improve recreation access, restoration outcomes, education opportunities or community connection with the park, and how could these be achieved?
- **Issues and constraints** - What challenges, conflicts or weaknesses currently exist within the park - for example between recreation activities, restoration objectives, grazing management or infrastructure - and how should the masterplan respond to or manage these?
- **Place-based insights** – Are there particular locations within the park where stakeholders see opportunities, issues or important values that should inform the spatial planning of the masterplan, and what approaches could be taken in those places?
- **Priorities and trade-offs** – What outcomes should be prioritised, and what considerations should guide decisions about balancing recreation, restoration and ongoing land management across the park?

41. This stage of engagement is intended to ensure that local knowledge, operational considerations and stakeholder perspectives are incorporated early in the spatial design of the masterplan, before a draft plan is prepared for wider public consultation. Councillors will be invited to attend these stakeholder meetings.
42. A councillor workshop is planned for August 2026, followed by a draft masterplan report to councillors in September 2026 and public consultation in October–November 2026.
43. Subject to consultation outcomes, the final Belmont Regional Park masterplan is expected to be presented to councillors for approval in early 2027.
44. The engagement approach for Belmont Regional Park focuses on early discussion with key stakeholders and park users before wider public consultation. This approach recognises that the masterplan is implementing the strategic direction already established through Toitū Te Whenua and aims to ensure that place-specific knowledge, operational considerations and cultural perspectives are incorporated into the spatial design before the draft is released for public feedback.

Implications of changing the direction established in Toitū Te Whenua

45. As noted above in the table showing the consultation history of Toitū te Whenua – the key shift relating to restoring natural values including wetlands and phasing out most livestock grazing activities in parks will be fundamental to the master planning process. If Council wishes to consider changing that fundamental direction of Toitū te Whenua, below are relevant considerations.

46. The master planning process described above operates within the strategic direction already established through Toitū Te Whenua. If councillors wished to go beyond this scope and reconsider that direction, for example by maintaining a larger proportion of Belmont Regional Park as a grazed park, a different statutory process would be required. In that case, the appropriate mechanism would be to initiate a variation to Toitū te Whenua under section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977.

47. A plan variation would require a statutory process similar to the development of the original plan, including:

    a public notification

    b preparation of a proposed variation

    c public notification of the draft variation

    d a submissions period

    e hearings for submitters

    f deliberation and adoption by Council.

48. Under section 41(9) of the Reserves Act 1977, an administering body may amend a reserve management plan without undertaking a full comprehensive review where the proposed change is limited in scope. In such cases the administering body may follow the consultation procedures set out in sections 41(5) and 41(6), including public notification and the opportunity for submissions. However, where a proposed change would alter the strategic direction or core management outcomes established through the plan - such as the network-wide approach to grazing and restoration set out in Toitū Te Whenua - a more substantial variation process would likely be required.

49. Reconsidering the grazing direction could also have implications beyond Belmont Regional Park. Toitū Te Whenua establishes a network-wide direction for the regional parks system, including the progressive reduction of livestock grazing across several parks.

50. If Council wished to amend the direction established in Toitū Te Whenua, officers would need to return with advice on initiating a statutory plan variation under section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977.

51. Initiating a variation will delay the Belmont Regional Park master planning programme and other strategic parks planning work, as officer's effort would need to shift toward preparing and consulting on a management plan change. It will also create uncertainty for ongoing work, including mana whenua partnership discussions and consultant work currently underway to support development of the Belmont masterplan.

52. Officers have not fully scoped the requirements and implications of a potential plan change process. Below is a short list of considerations:

a Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 requires that legislation administered under the Act, including the Reserves Act 1977, be interpreted and administered so as to give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. These principles guide decision-making and require meaningful engagement with mana whenua and consideration of Māori cultural interests in the management of reserve land. It is therefore reasonable that mana whenua should be included in any considerations of changing Toitū te Whenua.

b The statutory framework governing livestock grazing on recreation reserves, includes the requirement that activities remain consistent with the reserve purpose. Belmont Regional Park is classified as a recreation reserve, which means activities must support recreation and public enjoyment of the reserve.

c Preparing and undertaking a statutory plan variation would involve significant officer and consultant resources.

d A plan variation under section 41 of the Reserves Act would likely require 12–18 months or more to complete. This reflects the need to prepare a proposed variation, undertake statutory consultation, receive and hear submissions, and complete Council deliberations.

e As Toitū Te Whenua establishes a network-wide direction, reconsidering the approach to grazing at Belmont could raise questions about the approach taken in other parks such as Queen Elizabeth Park and Baring Head / Ōrua-pouanui.

f The restoration direction established through Toitū Te Whenua and the transition of land across the parks network from grazing toward ecological restoration is well aligned with wider Greater Wellington strategies and other planning instruments relating to biodiversity and climate objectives.

g Following consideration of the statutory framework, mana whenua partnership obligations, wider strategic objectives and stakeholder input, it is likley that the current restoration-focused direction established through Toitū Te Whenua would ultimately be reaffirmed.

Ngā kaiwaitohu
Signatories

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