

# Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan

## PART 2: RESOURCES & CONTEXT





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# Introduction

Outdoor recreational use of the Kahuterawa Valley, centred around the end of Kahuterawa Road, has developed naturally due to the close proximity of this area to Palmerston North, and the variety of recreational opportunities that are present.

Palmerston North City Council owns the Gordon Kear Forest in the headwaters of the Kahuterawa Stream and also manages Turitea Reserve. The southern end of Turitea Reserve, which is known as Harding's Park, includes a significant portion of the headwaters of Kahuterawa Stream.

In 2002, PNCC adopted an Outdoor Recreation Strategy for the City. This identified a key objective of developing the Kahuterawa Valley as an Outdoor Recreation Hub.

PNCC acquired Woodpecker Forest located at the end of Kahuterawa Road in July 2006. This forest area was acquired through an exchange for part of Gordon Kear Forest. This exchange was seen as providing PNCC with direct control over the strategic Woodpecker Forest to allow active development of the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub.

The purpose of this plan is to set the long term direction for management of Woodpecker Forest, and the linked areas around the Kahuterawa Road end to ensure they provide the maximum benefit to the whole community. It sets out the basis for ongoing provision of outdoor recreation and a range of environmental services from the area. It aims to provide the best approach to forest management for Woodpecker Forest to minimise the impacts of wind damage, facilitate outdoor recreation and enhance other resources such as biodiversity.

## Scope of Plan Development

The plan focuses on achieving a balanced plan for the management of the recently acquired Woodpecker Forest.

The plan will also address related important issues associated with the management of linked areas and facilities that form part of a Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub.

Areas and facilities included in this plan are set out below:

Area/Facility	Status	Legal description	Description
Woodpecker Forest	Council owned private land	CT WN 324/117	171.6 Ha land area, 130.7 Ha of which is mature radiata pine forest. Located at the end of Kahuterawa Road.
Kahuterawa Reserve	Reserve used for recreation purposes	Lot 1 DP 30200 Lot 2 DP 30200 Lot 4 DP 80726	4.9 Ha of Recreation Reserve adjacent to Kahuterawa Road and Kahuterawa Stream.
Back Track	Legal road		Formed legal roadway used as recreational track from the end of Kahuterawa Road to Scotts Road.
Sledge Track	Legal road		Recreational walking track on legal roadway from end of Kahuterawa Road to Hardings Park.
Hardings Park	Scenic Reserve	Part Sec 2 SO 37039, CT WN 373/131 (pt).	828.7 ha of scenic reserve comprising the southern end of Turitea Reserve. Covered by the Turitea Reserve Management Plan
Kahuterawa Road	Legal road		Public roadway and associated land providing access to private properties and the Kahuterawa road end.
Greens Road	Legal road		Public roadway and associated land providing access to private properties between the Turitea and Kahuterawa Valleys.
Scotts Road	Legal road		Public roadway and associated land providing access to private properties and to Gordon Kear Forest in the head of the Kahuterawa Valley.
Gordon Kear Forest	Council owned private land.	CT 242473 and CT WN 225/68	678.1 ha of land and forest jointly owned by PNCC and Manawatu District Council. 414.1 ha is planted in radiata pine forest, of which 60.5 ha is subject to a six year forestry right. Excludes 66.2 ha in CT 242474 which is no longer owned by Council. Gordon Kear Forest is managed for commercial forestry returns but has some secondary recreational use.

The objective is to provide an integrated plan for the management of PNCC outdoor recreational assets within the Kahuterawa Valley, to ensure they provide maximum benefit for the community within the framework of the Outdoor Recreation Strategy (ORS) and LTCCP (Long Term Council Community Plan).

The Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Area is adjacent to Turitea Reserve and part of Turitea Reserve (Hardings Park) is broadly included in this plan. Where appropriate, the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan needs to take into account the Turitea Reserve Management plan and be compatible with it. The Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan does not override anything in the existing Turitea Reserve Management Plan.

### Process for Plan Development

The following process is being used in developing a Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Management Plan

#### 1. Public notification and provision of information

Public notification – included:

- Mail out to key groups and stakeholders
- Public notice
- Signs at road end.
- Provision of pamphlet summarising key opportunities, issues, constraints; and setting out the plan preparation process being used.
- Call for initial suggestions for management.

#### 2. Run focus groups for key interest areas to identify values, issues and possible solutions.

Focus groups were:

- Non mechanised outdoor recreation (walking, orienteering, running etc)
- Mountain biking
- 4WD & Hunting
- Biodiversity & natural values

- Neighbours

Contact has been made with Iwi groups and work is continuing to obtain Iwi input.

#### 3. Prepare Draft Plan

The draft plan has been prepared and then reviewed by PNCC staff prior to public release.

#### 4. Feedback / submissions on Draft Plan

- Public notice, mail out to stakeholders & call for submissions.
- Direct meetings with some key stakeholders to discuss plan
- Collate submissions

#### 5. Plan Amended and Adopted by Council.

### Structure of the Plan

The Plan is presented in two separate documents:

**Part One:** Goals and Actions: This identifies the goals of management and the specific management actions that will be taken to achieve these goals. The goals and actions identified are based on consideration of the resources and their management context set out in Part Two.

Part One is intended to be referred to day to day in undertaking management of the area.

**Part Two:** Resources and Context: This document identifies the important background of the planning framework of existing legislation and policies, the resources of the area and their local / regional context, and community aspirations for management identified in early consultation. This information is the basis for forming the goals and actions in Part One.

Part Two is an ongoing information resource and referred to for support of the goals and objectives.



## 2. Planning Framework

### 2.1 Legislation

#### Local Government Act 2002

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) identifies the purpose of local government as enabling democratic local decision making for communities and promoting the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the present and future. Under the LGA, the Council is required to facilitate a process of identifying community outcomes, which will focus on the well-being of the community as a whole. The community outcomes then set the framework for the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP). Community outcomes are identified in section 2.2.1.

#### Resource Management Act 1991

The Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) defines the framework for sustainable management of natural and physical resources. The Palmerston North City Council and Horizons Regional Council are given powers to implement the Act including through the preparation of district and regional plans and the granting of resource consents.

Provisions of the RMA must be taken into account in relation to the sustainable management of resources as identified in local district and regional plans. Resource consent will be required for undertaking any activities that are not permitted activities within the Rural Zone under the District Plan. Similarly activities that are controlled under any regional plans will require consent. Plans that are relevant to management of the Kahuterawa area are identified below.

#### Horizons Regional Council

- One Plan (Proposed): Horizons are currently completing consultation on a combined planning document. This document is a combined resource policy statement, regional plan and regional coastal plan. Once adopted, this will become a key document setting the approach to encouraging and controlling sustainable management of resources in the area. The previous Horizons plans, set out below, remain active at present.
- Regional Policy Statement: This document identifies key resource management issues in the Region plus policies and methods to address these. It sets the wider framework for Regional and District Plans and issues that should be considered in issuing resource consents. One particular issue that is identified in this area is that the main range, forming the eastern backdrop to the Kahuterawa Hub, is a regionally significant landscape to be protected.
- Land & Water Regional Plan: This plan became operative in September 2003. It includes rules in relation to vegetation clearance and soil disturbance. Under this plan exotic forest harvesting is a permitted activity unless soil disturbance is occurring within 5m of a waterway greater than 2m in width. In this plan the Kahuterawa Stream is identified as a waterway with important species and habitat due to its use by trout for spawning.
- Manawatu Catchment Water Quality Plan: This plan addresses water quality standards and discharges. The Kahuterawa Stream is classified as a fish spawning stream in this plan. Standards of water quality that must be maintained for fish spawning are set in the plan. These set requirements on changes in sediment, temperature etc that must be avoided.
- Regional Plan for Beds of Rivers & Lakes: Controls operations within stream

beds. Rules would apply to activities such as excavation, modification etc of the Kahuterawa stream bed.

### Palmerston North City District Plan

Woodpecker Forest and the area around the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub are within the Rural Zone under the plan. The majority of the area is classified as Rural Residential. This allows subdivision down to a 1 hectare minimum lot size as a controlled activity. The Back Track and Sledge Track are classified as an unformed road.

The District Plan identifies a variety of rules in relation to the rural zone. Production forestry is a permitted activity, but a variety of performance conditions must be followed including Council notification of planting and harvesting, and planting separation distances from boundaries and some waterways. Community, leisure and tourist facilities are discretionary activities (unrestricted). Consent would be required for any future construction of buildings or structures for this purpose.

Palmerston North City Council are currently undertaking work toward a review of the Rural Zone as part of the upcoming district plan review. This may change the definition and rules relating to this area.

A landscape assessment of the City is currently being completed to provide information to assist with the district plan review.

### Reserves Act 1977

This legislation provides a process to formally declare areas as reserve and classify them for management. Kahuterawa Reserve and Hardings Park are reserves under the Reserves Act. The administering body of a reserve, in this case the PNCC, is required to produce a reserve management plan under the Act. Legal requirements to consider key management issues vary depending on a reserve's classification (either as a recreational, historic, scenic, nature, scientific, government purpose, or local purpose reserve under sections 17 – 23 of the Act).

A management plan is already present for Turitea Reserve, which covers Hardings Park. The Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan does not supersede this plan, rather it is compatible with it and links its management to other areas. Kahuterawa Reserve does not currently have a management plan.

The reserves Act contains a wide range of provisions for dealing with the management of reserves including:

- Preservation of trees and bush
- Grants of easements
- General powers of the administering body (in this case the Palmerston North City Council)
- Leasing powers

### Biosecurity Act 1993

This Act enables regional councils to prepare pest management strategies and to set rules for the control of certain pests plants and animals.

Horizons Regional Council has a current Regional Animal Pest Management Strategy and Regional Plant Pest Management Strategy. Both of these documents are relevant as they refer to animal and plant pests that are present within the area. The strategies set requirements on the control of some plant and animal species by the PNCC as land owner. They also identify control that will be undertaken or may be supported by Horizons Regional Council. The Turitea Reserve, Sledge Track and Back Track are identified by Horizons Regional Council as a high value natural areas. These areas can receive direct assistance from Horizons Regional Council with control of some key pest species (such as possums). Horizons are currently assisting with possum control in Turitea Reserve. There is potential for Horizons involvement with possum control in Sledge Track and Back Track areas.

## 2.2 Current PNCC Planning Documents

### 2.2.1 LTCCP

The Local Government Act 2002 (LGA) introduced a new approach to planning by local authorities. Under the LGA PNCC is required to identify community outcomes – what communities identify are important for their current and future social, economic, environmental and cultural well being. The Council must then develop a long term council community plan (LTCCP) to meet the community outcomes.

A community consultation process, development of community outcomes and preparation of a revised LTCCP was completed by 2006.

The 2006-2016 LTCCP identifies community outcomes, as set out below. The outcomes most relevant to the Kahuterawa Outdoor recreation plan are in bold.

- **People have lots of fun things to do**
- People feel safe
- **Palmerston North is attractive, clean and green**
- Businesses grow here and people have lots of job opportunities
- People have lots of learning opportunities
- People can move easily around Palmerston North
- Palmerston North's infrastructure is reliable
- The community is supportive and people and organisations work together
- **People are well housed and healthy.**

The LTCCP sets out the budgeted spending by Council over a 10 year period on all activities it undertakes. This includes areas such as recreational activities and roading.

### 2.2.2 Natural and Built Environment Policy

A Natural and Built Environment Policy was developed by Council in 2006. The policy is a coordinating document that brings together the diverse range of Council activities that relate to the environmental aspects of sustainable development. The policy includes eight goals to ensure that community outcomes related to the environment are achieved over the next 10 years.

#### These goals are:

1. Stormwater, roading, water and waste infrastructural assets are provided and managed sustainably
2. Palmerston North City Council's statutory environmental obligations are met
3. The resources of tangata whenua are protected and restored
4. Palmerston North City's growth occurs sustainably
5. Palmerston North's natural environment is managed sustainably
6. Palmerston North's built environment is managed sustainably
7. Palmerston North is energy efficient
8. The wider community of Palmerston North takes a leadership role in all aspects of environmental well-being.

### 2.2.3 Leisure Policy

The purpose of Council's Leisure Policy (2006) is to guide the Council's involvement in the provision of leisure opportunities so that it can plan for, and provide, a sustainable level of leisure services for the community. Relevant areas covered by the strategy include parks and reserves and recreation facilities.

Goals relevant to the KORP include:

- **Goal 1:** Palmerston North has a wide range of leisure opportunities. A current action within this is implementation and review of the Outdoor Recreation Strategy.
- **Goal 2:** The Council's recreation facilities are managed sustainably.

### 2.2.4 Recreation Strategy

Work is currently being undertaken by City Future to prepare a Recreation Strategy. This will integrate a wide range of existing documents and initiatives relating to the provision of recreation opportunities in Palmerston North. The provision of outdoor recreation, aquatic facilities and indoor recreation will be addressed. Examination of the Outdoor Recreation Strategy (see section 2.2.5) will be incorporated in this work.

The Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan (KORP) forms a key component of nature based recreation within the Recreation Strategy. Developments in the Recreation Strategy will be taken into account as the KORP is prepared. The KORP will implement the current strategy. Development of the Recreation Strategy will identify the next steps in development. In this way the Recreation Strategy and review of the Outdoor Recreation Strategy will inform future reviews of the KORP.

### 2.2.5 Outdoor Recreation Strategy

An outdoor recreation strategy (ORS) was adopted by Council in 2002. The ORS is the means by which the Council will determine its priorities and guidelines for the provision of outdoor recreation services within the City.

The ORS was produced following consultation with a variety of user groups. It identifies five key objectives. These objectives and a summary of policies and implementation that are relevant to the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub, are set out below.

#### Establishment of an outdoor recreation hub in the Kahuterawa Valley area

**Objective:** To develop the Kahuterawa Valley as an Outdoor Recreation Hub

**Policies:** To develop the Kahuterawa Valley as the main access point for the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub

- To cluster multiuse tracks and facilities in this area
- To establish further scenic reserves in the area
- Develop character and increase public perception of the area
- Mitigate conflict between users of the outdoor recreation facilities.

#### **Methods of implementation:**

High priority

- Re-brand the area and develop formal names for existing facilities
- Provide signage and interpretation
- Investigate measures to mitigate conflict between users.

Medium priority

- Classify unformed portions of Kahuterawa Road (Sledge Track & Back Track) as Reserve. Current zoning as road under the District Plan should be changed to give a more appropriate zoning.

Low priority

- Promote formed legal roads in the area for horse, bicycle and pedestrian use.

#### **Provision of tracks**

**Objective:** To manage existing tracks and provide new tracks and facilities to meet the leisure needs of the community.

***Of particular relevance under this objectives are the following methods of implementation:***

High Priority

- To extend multiuse tracks and public access along the Kahuterawa stream (from the Manawatu River to the Kahuterawa car park).
- Emphasis will be placed on additional track and facility development in the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub.....

Medium Priority

- To encourage the “Back Track Management Committee” to continue to continue administering the Back Track and Sledge Track.

Low Priority

- **Promote** increased use of the Sledge Track

#### **River access**

**Objective:** To maintain and enhance public access to and along rivers.

***Of particular relevance under this objectives are the following methods of implementation:***

High Priority:

- Purchase / acquire esplanade reserves on the edge of rivers or streams.....

Medium Priority

- Develop a multiuse bridle track to link the Manawatu River with the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub. Specifically this may include a track from the end of Hewitts Road to the end of the formation of Kahuterawa Road by Black Bridge (via Kahuterawa Reserve).

#### **Enhanced road end and picnic facilities**

**Objective:** To develop an increased range of road end and picnic facilities, focussing on forest fringe, semi natural settings, with good facilities for picnicking, camping and short walks.

#### **Improved information about recreation opportunities.**

**Objective:** To enable effective and efficient use and development of outdoor recreation facilities in Palmerston North and in the immediate surrounding area through information transfer and distribution.

#### **2.2.6 Recreation Needs Assessment**

A recreation needs assessment (RNA) was completed by Council in 2005. The RNA provides background information on the recreation sector to assist decision making and policy development. The RNA has been adopted by Council as a reference document to support policy development.

The RNA provides a range of information that is useful in developing appropriate management for the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub. Information on national and local recreational participation levels and demographic trends is provided. This will be relevant to the type of activities and facilities that are developed at Kahuterawa.

Particular areas in the RNA of relevance to planning for the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub are mainly in relation to Pathways. The main findings identified in relation to pathways include suggestions that Council should:

- Form a master plan for walkways development
- Support the development of major pathways.
- Support the Te Araroa Project.
- Continue work to develop the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub.

The underdevelopment of the City's riverside recreation is identified. Recreation associated with the Kahuterawa Stream is potentially an extension of this.

### 2.2.7 Draft Strategy for the Turitea Valley – Turitea & Environs Working Group

The Turitea and Environs Working Group was established in April 2000 as a community led, Council supported initiative, following letters and a deputation from concerned residents to the Council. The key purpose of the group was "To develop a widely supported long term strategy for the area using an inclusive process which addresses the issues associated with the Turitea Valley." The Draft Strategy includes objectives and actions in relation to five goal areas:

- Farming
- Forestry
- Natural Environment
- Recreation
- Managed Development

Though it was prepared for the Turitea Valley, the Strategy includes a wide range of objectives and proposed actions that are likely to be relevant to the management of the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub, including

- maintaining and enhancing native vegetation
- identifying and protecting landscape characteristics with strong amenity value
- improving pest and weed control
- minimising fire risk
- encouraging safe and acceptable forest harvesting
- providing for recreational access and **facilities**

Consultation on the Draft Strategy identified general support for proposals in relation to protecting the natural environment and expressed concern that the Council should act as role model on land it owns.

This Strategy was adopted by Council in July 2002, with actions being undertaken subject to future funding through the Annual Plan Process.

### 2.2.8 Greening Strategy

Greening the City, protecting the City's ecological areas, and improving associated recreational use of these natural areas have been key issues raised by the community. Environment Network Manawatu, an umbrella organisation of the City's environmental groups, identified the need for an overarching strategy to coordinate activities that contribute to greening of the City. This has led to a Council-community initiative to prepare a greening strategy for the City.

A Greening Strategy was approved by Council in 2006. This Strategy is a non-regulatory approach to addressing biodiversity issues in the Palmerston North City area, and contributes to both the National Biodiversity Strategy and the Regional Biodiversity Strategy. While biodiversity is seen as the main focus for this Strategy, it also recognises that recreation and amenity objectives also contribute to greening the City and need to be encompassed in this Strategy.

### Aims set out in the Strategy are:

- Increase the health and extent of native biodiversity in Palmerston North City area.
- Increase the extent of greening for amenity purposes in the City – particularly in the urban area.
- Improve the range of opportunities for people to experience the natural environment while minimising impacts on that environment

### The goals stated within the Strategy are:

1. Restoration and enhancement: To increase the health and extent of native biodiversity.
2. Corridor development: To develop an interlinking network of corridors throughout the City area that connect key places and spaces.
3. Experiencing the natural environment: Improve the range of opportunities to experience the natural environment while minimising impacts.
4. Amenity and beautification: To enhance the amenity of the City by increasing planting in order to create “green” cityscapes.

A summary of the relationship of the Interim Greening Strategy to other Council planning documents is provided in the figure below

#### 2.2.9 Ecological Processes in Palmerston North City

As part of the process of developing a Greening Strategy, the Council commissioned a report on ecological processes in the City. This report was completed in June 2002 and identified broad “ecodomains” within the City and prepared an initial database of significant ecological areas.

The report makes a range of recommendations, as set out below. Some of these recommendations have direct relevance to management of the Kahuterawa area.

### Summary of Recommendations:

#### 1. Restoration Strategies:

- Develop a generic reserves ecological management plan.
- Investigate “mountains to city” corridor with integrated walkways development
- Management plans to integrate animal and plant pest priorities, with Horizons Regional Council, paying particular attention to protecting the Turitea and northern rata habitats.
- Gordon Kear forest to be managed in support of its biodiversity and ecological values. (Note that the inclusion of Woodpecker Block as an outdoor recreation resource adds a new dimension to this, which now has to be considered in the future planning of the area).
- Develop a priority list for corridor restoration in the floodplain on the Manawatu River in collaboration with the Manawatu District Council.
- Pay special attention to all depleted eco-domains (river/stream beds, wetland habitats) for restoration.

2. Policy development and guidelines to protect ecological areas against fragmentation and work towards a desired environmental vision.

3. Develop landscape management guidelines to protect both urban and rural distinctive values.

4. Undertake systematic monitoring and assessment of current ecological values and states to provide an accurate database for further action.

The report strongly supports the continuation of the Green Corridors programme.

The report identified a number of “ecological areas” around the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub including a number of sites in the Kahuterawa Stream, Bush in the “Kahuterawa Gully” and Hardings Park.

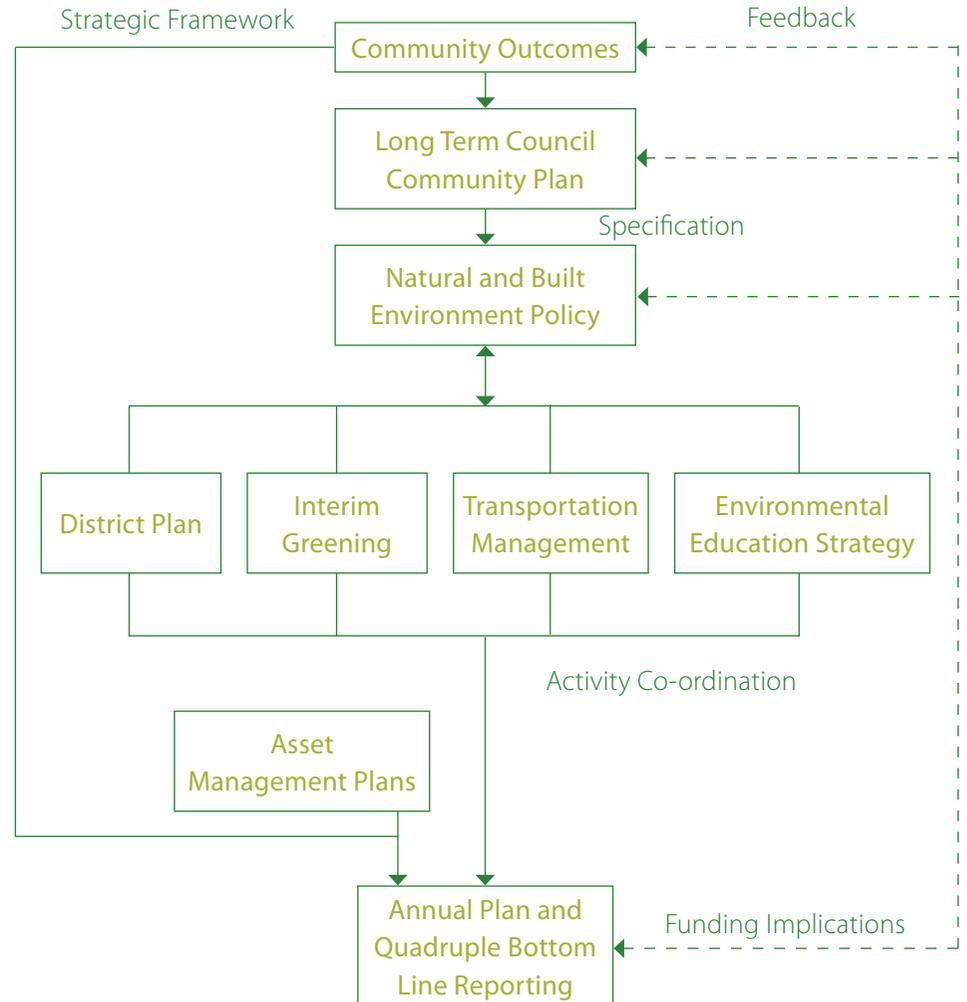
### 2.2.10 Landscape Assessment Study

A landscape assessment study of the Rural Zone is currently being completed. This work is being undertaken to assist with the District Plan review. The landscape assessment study may provide further information to consider in preparing the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan.

### 2.2.11 Green Corridors

The green corridors project was established by the Council in 1999. The Green Corridors Working Group promotes the development of corridors of protected open space for conservation and/or recreation, following natural features such as streams. The main current initiative is the Turitea Stream Green Corridor project which aims to develop a corridor from the Turitea Reserve to the Manawatu River. The Kahuterawa Stream also offers opportunities for green corridor development.

Figure: Relationship of Interim Greening Strategy to other Council planning documents.



# 3. Physical Environment

## Topography

Altitude varies from 150 m above sea level at Black Bridge to around 340 m at the junction of the Back Track and Scotts Road and up to 767m at the summit of Arawaru, the highest point in the area at the southern end of Harding's Park.

Slopes generally rise steeply from the Kahuterawa Stream onto broad spurs and ridges. Areas of rolling terrain occur on the upper areas of Woodpecker Forest and through to Gordon Kear Forest. The head of the Kahuterawa Stream around the area of Gordon Kear Forest contains some easier country in headwaters basins. Steep slopes are present in the headwaters of Ross Creek and Quartz Creek, in and around Harding's Park.

## Climate

Exposure and altitude have a major impact on local climate. Stronger winds, cooler temperatures and less sun are experienced at higher altitudes in Hardings Park and the upper slopes of Gordon Kear Forest.

Information from Esler 1978 suggests that rainfall is likely to increase from around 1200-1400mm per annum on lower slopes around Black Bridge, up to around 2000mm around Arawaru and the main range. Cloud also increases with altitude. Palmerston North experiences around 1800 sunshine hours / annum, while sunshine hours on the upper slopes of Hardings Park are likely to be more like 1400 per annum.

Areas around Black Bridge, the lower Back Track and lower slopes of Woodpecker Forest are relatively sheltered from prevailing winds. However exposure to wind increases greatly on ridge tops and toward the main Tararua range. The summits of Woodpecker Forest are exposed and exotic forest shows poor form. Upper slopes of Gordon Kear Forest, Hardings Park and toward the summit of Arawaru increase greatly in their exposure to strong persistent winds.

## Geology and Soils

Greywacke hills dominate the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Area. Level to rolling areas around the crests of some of these hills represent an old peneplain surface. Loess, Greywacke erosion debris and volcanic ash lie quite deep in places (Esler 1978).

At the mouth of the Kahuterawa Valley, around the area of Greens Road, there is a junction between the greywacke hills and terraces to the west. These terraces are comprised of sandstone and gravel.

Soils of the area are formed from greywacke on the steeper parts or greywacke with the addition of loess and volcanic ash on the gentler topography. The stepland soils are shallow and stony. The soils on easier slopes are deeper and more friable but moderately to strongly leached and fairly acid (Esler 1978).

The key resources associated with Woodpecker Forest and the associated areas around the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub are outlined below. Their importance in the city / region and any management constraints or threats are identified.

# 4. Important Resources

## 4.1 Water

### Resource

The Kahuterawa catchment was historically considered as a water supply catchment for Palmerston North. It has a variety of important water resource values. These include:

- Good native fish species biodiversity
- Trout spawning stream for lower Manawatu River
- Recreational fishing values
- Management within the catchment is likely to be important to Important to flood control in lower catchment areas, particularly with growth in lifestyle properties.
- Swimming in the stream is important over summer, requiring a high quality water resource.
- The stream is sometimes canoed from Scotts Road (Gordon Kear Forest) when it is in flood.

### City / Regional context:

The Kahuterawa Stream is important to the City in relation to:

- Recreational use over summer for swimming.
- Diversity of native fish species.
- Recreational fishery resource for Palmerston North.
- Downstream relationship to property – particularly lifestyle properties.
- One of major waterways within the City

It has a regional importance in terms of its significance as a trout spawning stream for the lower Manawatu River and the diversity of native fish species present.

### Management Constraints / Threats

Management constraints and threats that need to be considered include:

- Nutrient input from upper catchment, particularly farming operations, could cause problems.
- Sediment from farming and forestry operations, particularly roading, could reduce water quality and impact on native fish and trout spawning.
- Changes in water yield with harvest of exotic forest could have an impact on water yield and flood control. However, this is likely to be minor due to the relatively small portion of the overall catchment that is in exotic forest.
- Impacts of browsing animals on vegetation and consequently soil stability could impact on water quality.
- Possible impacts on water quality during road upgrade operations, particularly Kahuterawa Road.

### Management actions available

These include:

- Careful management of exotic forest harvesting operations to avoid soil & water impacts.
- Control of possums and deer to improve quality of indigenous vegetation cover.
- Working with landowners to develop riparian protection and minimize soil erosion and nutrient impacts.
- Careful planning and undertaking of public road upgrade and maintenance operations.

## 4.2 Indigenous Biodiversity

### 4.2.1 Indigenous Vegetation

#### History of vegetation

Podocarp / broadleaf forest is likely to have been the original vegetation cover on the flatter areas of the headwaters basin from Woodpecker Forest south. This forest would have been comprised of emergent rimu with some kahikatea, totara and pukatea. It is likely that kamahi and tawa made up the majority of the forest canopy.

On the steeper gully faces it is likely that a mixture of northern rata / kamahi forest and tawa forest occurred.

Vegetation clearance by European settlers occurred during the early 1990s. This was concentrated on the easier country in the lower valley and headwaters basin. Logging also occurred from the early 1900s with occasional logs still being removed up to the 1960s.

Vegetation over considerable areas in the upper headwaters, including Hardings Park has not been cleared. Small remnant areas on steeper and wetter areas of the valley sides have also remained.

Introduction of deer and possums from the early 1900s has had a major impact on the vulnerable rata / kamahi forest that was once abundant in the valley. Possum populations are likely to have peaked around the 1940s. Damage by possum browsing is likely to have been the major cause of canopy collapse across rata kamahi forests throughout the local area and the virtual removal of northern rata.

#### Current Indigenous Vegetation

Indigenous vegetation remains across significant areas of the upper catchment, including Hardings Park where it has never been cleared. Areas of this forest that originally supported rata / kamahi forest have suffered canopy collapse during the 1940s and now commonly consist of occasional emergent podocarps with a low canopy of predominantly pepperwood (*Pseudowintera* species), mixed shrub hardwoods such as mahoe and tree ferns. Where tawa was more dominant in the original canopy, the forest has remained more intact and consists of occasional emergent podocarps over a tawa canopy.

Some of the native vegetation within the legal road area of the Back Track and adjacent private land contains areas of tawa forest and occasional podocarps that were not cleared during European settlement.

Northern rata is almost extinct in the catchment. A single tree is present in Ross Creek. There may be other occasional individuals remaining.

Small areas of kamahi remain along the Sledge Track, Back Track and in Gordon Kear Forest. These are some of the last remaining areas of Kamahi in the district. These stands are generally in poor condition with dead trees common.

The Kahuterawa Hub area contains the distinctive native understorey species Paritaniwha (*Elatostema rugosum*). This species is conspicuous along areas of both the Sledge Track and Back Track.

Significant areas of regenerating native vegetation are present. These are most common in the steep gully areas around the Kahuterawa Stream and Back Track.

PNCC has recently completed work in conjunction with the landowner neighbouring the Sledge Track to fence and covenant the strip of forest remnant and regeneration extending from Ross Greek to Black Bridge (approximately 3km in total).

#### 4.2.2 Indigenous Fauna

Some early information on fauna present in the area is provided below. This is incomplete as survey information is limited.

##### Birds

A small amount of bird survey work undertaken around the headwaters of the Kahuterawa catchment showed relatively low native bird abundance and diversity compared to the catchment areas of Turitea Reserve. Indigenous bird species recorded and their relative frequency are shown in the table below.

Species	% occurrence at count stations		Notes
	Gordon Kear Forest*	Turitea Reserve**	
Grey warbler	78	87	* : Count stations are in native forest on upper slopes of Gordon Kear Forest and on adjacent DOC land. A total of 50 count stations.  **: Count stations are in Turitea Catchment. A total of 127 count stations.
Bellbird	52	84	
Whitehead	6	67	
Tomtit	58	50	
Silvereye	24	32	
Fantail	16	23	
Tui	6	10	
Rifleman	2	10	
Kingfisher	12	9	
Kereru	2	3	

Mixed pine forest and regenerating native vegetation areas in and around Woodpecker Forest support predominantly insectivorous bird species including whitehead, fantail, grey warbler and tomtit.

Presence of a matrix of different vegetation types within the area - from mature forest, second growth, pine forest, to pasture etc means there is a diversity of habitat and potentially rich resources for a range of bird species. Presence of predators such as rats, possums and stoats is likely to be the limiting factor.

##### Snails

The large carnivorous land snail *Powelliphanta traversi* / *tararuaensis* is present in the Woodpecker Forest, Back Track and Sledge Track areas. This species is very localised in its distribution and is nationally endangered.

##### Aquatic

The Kahuterawa Stream has been identified as supporting a good diversity of native fish species.

##### City / Regional context:

- The area is important to the City as an extensive area of reasonable quality native vegetation that can be accessed by the public.
- The area is regionally important in relation to the presence of:
  - Kamahi forest remnants
  - *Powelliphanta traverse tararuaensis* snails (Nationally endangered)
  - Biodiversity of native fish species
- Horizons Regional Council have identified the Sledge Track, Back Track, and Hardings Park as high value natural areas.

## Management Constraints / Threats

A range of threats and management constraints are present, these include:

- Possum impacts on important kamahi remnants. Kamahi is currently under serious threat from possum damage.
- Browsing animal impacts on vegetation (possums and deer)
- Predator impacts on native birds and on snails
- Spread or introduction of goats
- Damage to vegetation from harvesting of exotic forest (but can be minimized)
- Impacts of sediment from forest harvesting and pastoral farming on native fish species habitat
- Introduction and spread of weeds is an ongoing problem. Species such as gorse, and montbretia are present down the waterway, having spread from farmed areas upstream. Tradescantia is present around the Kahuterawa road end. Dumping of domestic garden rubbish and spread from upstream areas will mean weeds are an ongoing threat.
- Fire is a threat, particularly on any drier north facing slopes. Increased recreational use will increase the fire risk.
- Localised damage to biodiversity resources could result from road upgrade and from uncontrolled development of recreational tracks.

## Management actions available

These include:

- Control of possums
- Ongoing recreational hunting of deer in the upper catchment
- Contract hunting of goats.
- Working with Horizons Regional Council to control pest animals and weeds – particularly those in areas such as the Sledge Track and Back Track that are classified as high value natural areas.
- Monitoring of indigenous flora and fauna, and pest populations.
- Mapping of weed distribution in the area.
- Control and eradication of key high risk weeds where possible.
- Predator control and other management to protect snail populations.
- Working with neighbours to control pests and weeds and avoid any new introductions.
- Establishing low fire risk vegetation around areas of high public use.

## 4.3 Exotic Plantation Forest

### Resource

Woodpecker Forest			Gordon Kear Forest		
Compartment	Planted	Area	Compartment	Planted	Area
1	1975	3.4	2	1977	30.8
2	1975	20.2	3	1978	72.9
3	1976	5.7	4	1979	69.2
4	1976	4.1	5	1980	25.8
5	1976	18.7	6	1980	43.2
6	1976	16.3	7	1980	21.6
7	1978	15	8	1979	59.3
7a	1978	4.3	9	1982	26.7
8	1978	43	10	1983	10
		130.7	11	1984	4.2
			12	1989	8
			13	1990	7.4
			14	1994	8
			Total		327.8

Woodpecker forest is generally unpruned and has been thinned to waste to produce structural timber.

54.7 hectares in compartment 1 of Gordon Kear Forest are now owned by Forest Endowment Ltd. In addition, a cutting right over the 59.3 hectares of compartment 8 is owned by Forest Endowment Ltd until 2012.

Gordon Kear is majority owned by PNCC with a smaller share held by Manawatu District Council.

Cutting right sold until 2012

Gordon Kear Forest is predominantly high pruned. Some small areas that are very exposed with poor form have not been pruned.

### The Forest Exchange

Following negotiations during 2004 an exchange of land and forest was agreed between Palmerston North City Council and Woodpecker Holdings Ltd. This transferred ownership of forest and land at Woodpecker Forest to PNCC. In return, Woodpecker Holdings Ltd received ownership of forest and land covering Compartment 1 of Gordon Kear Forest and ownership of standing forest in Compartment 8 of Gordon Kear Forest under a 6 year cutting right.

Final legal exchange of property was completed in 2006.

### Other Forest Areas

Other significant exotic forest areas are present on private land in the catchment above black bridge. These include approximately 40.5 hectares planted between 1978 and 1986 that is adjacent to the upper Back Track area and approximately 140 hectares planted between 1995 and 2003 between Gordon Kear and Woodpecker Forests.

### City / Regional Context

Total area of radiata pine forest in the Palmerston North City District is estimated from the National Exotic Forest Description 2001 as 1,868 hectares. The age class is weighted to older ages, with 1,060 hectares in the 24-28 age class and 166 ha in the 29-33 age class.

Woodpecker Forest has a total stocked area of 130 ha so makes up around 7% of the exotic forest in the district. