

Recreation Waiheke

Waiheke's Open Space Network Plan 2012

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**Waiheke
Local Board**



Auckland Council

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Introduction

Waiheke is a blend of beaches and coastal landscapes, large areas of native bush, rural landscape and small urban villages. The natural features of the landscape play a major role in creating Waiheke's unique character and sense of place.

The parks and open spaces contribute to this character by protecting and enhancing these landscapes and our cultural heritage. They provide places where the community can come together, be active and spend their leisure time. They are important to the quality of everyday lives and the sustainable management of our natural environment. The qualities of these spaces reinforce Waiheke as a desirable place to live, work and play and are a draw card for visitors and holiday makers.

Purpose

Recreation Waiheke: Waiheke's open space network plan (subsequently referred to as Recreation Waiheke) is a non-statutory document which sets out a ten year vision to guide decision-making on the provision, development and management of the open space network on Waiheke Island. An action plan outlines the key actions and projects proposed for the next ten years.

Background

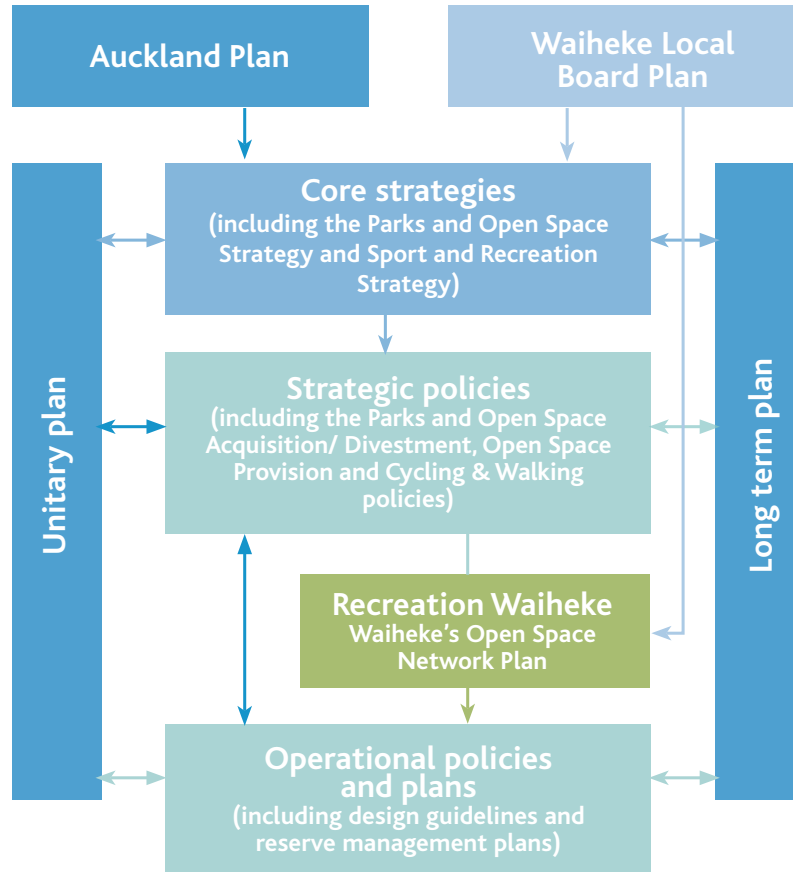
This document recognises and builds on work done in previous versions of Recreation Waiheke.

In 1994 Recreation Waiheke was initiated by the Waiheke Community Board of the former Auckland City Council to enable the Waiheke community to establish a ten year vision for the provision of recreation facilities on the island. This vision covered key aspects of recreation: sustainable growth; networks for getting around – walkways, bridle paths, cycling, public transport and roading; land acquisition; public participation in the process; youth needs; and indoor, outdoor and marine recreation facilities. The vision was supported by a series of objectives and an action plan. The document was updated in 1998 and 2006 to measure progress. By 2011 many of the objectives of the 1994 plan had been fully or partially achieved and it was recognised that a major update was required.

During 2012 Waiheke residents were given various opportunities to provide their views and ideas and have input on priority actions for the open space network. These have helped shape the objectives and actions identified in this plan.

Planning context

The diagram on this page shows how Recreation Waiheke fits within Auckland Council's strategic framework.



The Auckland Plan is a 30-year strategy to make Auckland the world's most liveable city. It recognises that our open spaces contribute to a quality of living that sets Auckland apart from other places in the world. The values of public open spaces are to be maintained and the network developed and strengthened to provide for the needs of a growing population.

The *Waiheke Local Board Plan* 2011 sets the framework for local decision-making and actions over a three-year time frame. Key open space and recreation priorities identified in the plan include:

- Protecting and enhancing our natural environment
- Building our local economy, through development and marketing of Waiheke's walkway network, including creation of a Round Waiheke Walk
- Improving recreational infrastructure, including investigation of additional boat ramps on Waiheke
- Building a strong community identity through development and extension of the open space network and improved facilities for active recreation
- Protecting and enhancing our character through development of a local signage suite and increased accessibility to heritage sites

Waiheke context

Located in the southern part of the Hauraki Gulf some 20 kilometres from Auckland, Waiheke Island has long been a haven for seafarers. Some 20 kilometres in length and 9,324 hectares in area, it is the largest and most populated island within the Gulf. Its 128 kilometres of coastline is indented by many bays and large tidal inlets. The topography is one of undulating hills rising to the highest point, Mt Maunganui, at 231 metres. These hills are dissected by many streams, most of which flow from north to south, leading to coastal flats and sheltered bays on the south side and exposed bays and picturesque beaches on the north.



Over the last twenty years there has been significant development on the island including commercial development, lifestyle block subdivisions, and numerous tourism and hospitality developments. The economy of the island has diversified from the traditional farming and fishing to industries based around tourism, horticulture (including viticulture and olive growing), arts and crafts, and home-based occupations made possible by new technologies.

The resident population has grown from 2,000 in 1981 to 5,000 in 1991, 7137 in 2001 and approximately 8500 in 2011. It is projected to grow to about 9850 by 2021¹. Compared with the Auckland Region as a whole, Waiheke has more people over 65 years of age (13% vs 9.9%) and fewer aged under 15 years (19% vs 22%)². In terms of ethnicity significantly more of the islanders are Europeans (78% vs 56%) and fewer identify as Pacific peoples or Asian. Unemployment is lower than the regional average (3% vs 5.6%).

