

3.2 SECTOR 2

Trelissick Park

Trelissick Park is located between the Johnsonville railway line and Ngaio Gorge Road. Most of the park lies on the northern side (true left) of Kaiwharawhara Stream and extends on the eastern side of Korimako Stream to Crofton Downs.

The 20-hectare park forms part of a deep gorge providing a potentially continuous ecological corridor between the harbour and the Outer Green Belt in what is part of the wider Kaiwharawhara catchment. The rounded forms of the upper slopes of the gorge contrast dramatically with the steeper erosion-formed valley sides. Within the park there are a series of quite dramatic bluffs, spurs, steep rock faces and outcrops along with a series of ravine-like side valleys.

The park neighbours a large area of KiwiRail land on the true right of Kaiwharawhara Stream. This land has great potential to become part of the ecological corridor but is currently in a degraded state with areas of unstable eroding slopes covered in weeds.

Trelissick Park is zoned Conservation Site under the District Plan and is classified as Scenic Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977.

It provides public access from Kaiwharawhara upstream to Waikowhai Street. There are several cross-valley links between Wadestown, Ngaio, and Crofton Downs. The Northern Walkway between Wellington Botanic Garden and Mt Kaukau and Te Araroa National Walkway also pass through the park.

The valley floor comprises one of Wellington's largest and most popular off-leash dog exercise areas.

The park is closed to mountain bikes under the Open Space Access Plan 2008.

The original vegetation was mixed broadleaf-podocarp forest with tawa forming the main canopy through which emerged rimu, kahikatea and northern rata. Much of the forest was milled in the 19th century, resulting in a significant change to the gorge landscape. Trelissick Park boasts a wide variety of indigenous tree species, including mature māhoe, tawa, rewarewa, mataī, tōtara, kahikatea and tītoki. Within the gorge, indigenous birds are common including kererū, tūī and shining cuckoos. Falcons frequent the area and kākā have been known to pay a visit. Kaiwharawhara Stream has redfin and bluegill bully, banded, shortjaw and giant kōkopu, kōaro, inanga and longfin eels. Some of these fish species are nationally threatened and rarely found in urban streams. Trout are a threat to indigenous fish and compete for their food.

The Trelissick Park Group has been working on the restoration of the park in conjunction with the Council. Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) was involved from 1991 to 2014. The group has made significant progress in enhancing the park with a vision and set of group management priorities that focus on environment, recreation, and culture and history. Its focus aligns with the policies of this management plan and members also have an advocacy role as local residents and Trelissick Park supporters. The Council will continue to support and work with the Trelissick Park Group.

There are significant weed issues along the adjoining rail corridor and from garden escapes.

3.2.1 LANDSCAPE

3.2.1.1 Policies

- a) To integrate management of the KiwiRail land (rail corridor) and adjacent privately owned bush remnants with management of the park.
- b) To maintain the unbuilt natural character of the park as part of the wider Kaiwharawhara catchment.
- c) To maintain the green corridor character along Ngaio Gorge Road.
- d) To protect the natural landscape features of the valleys.

3.2.1.2 Discussion

The gorge site has an important landscape role within the wider Kaiwharawhara catchment. It contains a primary forest remnant and is part of an ecological linkage providing connectivity between Wellington Harbour and the Outer Green Belt.

In the wider context, the park is visually part of the indigenous forest and shrubland that covers the gorge between the developed ridges of Wadestown and Ngaio. This wider land includes the following.

Council land managed as part of the park without legal protection. For instance, the lower entrance off Ngaio Gorge Road south of the magazine site is legal road. This large area needs to be surveyed off and vested as reserve.

KiwiRail (railway) land – Much of the bush-covered slopes below the Johnsonville Railway line is owned by KiwiRail. The Council has three leases covering part of this land to facilitate restoration and slow down weed migration into the park.

Private residential land containing primary bush remnants. Private landowners off Hanover Street have protected their land with QEII National Trust Covenants. There are also primary forest remnants on some of the private residential properties below Trelissick Crescent. Some of this private land is zoned Conservation Site with the balance zoned Outer Residential.

