

Submission to Greater Wellington – Draft Natural Resources Plan

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The Trelissick Park Group would like to congratulate Greater Wellington Regional Council on the thorough preparation of this draft Plan. We support all the measures proposed of interest to us - largely ecosystem health, public access, water discharges, stormwater, earthworks/vegetation clearance and the Kaiwharawhara Stream, tributaries, estuary and adjacent reclamation.

General Concerns

Trelissick Park is an integral part of the whole Kaiwharawhara Stream catchment. The maintenance and enhancement of the ecological corridors of the catchment from the harbour to the outer green belt are most important. We value the fish and bird movements through our Park, and then through Otari and Zealandia, as well as along the Korimako tributary with its source below Mt Kau Kau. Much riparian restoration has been undertaken by the Group since 1991 to enhance these movements.

Concerns have long been expressed by the Group about the lack of stormwater control in the catchment. We have long advocated for zero effect on stormwater runoff from any new developments by such measures as permeable surfaces, soak pits, roof tankage, planting and stormwater detention. More housing on the steep hillsides – together with predicted heavier rainfalls from climate change – have increased the already negative effects of fast flows on the structure of the waterways as well as on water quality. We note GW's provisions in 4.3.3 and 5.2.3.

Specific Comments

Schedules F1 and F4 – We are pleased to see that the Kaiwharawhara Stream, tributaries and estuary are designated as “Ecosystems and habitats with significant indigenous biodiversity values”. What happens at the estuary can have negative effects upstream - it has its own values which need both protecting and improving. In this context, we are aware that CentrePort intends to extend its port activities in this area but no details have yet been given to ‘interested parties’. It intends to object to relevant parts of this Plan. We request that GW retains the valued natural resources of this estuary area. The fact that, in the past, authorities approved reclamation plans, the concreting of stream banks and the building of two ugly bridges, does not mean further degradation should be permitted – rather this Plan can support and improve the biodiversity of the area. It is our ‘good fortune’ that the estuary remains open to the sky although having lost its original appearance and in spite of plans to culvert it. It is the only remaining open estuary within WCC boundaries entering the harbour and as such needs treasuring.

We note also that in past years DOC installed some nesting boxes for little blue penguins upstream near Spotlight, but they were swept away during flooding. We would be delighted if they could be encouraged to return.

3.14 Objective RP.039 and 6.10 item (c) concerning public access – These sections refer to enhancing public access along the coastal marine area. There is the public beach on the northern side of the Kaiwharawhara reclamation (managed by DOC) which needs preserving and improving. In past years this was used and enjoyed by the public for fishing, launching boats and just as a beach – particularly suitable for the young with its shallow water. Access to this public area is now virtually denied by CentrePort and KiwiRail, but could be provided for under this Plan. The estuary itself can be accessed by the public, including those waiting to go on the ferry, enabling them to appreciate (in particular) the bird life at the waters edge and the views across the harbour (although more effort could improve its attractiveness).

Map 14 and Schedule F16 - Concerning inanga spawning habitat, the Kaiwharawhara Stream is shown on Map 14, but does not appear on the related Schedule F16.

We are available for discussion on any details affecting this area. Meanwhile we await with interest the final version of the Plan for public discussion.

Regards,
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(Chairman
Trelissick Park Group)