At certain times of the year the island experiences an upsurge in population, particularly during holiday periods, long weekends and special events such as the annual Waiheke Jazz Festival and the biennial Sculpture on the Gulf. The population of Waiheke can be boosted by 35,000 people during peak times. Some of these are property owners who have holiday homes on the island.

¹Statistics NZ. Area Unit Population Projections by Territorial Authorities, Age and Sex, 2006 (base) to 2031 update.

²Statistics NZ. Auckland Council Local Board Tables, 2006 Census.

Visitors to the island, ranging from day-trippers to weekenders to long stay visitors, currently amount to between 500,000 and 700,000 per year, with over 70% coming from the Auckland region³. The majority of visitors come by ferry or private boat, but a small minority travel by plane or helicopter.

The main settlements on Waiheke are Oneroa, Blackpool, Surfdale, Palm Beach, Ostend, Onetangi and Rocky Bay (Omiha). Urban settlement is largely concentrated in the western half of the island. Eastern Waiheke retains a working rural character and includes important natural features such as large areas of indigenous vegetation, remote undeveloped beaches and significant ecological areas.

(Refer to Appendix C for more information about the history, geology and ecology of Waiheke Island)

Open space overview

Waiheke's public open space is largely made up of parks and reserves administered by Auckland Council, the Department of Conservation ('DoC'), and the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society of NZ Inc. This plan focuses on those spaces owned or administered by Auckland Council but takes into account those open spaces managed by other bodies. It does not specifically address recreational facilities within road reserves, such as footpaths, cycle ways and bridle ways, except in terms of advocacy with Auckland Transport, who is the asset owner.

Auckland Council owns and/or administers around 135 parks and reserves – these are shown in the open space network maps in Appendix B of this plan. Some of the reserves are owned by DoC but vested in Council to control and manage.

DoC retains management of four reserves on the island, which preserve ecological and historic features, including Stony Batter and Matietie Historic Reserve. Forest and Bird has three reserves, two of which have track networks connecting to open space areas administered by Auckland Council.

Waiheke is fortunate to have a diverse range of parks and open spaces. They offer a variety of recreational and leisure experiences for Waiheke residents and visitors, and places for social interaction. The parks and open spaces provide access to and along the coast enabling a range of water based activities to be experienced. They also help protect Waiheke's natural, cultural and historic values. Some are venues for the cultural events that bring vibrancy and economic benefits to the island.



³CEO Fullers, based on Auckland University research 2010.

The results of a 2012 survey showed that the natural beauty and the uncrowded, undeveloped nature of Waiheke's open spaces is highly valued by the community, as is their variety and accessibility⁴. The island's unspoiled beaches and the walkway networks, particularly the routes along the coast and through bush areas, are favourite destinations for local residents. The quality of the natural environment within the open space network and the effort that goes into maintenance and cleanliness is also valued. Residents favourite parks were Whakanewha Regional Park, Onetangi Beach, Palm Beach, Onetangi Sports Park and the coastal walkways in western Waiheke.

The majority of the parks and open spaces administered by Auckland Council are esplanade reserves and neighbourhood parks which provide informal recreation opportunities and access to the coastal environment. The largest reserve is Whakanewha Regional Park⁵. This park contains significant mature



coastal forest, a large wetland which is home to some uncommon birds and a crescent-shaped beach. It provides opportunities for picnicking, walking, horse riding and camping. There are two sports grounds, the largest of which is Onetangi Sports Park, which caters for a range of outdoor recreational uses, including team sports, tennis, mountain biking and golf. Indoor recreation activities are provided for at the Waiheke Recreation Centre in Surfdale.

Development of the open space network over the past few decades has provided a comprehensive walkway network in the western part of the island and progress has been made towards more walkway connections in the eastern area. In total Waiheke Island has over 70 kilometres

of walkways. This comprehensive network, still evolving, provides stunning views over the waters and islands of the Hauraki Gulf to parts of mainland Auckland and Coromandel. Just as important are the views within the island and over native bush and wetlands, farmland and small villages. However there are still many areas of coastline, particularly in the eastern end of the island, where there is no public access by land.

Challenges and opportunities

The key challenges and opportunities identified for Waiheke's open space network and recreational facilities are:

- Protection and enhancement of the natural environment through weed and pest control, native restoration and waterway management in the open space network
- Improved maintenance of the existing open space network
- Improved open space connectivity, particularly in eastern Waiheke
- Shared use of open space connections by walkers, cyclists and horse riders

⁴Recreation Waiheke public input form analysis, Feb 2012.

⁵The management and development of Whakanewha Regional Park is guided by the provisions of the Regional Parks Reserve Management Plan 2010 and is not specifically addressed in this open space plan.

- Year-round swimming/learn to swim facilities – there are learn to swim facilities currently provided at Te Huruhi Primary School and by a private provider
- Managing the open space network to accommodate growing population and visitor numbers, which are placing pressure on the existing open space resource and infrastructure
- Providing networks and facilities that support visitor activities, including water-based recreation
- Improved facilities within popular open spaces, for example toilets, playgrounds, boat ramps and BBQs
- Ensuring that open spaces and facilities remain relevant and meet the needs of the community and visitors
- Improved provision of recreational facilities for all ages and abilities
- Maintenance and enhancement of Waiheke’s unique character
- Balancing the needs of residents and visitors
- Increased community involvement in the development and management of the open space network
- Improved awareness of what Waiheke’s open spaces have to offer.



Strategic Direction

Vision

To provide a quality and diverse range of public parks and open spaces which reflect Waiheke’s uniqueness and protect its natural environment, while meeting the aspirations of local communities, and providing for the needs of increasing numbers of visitors.



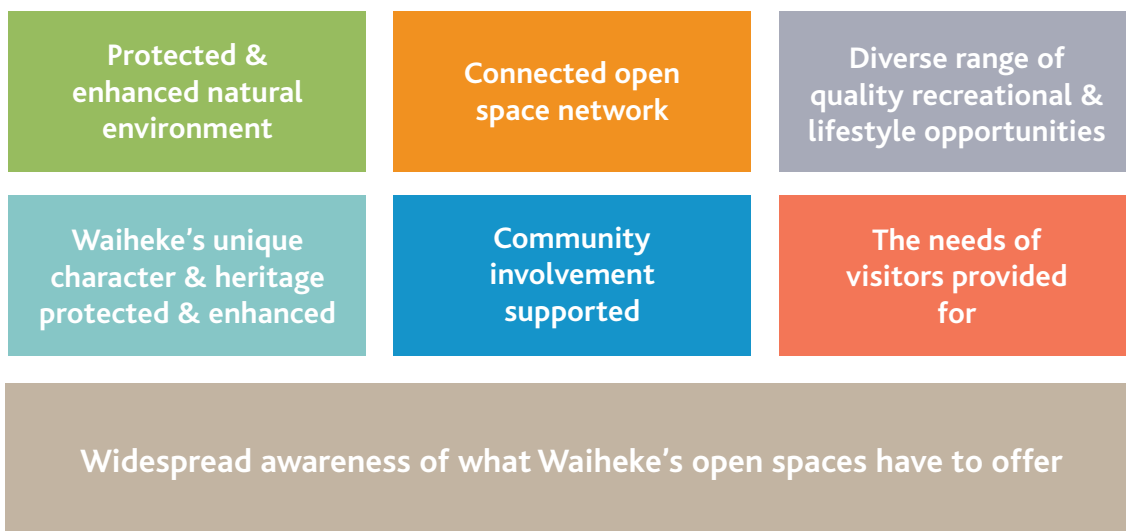
Vision explanation

The vision for Waiheke’s public open spaces reflects the island’s natural advantages – an easily accessible coastline, friendly welcoming residents, diverse landscapes and experiences and unique local character. The vision will be achieved if communities and council work together in the development and management of these spaces in the spirit of kaitiakitanga.



Outcomes

Referencing the Auckland Plan, the Local Board Plan and community views, the following outcomes outline the desired results for Waiheke's open space network and recreation facilities.



Objectives

The following objectives support the outcomes and are for a ten-year period.

A. Improve the ecological health of Waiheke's open space network and work to retain and restore native species biodiversity

Explanation

The open space network has an important role to play in the ongoing protection and enhancement of ecological values on Waiheke Island. Appropriate access to these areas gives people the chance to experience and learn about nature, conservation and wildlife on the island.

Invasive weeds and pests are a significant threat to ecological areas and native species biodiversity on Waiheke. With the high proportion of absentee land owners, weed spread from private properties contributes to this issue. Prioritised management of plant and animal pests on public open space is required, together with native restoration planting to minimise weed re-establishment, enhance ecological values and protect water quality. Partnering with the community is desirable to develop awareness of the threats to native diversity and habitats and to encourage a strong sense of community ownership.



There are significant ecological areas located on private land. Consideration needs to be given to identifying these areas and working with landowners in securing their protection through methods such as covenants, fencing and rates remission. Acquisition may be considered where it is determined appropriate to retain the land in public ownership.

B. Use open space management and development initiatives to improve the environmental sustainability of Waiheke

Explanation

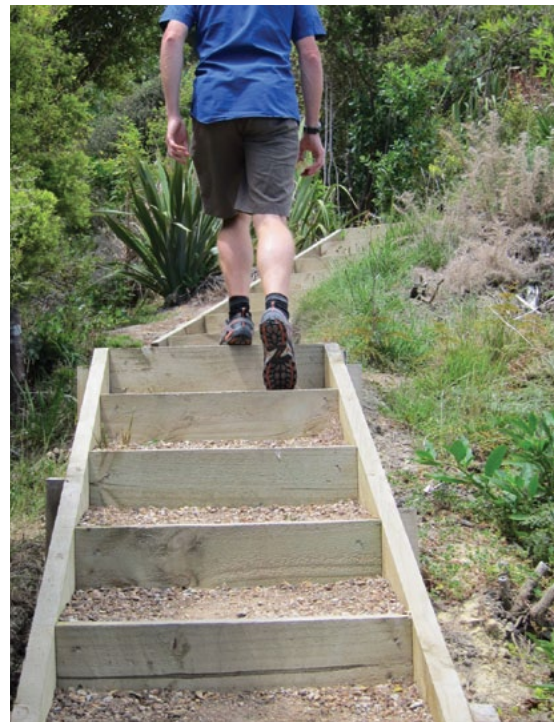
The way open spaces are managed and developed can either enhance or detract from the environmental sustainability of Waiheke Island as a whole. Environmental sustainability could be improved by implementing various management techniques such as using swales, wetlands and permeable surfaces in parks, rather than hard surfaces and pipes, or by making it easy for people to access parks open spaces by foot or bicycle rather than using a vehicle. Waiheke also needs to play its part in achieving the greenhouse gas emission goals outlined in the Auckland Plan.

C. Develop and strengthen the open space network

Explanation

Providing a diverse network of easily accessible, interconnected open spaces across the island and to and along the coast provides a number of benefits to people and wildlife, including:

- a variety of recreational and leisure experiences for residents and visitors
- providing access to remote beach, bush and rural areas
- a draw card for visitors to the island
- allowing people to walk, cycle or ride horses to destinations instead of using vehicles
- linking areas of ecological value and creating ecological corridors
- enabling people to move around more easily to use and experience Waiheke's parks and open spaces



Good progress has been made in developing a walkway network within the more populated western end of Waiheke and around the coastline at the western end. Improving walkway connectivity in the eastern rural part of Waiheke is one of the priorities for the next ten years, as is the development of routes and circuits that are suitable for all ages and abilities.

Council has committed to developing the Round Waiheke Walk, a seven-day round island walk that has the potential to become a world-class visitor attraction. The round-island walk will provide benefits for the local community in terms of upgraded connections, more accessible information about the walkway network, and opportunities for Waiheke's tourism sector.

Accessibility and safety for recreational and commuter cyclists is currently an issue for the Waiheke community. As many of the opportunities for improving cycle ways are within the road reserve, Council should advocate and work with Auckland Transport, who manage the asset. Off-road routes through reserve land will be developed where they provide more direct, safe and pleasant connections. Shared use walkway/cycle ways will be considered where appropriate.

For horses and their riders, a bridle path network is needed as a recreational facility and to provide access to pony club and horse riding areas. Working with local riders, bridle path connections can be prioritised and developed incrementally as budgets allow. Routes that are shared with walkers and cyclists require specific design and signage to ensure the safety of all users.

Gaps in the open space network in terms of connectivity, overall provision and quality should be identified, and a range of methods considered to remedy them. Methods could include land acquisitions, improvements to existing reserves, easements or private landowner agreements/partnerships.

D. Maintain Onetangi Sports Park as Waiheke's high quality recreational precinct

Explanation

Onetangi Sports Park has been developed as Waiheke's premier outdoor recreation precinct, providing a sports pavilion, sports fields, tennis courts, frisbee golf, mountain bike trails, and walkways. It is also the location of the Waiheke Golf Club. Utilisation of the park could be improved through greater promotion of the facilities and through collaboration with local sports clubs and other community groups. As outdoor recreational needs on the island change and develop, it is important to ensure that the sports park facilities continue to meet users' needs.

F. Ensure that Waiheke Recreation Centre is accessible and meets community needs



Explanation

Waiheke Recreation Centre was constructed to meet the identified indoor recreation needs of the Waiheke High School and wider Waiheke community, in particular youth. Council provides annual funding to the Centre to ensure it is available and accessible to the local community outside of school hours. The Centre has been operational for almost ten years, so a review is currently underway to reassess community need and ensure that the Centre is able to meet this.

G. Provide structures and facilities that improve recreational experiences on Waiheke



Explanation

Improving the provision of appropriate and relevant facilities within Waiheke's open spaces will enhance the experience and enjoyment for users. It will also help to address issues around population growth and increased visitor demand.

Structures and facilities include things such as play equipment, camp sites, boat ramps, toilets, changing rooms, park furniture, walkways and BBQs. These facilities improve opportunities for recreation, socialising and undertaking physical activity. It is important that a range of facilities is available for all ages, abilities and cultures.



Identified gaps in provision include facilities for all-year-round swimming/learning to swim and boat ramp facilities on the northern side of the island.

Whakanewha Regional Park currently provides the only managed public camping ground on Waiheke Island. Additional remote camp sites with limited facilities could be established in eastern Waiheke, providing overnight accommodation for visitors on the Round Waiheke Walk and for kayakers and boaties.

Local mountain bike clubs have worked with Council to develop and maintain mountain bike tracks on Rangihoua, within Onetangi Sports Park. There is a desire to increase the length and variety of tracks to form a mountain bike destination for visitors. This could be achieved by expansion of the network into adjacent areas, through shared use links and dedicated mountain bike tracks. The investigation of a mountain bike track network in Whakanewha Regional Park is provided for in the 2010 Regional Parks Management Plan.

H. Maori and European heritage sites will be protected, through collaboration with Mana Whenua, and appropriate sites will be interpreted and promoted as part of the open space network

Explanation

Waiheke Island has been inhabited for over 1000 years and has a rich Maori and European history. The island has a number of significant archaeological and heritage features, including the Stoney Batter World War II tunnels and gun emplacements, defensive Maori pa, and a number of waahi tapu sites. These features need to be protected during management and development of the open space network.

Strategic Direction 2 of the Auckland Plan seeks to enable Maori aspirations through recognition of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and customary rights. The cultural values of Mana Whenua, including the exercise of kaitiakitanga in relation to public open spaces, should be recognised and provided for.

There are opportunities to provide interpretation at appropriate heritage sites, in consultation with Mana Whenua and the local community, to enhance our understanding and identify our heritage. This adds to the depth of experience for residents and visitors.

I. Manage and develop Waiheke's open space network in a way that reflects and enhances the island's character



Explanation

Waiheke Island has a unique character and lifestyle, and there is a strong desire to maintain and enhance this character and to avoid 'over-development' of public open spaces. It is important that all maintenance and development in parks, walkways and beaches is appropriate to its landscape context. For example heavily used parks in western Waiheke should have a tidier more manicured appearance than bush and ecological areas.

Any signage suite developed for Waiheke's open space network should reflect the local character and be appropriate for a tourist destination in a semi-rural coastal setting.

K. Actively support community involvement in the management and development of the island's open space network

Explanation

A sense of community is one of the most highly valued aspects of Waiheke's lifestyle. It is reinforced by a high level of participation in community events and projects. Volunteers play an important role in fostering community identity and in looking after the natural environment. Support and encouragement for community groups who work to improve the open space network should be continued and more opportunities provided for people to participate in the management and development of parks, beaches and walkways. Direct involvement means that locals have a greater sense of ownership of their open spaces and Council benefits from local knowledge and expertise.

J. Promote the open space network through all appropriate and available media

Explanation

To ensure Waiheke's open spaces and recreational facilities are used and enjoyed, residents and visitors need to be aware of what the network has to offer. Promotions should utilise all available media, including brochures, websites, newspapers and social media. Popular events like Twilight Rambles and the Waiheke Walking Festival have helped to improve awareness of Waiheke's walkways and new events that enhance the use of the open space network should be supported.

Open space network action plan

The tables on the following pages summarise key actions – plans, capital development projects and advocacy – needed to achieve the plan objectives. The table also shows how the actions fit with the desired outcomes for Waiheke's open space network and recreational facilities.

Key to Abbreviations

SLIPs Small Local Improvement Projects

LBP Local Board Plan

GB Governing Body

Potential projects associated with the actions can be found in Appendix A.

VISION: To provide a quality and diverse range of public open spaces and recreational facilities which reflect Waiheke's uniqueness and protect its natural environment, while meeting the aspirations of local communities, and providing for the needs of increasing numbers of visitors.		Time frame (yrs)*	Funding source	CORE OUTCOMES						
				Protected & enhanced natural environment	Connected open space network	Diverse range of quality recreational & lifestyle opportunities	Waiheke's unique character & heritage protected & enhanced	Community involvement supported	The needs of visitors provided for	Widespread awareness of what Waiheke has to offer
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: A. Improve the ecological health of Waiheke's open spaces and work to retain native species biodiversity.										
Action A1	Work collaboratively with the community & the Biodiversity & Biosecurity teams to identify & implement priorities for weed control & native restoration eg. bush remnants, wetlands & sites of ecological significance.	1-3	Existing budgets /SLIPs							
Action A2	Undertake weed control in high profile areas along the walkway network.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action A3	Support the work of the Biodiversity & Biosecurity teams in increasing community awareness of the threats to native species biodiversity, including weeds, loss of native vegetation & reductions in water quality. Encourage & support the identification & implementation of specific projects.	1-6	Existing budgets							
Action A3	Support the work of the Biodiversity & Biosecurity teams in developing initiatives, like the 'Streetsmart' initiative, to encourage private property owners to play their part in the battle against weeds.	1-6	Existing budgets /SLIPs							
Action A4	Support the work of the Biodiversity & Biosecurity teams in developing & implementing a pest control plan for Waiheke.	3-6	Existing budgets							
Action A5	Protect and enhance significant ecological areas & corridors eg. through acquisitions, covenants & private landowner agreements.	Ongoing	Existing budgets /GB							

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: A. Improve the ecological health of Waiheke's open spaces and work to retain native species biodiversity.										
Action B1	Establish orchards on public open space & work with the community to establish food gardens that are in accordance with Council's Community Gardens policy.	1-6	Existing budgets /SLIPs							
Action B2	Practice low impact management of stormwater in parks and reserves where applicable, using 'soft' solutions such as swales, wetlands & permeable surfaces rather than 'hard' solutions such as pipes & impermeable surfaces.	Ongoing	Existing budgets /SLIPs							
Action B3	Advocate and work with Auckland Transport to ensure environmentally sustainable management of water courses and stormwater, where they may affect public open space.	Ongoing	Advocacy							
Action B4	Advocate and work with transport providers to improve public transport connectivity to key open spaces.	1-3	Advocacy							
Action B5	Improve facilities (eg. playgrounds, beach areas and parks) & provide opportunities for short walks in each village so that most residents are able to walk to facilities rather than using vehicle transport to other areas.	1-10	LBP/SLIPs							
Action B6	Promote a smoke free environment in Waiheke's parks	1-3	Existing budgets /SLIPs							

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: C. Develop and strengthen the open space network										
Action C1	Develop & deliver an implementation plan for the Round Waiheke Walk.	1-3	LBP/SLIPs							
Action C2	Undertake a feasibility study of the opportunities for improving walkway connectivity in eastern Waiheke eg. through the use of unformed legal roads (paper roads), including consideration of shared cycle access where feasible.	1-3	Existing budgets							
Action C3	Identify & provide a number of walkway routes that are suitable for all ages & abilities & meet the footpath standard.	1-6	LBP/SLIPs							
Action C4	Adopt designs for shared use walking, cycling & horse riding paths (where appropriate) that provide solutions for a range of open space settings.	1-3	Existing budgets							
Action C5	Advocate & work collaboratively with Auckland Transport to improve the safety & accessibility of shared use walkways & cycleways, particularly on routes to schools and between Matiatia and Onetangi.	1-3	Advocacy /SLIPs							
Action C6	Advocate & work collaboratively with Auckland Transport & local riders to identify & develop new bridle path connections.	1-10	Advocacy /SLIPs							
Action C7	Work with the Department of Conservation (DOC) for 'control & management' of selected DOC owned &/or managed reserves on Waiheke.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action C8	Improve connectivity, particularly to & along the coast eg. through acquisitions, easements, private landowner agreements & use of paper roads.	Ongoing	Existing budgets /GB							
Action C9	Identify gaps in open space provision and use a range of methods to address any significant gaps eg. through land acquisitions, improvements to existing reserves, easements & private landowner agreements.	Ongoing	Existing budgets /GB							

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: D. Maintain Onetangi Sports Park as Waiheke's high quality recreational precinct.										
Action D1	Work collaboratively with sports codes & the local community to increase the number of people using Onetangi Sports Park & to ensure that facilities remain adequate and appropriate for users.	Ongoing	Existing budgets /LBP							
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: E. Ensure that Waiheke Recreation Centre is accessible and meets community needs.										
Action E1	Investigate community needs for indoor recreation facilities.	1-3	Existing budgets							
Action E2	Review the operation of the Waiheke Recreation Centre to ensure that community needs are met.	1-3	Existing budgets							

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: F. Provide structures and facilities that improve recreational experiences on Waiheke.										
Action F1	Continue to advocate to the Governing Body for a public swimming pool (possibly with squash courts & health facilities) & undertake a feasibility study as a first step towards the project.	1-3	Advocacy /LBP							
Action F2	Investigate the possible location & provision of additional recreational boat launching facilities for Waiheke.	1-3	Existing budgets /LBP							
Action F3	Work with mountain bike clubs to expand the mountain bike trail network from Onetangi Sports Park.	1-6	Existing budgets							
Action F4	Identify opportunities for remote campsites as part of the Round Waiheke Walk & the southern sea kayak and waka trail.	1-3	LBP/GB							
Action F5	Improve facilities at the popular parks & reserves in each village.	1-10	LBP/SLIPs							
Action F6	Manage freedom campers in accordance with Council policy.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action F7	Identify a location & provide a 'dump station' for motor homes/caravans/ camper vans.	1-3	Existing budgets /LBP							
Action F8	Investigate the provision of exercise equipment for older people in an appropriate park.	1-3	LBP/SLIPs							

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STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: G. Maori and European heritage sites will be protected, through collaboration with Mana Whenua, and appropriate sites will be interpreted and promoted as part of the open space network.										
Action G1	Ensure that Maori & European heritage sites within the open space network are protected during open space maintenance & development.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action G2	Develop an interpretation strategy for heritage sites, in consultation with Mana Whenua, the Waiheke Historical Society & other parties eg. as part of the Round Waiheke Walk.	1-6	Existing budgets /SLIPs							
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: H. Manage and develop Waiheke's open space network in a way that reflects and enhances island character.										
Action H1	Reinforce the special character of Waiheke's varied cultural and natural landscapes through appropriate planting, park infrastructure & open space management.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action H2	Confirm a suite of signage for Waiheke Island's open spaces that reflects the local character.	1-3	Existing budgets							
Action H3	Continue to identify, improve and maintain significant viewshafts.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							

VISION: To provide a quality and diverse range of public open spaces and recreational facilities which reflect Waiheke's uniqueness and protect its natural environment, while meeting the aspirations of local communities, and providing for the needs of increasing numbers of visitors.		Time frame (yrs)*	Funding source	CORE OUTCOMES						
				Protected & enhanced natural environment	Connected open space network	Diverse range of quality recreational & lifestyle opportunities	Waiheke's unique character & heritage protected & enhanced	Community involvement supported	The needs of visitors provided for	Widespread awareness of what Waiheke has to offer
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: I. Promote the open space network through all appropriate and available media.										
Action I1	Support events which lead to increased use and knowledge of the open space network	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action I2	Develop materials and methods that effectively communicate information about the open space network to residents & visitors. The information will focus on Waiheke's walkway, cycleway, mountain bike & bridle path networks.	1-3	Existing budgets /LBP							
Action I3	Work with local landowners to extend & promote visitor activities in & around the park & walkway network.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: J. Support community involvement in the management and development of the island's open spaces.										
Action J1	Create opportunities for locals to be involved in improving their favourite parks and walkways.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action J2	Continue to support community groups who are prepared to put time into improving parks.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							
Action J3	Ensure effective interaction & communication with the local community through means such as an increased Council presence in parks & informal engagement & communication.	Ongoing	Existing budgets							

Appendices

Appendix A: Proposed projects

The following list contains a selection of projects that may be implemented to achieve the plan objectives. The feasibility of these projects has not yet been confirmed. Other specific projects, which are consistent with the vision, outcomes and objectives, will be identified and progressively implemented during the ten-year time frame of the open space network plan.

Objective A

Improve the ecological health of Waiheke's open spaces and work to retain native species biodiversity.

- Wetland restoration at Tawaipareira and Rangihoua
- Wetland restoration at Awaawaroa
- Wetland enhancement at Third Avenue Onetangi
- Investigate restoration of the Rangihoua catchment area. Inclusive of weed control, restoration planting, Wai Care involvement and initiatives that could allow schools to become involved in environmental programmes

Objective B

Use open space management and development initiatives to improve the environmental sustainability of Waiheke.

- Additional weed management projects
- Installation of a campervan dump site at a suitable location
- Orchard gardens and 'Planting for the Bees'
- Investigation of additional drinking water fountains at popular locations

Objective C

Develop and strengthen the open space network

- Investigation of paper roads in eastern Waiheke
- Construction of the Te Matuku Stockyard to Pearl Bay track
- Upgrade walkway up Puke o Kai behind Poderi Crisci
- Wharetana Bay walkway/Te Whau Esplanade Reserve signage and seating
- Track upgrades, signage and construction of new walkways in the Awaawaroa area
- Construct track between McKenzie Reserve and Sandy Bay end of Coromandel Road
- Loop walking tracks to include Rangihoua Creek, Te Whau Esplanade Reserve and Onetangi Sports Park
- Open Ballysaggart Track on existing easement
- Work with Auckland Transport and local horse riders to create informal bridle paths on Sea View Road, from Ostend to View Road turnoff, and from Causeway Road to Onetangi Beach
- Work with Auckland Transport and local riders to create informal bridle paths on Sea View Road, from Ostend Road
- Work with Auckland Transport to maintain the bridle path connection from Victoria Road South to Waiheke Road, via Trig Hill Road and Fisher Road
- With Auckland Transport and local riders, work towards creating a bridle path connection between the adult riding club on Onetangi Road and the pony club in Blackpool

- Undertake a condition assessment and classification of the island's walkways to identify renewal and upgrade needs
- Work towards making reserve boundaries clear in ways appropriate to the site e.g. survey pegs, mowing, signs.

Objective D

Maintain Onetangi Sports Park as Waiheke's high quality recreational precinct

- Build Onetangi Sports Park to Onetangi Road boardwalk

Objective G

Provide structures and facilities that improve recreational experiences on Waiheke

- Construction of a toilet at Tawaipareira Reserve
- Ensure safe pedestrian and boat access areas at Sandy Bay
- Improve facilities at other popular parks and reserves in each village. The targeted parks may include (in alphabetical order):
 - Alison Park (including further development of the sculpture trail)
 - Blackpool Reserve and Beach
 - Esslin Reserve
 - Little Oneroa Beach
 - Man O'War Bay
 - Mary Wilson Reserve
 - Matapana and Palm Beach Reserves
 - Oneroa Beach
 - Ostend Domain
 - Surfdale Reserve
 - Tin Boat Reserve/Fourth Avenue Reserve

Objective H

Maori and European heritage sites will be protected, through collaboration with Mana Whenua, and appropriate sites will be interpreted and promoted as part of the open space network

- Interpretation signage for new and existing walkways in appropriate areas eg. Awaawaroa area

Objective I

Manage and develop Waiheke's open space network in a way that reflects and enhances island character

- Ensure adequate signage on all reserves and walkways

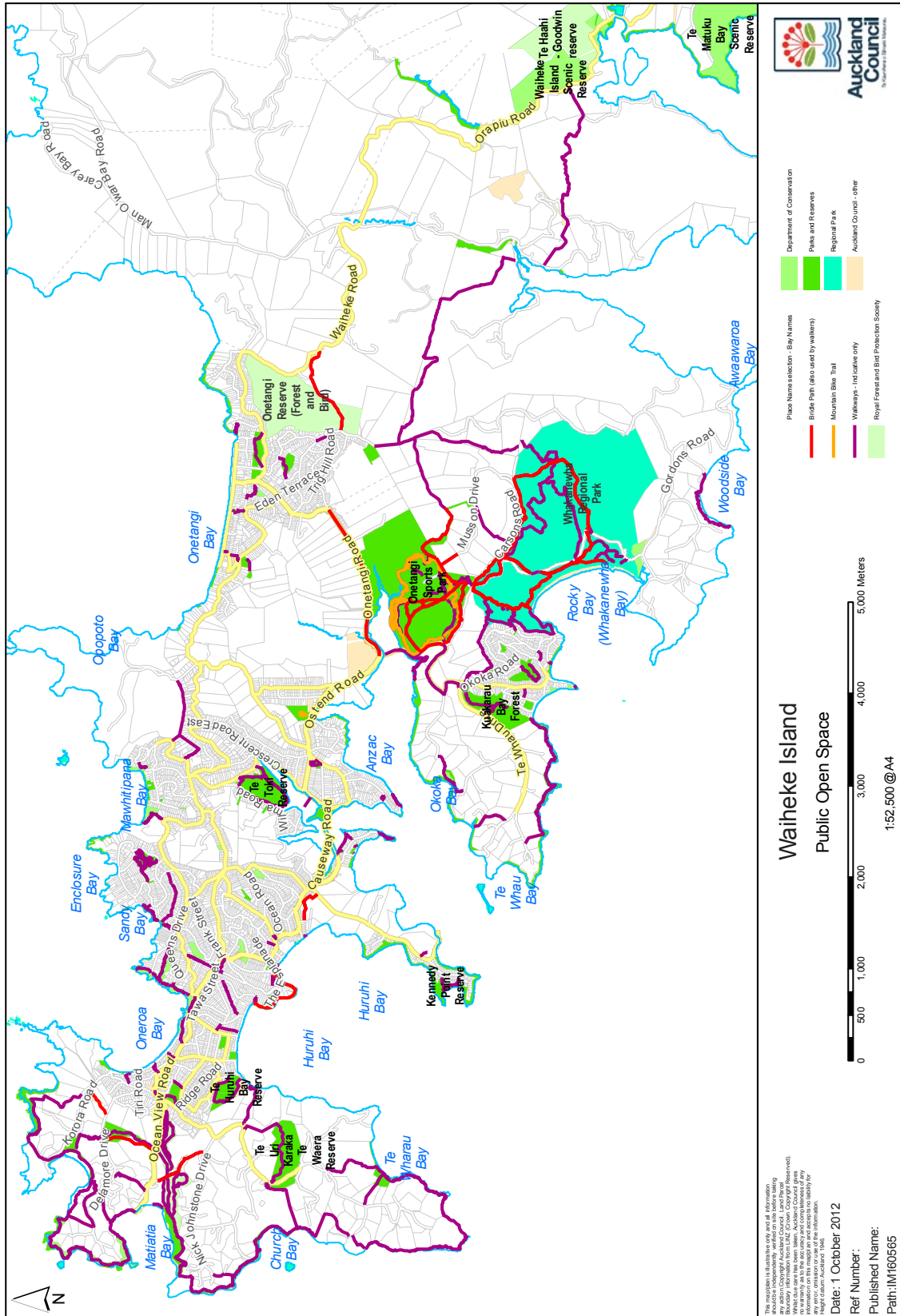
Objective J

Promote the open space network through all appropriate and available media

- Update and reprint the 'Explore Waiheke Island's Walkways' brochure
- Produce 'Discovering Map(s)' for Matiatia and Oneroa, and possibly for Rocky Bay

Appendix B: Open space maps

More detailed online maps of Waiheke's open space network can be found on Auckland Council's GIS viewer (<http://intermaps.arc.govt/AucklandCouncilViewer>)



Appendix B: Open space maps



Appendix C: Background information

History

The island was not generally known as Waiheke ('descending waters') until European settlement commenced in the 1800s. Its ancient Maori name was Te Motuarui-roa ('the long sheltering island') and, later, it was known as Te Motunui-o-Kahu ('the large island of Kahu') after a young chieftain, Kahu, who is said to have landed on the island around the middle of the 14th century and claimed territory for the Te Arawa people (Day 1989, Monin 1992).

Situated in the Inner Gulf Islands Ecological District, which lies within the Auckland Ecological Region, the majority of Waiheke Island was originally covered in native vegetation. Kauri (*Agathis australis*), tanekaha (*Phyllocladus trichomanoides*) and hard beech (*Nothofagus truncata*) were evidently present on upper valley walls, ridges and spurs; taraire (*Beilschmiedia tarairi*), tawa (*B. tawa*), and kohekohe (*Dysoxylum spectabile*) occurred in sheltered coastal and inland valleys, with some rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*) also present. Pohutukawa (*Metrosideros excelsa*) and occasional karo (*Pittosporum crassifolium*) occurred on coastal slopes and cliffs and the margins of forests by the sea. On less exposed coastal slopes kohekohe, puriri (*Vitex lucens*) and karaka (*Corynocarpus laevigata*) accompanied pohutukawa. In poorly drained areas pukatea (*Laurelia novae-zelandiae*), kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*) and taraire were dominant. Flax (*Phormium tenax*) and various sedges occurred mainly in marshy places or on the borders of forests (Kirk, 1878; Fitzgibbon & Slaven, 1988).

Maori have had an association with the island going back about 1,000 years. Early Maori lived largely off native fauna such as shellfish, moa, fur seals and the abundant fisheries of the Hauraki Gulf. Later on they developed more extensive gardening practices, burning forests for clearance and soil enrichment. This slash and burn type of agriculture occurred mainly in the western parts of the island on areas of flat land, while in the east reliance was more on kaimoana, seafood gathering (Monin, 1996).

By the time of the European arrival kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*)-manuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*) forest predominated in western Waiheke and climax forest, including impressive stands of kauri, was limited to the area from Awaawaroa eastwards to the Orapiu/Man O' War Bay coast. Only tiny remnants of climax forest remained west of this point, and the kauri forests of the western end of the island had disappeared (Monin, 1996).

With the advent of Europeans there was much further modification of the island's extensive forests. It began in 1826 when the barque St Patrick loaded kauri spars at Man O' War Bay. Kauri was transported to Sydney and Valparaiso, Chile (Monin, 1992), and sent to Auckland for house and furniture timber for the growing settlement there. It was also used for the building of Waiheke's early homes and farm buildings. Puriri was used for house foundations, fence posts and battens. Tanekaha bark was stripped for use in the tanning trade and the wood used as walking sticks and fishing rods. Kauri gum was used in the manufacture of paint and polishes, as kindling and polished for gifts (Day, 1989). Pohutukawa was used for the knees of vessels and for framing (Monin, 1993).

Once the settlement got under way manuka and kanuka was extensively cut down for firewood and was the chief source of Auckland's firewood. Kanuka was also used for fencing. By about 1880 the hills had been stripped bare for sheep farming with only the small remnants of forests restricted mainly to gullies, the forests having been consumed consecutively by the needs of sailing ship technology, housing construction and the fires of Auckland (Monin, 1996).

Mamangi (*Coprosma arborea*) was not suitable for firewood as it gives off an unpleasant odour when burnt, though it was occasionally used for inlays due to its peculiar yellow colour (Kirk, 1878).

The steady decline in sheep farming on the island after 1945 has seen some areas slowly revert to regenerating forests and shrublands of kanuka-manuka and mamangi-mapou (*Myrsine australis*), the latter being a distinctive feature of the island vegetation today in the western part of the island. The prominence of mamangi on the island may well be due to its unsuitability for the fireplace.

Today the eastern end of the island is largely rural in character with large tracts of forest, whereas the western end is more urbanised, small villages surrounding tiny forest remnants and separated by farmed green belts. The character is beginning to change in the far west of the island, where large areas of erosion-prone farmland are being converted into native forest through revegetation programmes as a result of subdivision consents. In both the eastern and western parts of the island, subdivisions through the 1990's to the present day have seen many of the island's areas of primary forest and secondary regeneration covenanted or placed into reserve. Many wetland and riparian areas have also been covenanted.

Significant areas of mature forest can still be found in the eastern end of the island at Te Matuku Bay, Waikopou Bay and Man O' War Bay. In the western end mature forest remnants tend to be small and isolated, some exceptions being Onetangi Reserve, Kuakarau Bay Forest Reserve and Pio Rehutai Reserve.

From this background it can be seen that the contrast in character between eastern and western Waiheke has always been there. First there was the Maori pattern of settlement, with the eastern end being little modified and the western end being more intensely settled and farmed. This resulted in a dramatic contrast in vegetation between the two parts of the island. This pattern has continued into modern times, with urbanisation concentrated in the western end and the eastern end remaining more remote and more heavily forested.

Natural features of Waiheke

The natural environment plays a large role in making Waiheke Island special. These special natural values include the beaches, extensive wetland areas, the Cascades in Whakanewha Regional Park and large areas of mature, regenerating and planted indigenous forests forming ecological corridors throughout the island.

Botanically the island has some unique associations and special features. The character of the island's vegetation is primarily coastal (Fitzgibbon & Slaven, 1988). The absence of possums on the island means that palatable species favoured by this introduced pest can thrive. The island has two major catchments where protected natural ecotone sequences (broadleaf forest through freshwater and saltwater wetlands) occur, Whakanewha and Te Matuku Bay. The southern tidal flats have extensive areas of mangrove (*Avicennia marina* var. *australasica*) forests, the most significant being at Te Matuku Bay.

The island is home to nationally local kumerahou (*Pomaderris rugosa*) and the rare pingao (*Desmoschoeus spiralis*). Kauri-hard beech forest, a very uncommon vegetation type in the Auckland Ecological Region, is present at Man 'o War Bay Forest (Fitzgibbon & Slaven, 1988). Pohutukawa is found in all vegetation types including an associated with kauri at Pike Ridge, where locally uncommon kawaka (*Libocedrus plumosa*) is also present.

Fitzgibbon & Slaven (1988) noted the presence of kauri snail (*Rhytida greenwoodii greenwoodii*) in Man 'o War Bay Forest and a recent study by Quadling (1999) discovered the species in Onetangi Reserve. The presence of this snail on Waiheke is significant in that it is on an island and is approaching the northern limits of its distribution. Notable bird species present include the threatened reef heron (*Egretta sacra sacra*), banded rail (*Rallus philippensis*), NZ dotterel (*Charadrius obscurus*), banded dotterel (*C. bicinctus bicinctus*) and Australasian bittern (*Botaurus stellaris pioiciloptilus*). The breeding population of NZ dotterel at Whakanewha Regional Park, through the assistance of pest control, is approaching 1% of the world population.

Many of the streams contain native fish, including long-finned eel (*Anguilla dieffenbachii*), banded kokopu (*Galaxias fasciatus*), inanga (*G. maculatus*), North Island crayfish (*Paranephross planifrons*), koura (*Paranephross planifrons*) and freshwater shrimp (*Paratya curvirostris*). The nationally threatened giant kokopu (*Galaxias argenteus*) was reported by McCulloch et al (1998) as present at Whakanewha Regional Park. Native bees are present in roadside banks and glowworms are found in the Cascades area of Whakanewha Regional Park. Little is known however of the invertebrate and reptile communities of the island.

The geology of the island belongs predominantly to the Waiheke Group and is of the Kawhia series of the mid-mesozoic Era, approximately 157 million years old. It consists of a turbidite deposit of siltstone and sandstone several thousand feet thick, with fossils being extremely rare. There are only two areas not formed by this group. The Stony Batter area is of the Kiwitahi Volcanics consisting of an andesitic agglomerate with dykes, tertiary in age, approximately 14 million years old. The area west of Park Point and south of Church Bay, and at Oneroa Bay, is of the Koheroa siltstone, approximately 22.5 million years old. (Rickard, 1981).

The Stony Batter area administered by DoC contains andesite boulders which are of regional significance. Other reserve areas that sport geological features include Pasadena Bay Marginal Strip, Pohutukawa Reserve in Rocky Bay, Glenbrook Reserve and Kuakarau Bay Forest Reserve. The Te Matuku Bay Stewardship Area includes a shell bank that provides a nesting ground for endangered bird species.

Historical features of Waiheke

Rickard (1981) has reported extensively on Maori archaeological features on the island as part of a series of summary reports for territorial local authorities. The types of archaeological sites found on the island are pa sites, pits and terraces, burial sites and middens. Archaeological sites are protected from destruction by the Historic Places Act 1993. Though the Rickard report is fairly detailed it does not include all sites likely to be present on the island. Additional surveys are routinely done as part of subdivision applications. These additional sites are protected by covenant as a condition of subdivision consent. Some Maori archaeological features are also protected in various reserves throughout the island.

Maori used siltstone for hangi stones, probably from local sources. This is not an ideal stone for this purpose, as it shatters and can explode with heat. This is apparent on archaeological sites, where shattered hangi stones are common. Obsidian, found in many sites, must have been imported from off the island. Jasper, used for prehistoric flake tools, probably came from the Stony Batter area. Quartz pebbles, found in middens, probably also came from the island. (Rickard, 1981)

There are also a number of European historical features contained in reserves and road reserves.

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