3.2.1.3 Actions

- a) Improve protection of the lower park by stopping unformed legal road and vesting as reserve.
- b) Review District Plan zonings for the park and where appropriate rezone to Conservation Site.
- c) Encourage and support private landowners to covenant land adjoining Trelissick Park.

3.2.2 ECOLOGY AND INDIGENOUS BIODIVERSITY

3.2.2.1 Policies – forest management

- a) Maintain, enhance, and restore the natural environment and wilderness character of the park.
- b) Prioritise weed control in the park, in particular old man's beard, japanese honeysuckle and climbing asparagus. Tradescantia control will happen in targeted

areas, for instance in areas where replanting will occur, the infestation is isolated, or there is a risk of reinvasion.

- c) Continue to manage possum, rat, hedgehog, and mustelid populations in the park.
- d) Prioritise restoration planting around:
 - i. ground cover for sprayed areas of tradescantia
 - ii. riparian planting in spaces left by willow eradication
 - iii. infill planting
 - iv. KiwiRail land following their weed control and subject to receiving KiwiRail funding
 - v. slopes below Ngaio Gorge Road, following earthquake strengthening of the road
 - vi. emergent and canopy trees such as rimu, tōtara, tawa, and kohekohe
 - vii. increasing the diversity of the forest ecosystem through understorey and ground cover species, eg grasses, shrubs and vines.

3.2.2.2 Discussion

Slips and recent disturbance within the park have encouraged weedy garden species to spread and in some places these are inhibiting regeneration and even spreading into existing forest areas. There are problems with pest weeds spreading from:

- the adjacent railway corridor managed by Kiwirail, especially Australian wattle
- recently excavated slopes below Ngaio Gorge Road
- private gardens
- sycamores in adjacent areas, such as Old Porirua Road
- remaining tracts of tradescantia in the park.

There are also isolated populations of weeds such as Japanese honeysuckle, bindweed, gorse, sycamore, Asiatic knotweed, old man's beard, climbing asparagus, blackberry, buddleia and montbretia. Biocontrol of tradescantia is being trialled in Trelissick Park.

Karaka is considered a non-local indigenous species and has cultural heritage associations. It is not a priority for removal, but the Trelissick Park Group actively remove some seedlings and saplings under 2 metres.

Although there has been no evidence of possums in the park for the last 10 years, there are ongoing problems with rats, stoats, hedgehogs, and rabbits.

Ongoing mustelid trap and bait station servicing is carried out by volunteers in partnership with the Council. Monitoring trials by Victoria University (chew cards, tracking tunnels, and night motion-sensitive videos) have identified interesting pest animal behaviours and distribution patterns.

3.2.2.3 Actions

- a) Continue to support the restoration planting carried out by the Trelissick Park Group.
- b) Remove known infestations of Japanese honeysuckle, old man's beard, climbing asparagus and Asiatic knotweed.
- c) Continue to fund possum and rat control in Trelissick Park and support the Trelissick Park Group with trapping.
- d) Encourage neighbouring landowners to remove weed species from their properties.

3.2.2.4 Policies – Kaiwharawhara and Korimako Stream

- a) Improve water quality by eliminating pollution from sewer and stormwater systems.
- b) Ensure that indigenous freshwater fauna can survive and move up and down the stream system.
- c) Stream stabilisation works shall minimise adverse visual impacts and retain or improve stream and riparian habitats.

3.2.2.5 Discussion

Kaiwharawhara Stream and its tributaries drain an area of steep hill land from Ngaio in the north to the Zealandia in the south. Korimako and Silver streams feed into the Kaiwharawhara, with points of confluence in the park (refer to map below).



The catchment has been highly modified with some parts running through suburban residential areas. It is notable, however, for the presence of significant primary lowland forest remnants, large areas of advanced secondary regrowth, as well as major reversion from pasture to scrub in the surrounding hills. Nearly 20 percent of the overall catchment is still covered by indigenous vegetation.

The lower reaches below Trellissick Park pass through a small industrial area and some parts have been channelled through culverts. The mouth of the stream has been modified by reclamation but is still notable as the only “natural” stream outlet on the inner harbour within Wellington City, identified as a site with significant indigenous biodiversity values in the coastal marine area of Greater Wellington’s Draft Natural Resources Plan (2014). The area between Zealandia and Otari-Wilton’s Bush has been heavily modified by the presence of two closed landfills. The stream currently passes through long culverts under the landfill sites at Appleton Park and Ian Galloway Park.

The stream experiences natural cycles of erosion and regeneration, with the waterway infilling and then re-establishing flow paths. Development in the area and some inflow of material inhibits this natural cycle of recovery between storm events.

Erosion and sedimentation is an issue caused by:

- stream bank erosion from sudden large downpours
- stormwater run-off from hard surfaces of urban development after removal of bush cover
- hillside slips.

The debris trap was “restored” some years ago with rocks replacing most demolition concrete, and the upright rails re-inserted.

In 2013 it was agreed that the barrier would be lowered in two stages, by removing the rocks. Accumulation of gravel and sediment washed down from the upstream pools is being monitored down to the harbour for any adverse effects. A balance must be found between allowing fish passage through the recreation of a natural stream flow and fulfilling the original intention of the debris arrestor in protecting downstream infrastructure.

3.2.2.6 Actions

- a) Carry out ongoing public education about not disposing waste into the stormwater system.
- b) Work with Wellington Water to eliminate cross-contamination between the sewerage and stormwater systems.
- c) The debris trap shall be monitored to ensure that fish passage is maintained, and lowered further if required.
- d) Other barriers to fish passage will be identified and addressed on a priority basis as resources allow. Fish species along the stream will be monitored.
- e) Any remaining willows shall be removed from the riparian margins of the stream and replaced with local indigenous species.

3.2.3 RECREATION AND ACCESS

3.2.3.1 Policy

- a) Increase recreational use and access in a way that does not compromise the natural values of the park.

3.2.3.2 Discussion

The park contains walking tracks that provide links with neighbouring suburbs. There is a variety of recreation opportunities available throughout the park including walking, running, dog walking, and picnicking.

Potential development of new tracks will need to consider the natural values of the park and significant vegetation during planning, construction, and ongoing track management.

The Council is preparing a strategic cycle network plan that includes Ngaio Gorge Road as a part of the commuting network. Trelissick Park is unlikely to be suitable to facilitate this connection. The standard of cycleway required to meet the needs of commuters (wide, good gradients, sealed and so on) could not be constructed in the park without major impacts on the landscape and ecological values of the park.

The existing main track through the park is unsuitable for recreational cycle access. The track is narrow in places with no space to suitably widen due to topography, the stream, and vegetation. There is also potential conflict between cycle access and off-leash dog exercise and walkers. Trelissick Park is one of only a few natural area walks that are closed to cycle access and this variety of user experiences is an important feature of the open space tracks network.

A new track link between Trelissick Park and Otari-Wilton’s Bush has been investigated in the past; ways of crossing the rail corridor, however, remain unresolved.

3.2.3.3 Action

- a) Investigate a new track link from Highland Park into the park to provide a second park entrance from Wadestown. Oban Street is the most likely route for a connection.

3.2.4 CULTURE AND HISTORY

3.2.4.1 Policies

- a) Recognise the cultural and historic significance of the park through understanding iwi and European settlement history.
- b) Protect the historic magazine building and the dry-stone walls along the access road and revetment wall on railway land below Crofton Downs station.

3.2.4.2 Discussion

The Kaiwharawhara Pā at the mouth of the Kaiwharawhara Stream was settled by Ngāti Tama who migrated through the Manawatu from Taranaki to eventually settle in the Kaiwharawhara area. Ngaio Gorge formed a natural access way between Wellington and the west coast and was used frequently by Māori. In particular, the route of the Northern Walkway between Hanover Street and Trelissick Crescent was likely to have been used by Māori and certainly by early settlers.

Ngaio Gorge and the Kaiwharawhara Stream were used as a source of food by Māori. During early European settlement, the chief was Te Kaeaea (also known as Taringa Kuri). Traditional occupation rights over this area are claimed by Ngāti Tama.

In 1841, the prominent New Zealand Company surveyor Mein-Smith improved the Māori track through the gorge to form a pedestrian way between Kaiwharawhara and Khandallah. In 1845, a road was constructed, which was then enlarged in 1846 to accommodate troops sent by Governor Gray to fight Te Rauparaha. By 1860 Cobb and Company coaches were using the gorge route going north.

In 1898, Onslow Borough Council approved the surveying and construction of a new road, which would follow much the same path as the present day road. The rail link through the gorge was constructed in 1874 by the Wellington–Manawatu Railway Company.

Between 1920 and 1922, 11 hectares were acquired for the park. Subsequent parcels were added, to bring the total to just over 18 hectares by 1995. More recently, two parcels were purchased – an area off Ngaio Gorge Road where the historic powder magazine building is situated (Historic Places Act Category II) and another off Waikowhai Street, Ngaio (recently changed from Residential to Conservation). Both have provided excellent east and north entrances to the park. The large, flat area of Wightwick's Field was generously donated by the Wightwick family to the Council and another piece of land below Oban Street, Highland Park, was added to the park when a Council property was sold. The total area for the park is now 20.25 hectares.

Some historic aspects include the powder magazine buildings from the 1870s, a dry-stone wall bordering the track from the lower park entrance, old Māori tracks up the valley from the pā by the harbour and an old track linking Wadestown with Ngaio (now part of the Northern Walkway).

There is a significant network of stormwater and sewage pipes and air vents throughout the park that are visible to park users. There is a story that could be relayed around the impact of people on the natural environment. This could consider the various scales of impact from general human modification of natural environments to development of a city in the Wellington landscape context to the specifics of Trelissick Park. This could work well alongside Project Kaiwharawhara interpretation.

The Kaiwharawhara diversion tunnel has significant historical value. It is a purpose-built air raid shelter that has had a useful role since the Second World War as a tunnel diverting Kaiwharawhara Stream. Its construction freed up adjoining land for industrial development and roading purposes, and helped in flood control.

3.2.4.3 Action

- a) Provide information to the public on the wide range of features and values of Trelissick Park and the Kaiwharawhara Stream catchment.

| Sector 2 Trelissick Park | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Reserve | Park Category | Land Area Sqm | Legal Description | CT Reference | Reserve classification | Proposed classification |
| Trelissick Park | Natural | 13,152.00 | Lot 34 DP 1162 | | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 16,617.00 | Pt Lot 53 DP 404 | 418/90 | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 16,820.00 | Lot 33 DP 1162 | 264/194 cancelled | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 62.00 | Sec 1 SO 33736 | | Recreation Reserve | Scenic B Reserve |
| | | 42.00 | Sec 2 SO 33736 | | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 3,146.00 | Pt Lot 4 DP 8225 | 425/170 cancelled | Scenic reserve 1(a) | no |
| | | 1,188.00 | Lot 3 DP 47382 | 356/179 cancelled | Recreation Reserve | Scenic B Reserve |
| | | 835.00 | Lot 1 DP 9734 | 415/213 pt cancelled | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 81,422.00 | Lot 27-28, 35-38 & Pt Lot 32 DP 1162 | 16A/1367 | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 6,622.00 | Pt Lot 289 DP 2644 & Pt Lot 1 DP 28078 | 17A/333 | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 15,682.00 | Pt Sec 3 Kaiwharawhara District | 135/111 | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 29,400.00 | Lot 5 DP 56284 | 25D/901 cancelled. GN 211652.2 (1991 p3737) | Recreation reserve | Scenic B Reserve |
| | | 1,925.00 | Lot 6 DP 56919 | 31B/430 | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 3,278.00 | Lot 2 DP 87316 | 55B/27 | Scenic Reserve | no |
| | | 13,187.00 | Lot 1 DP 395824 | | Fee simple | Scenic B Reserve |
| | | 9,358.00 | Pt Sec 2 Kaiwharawhara District | | | |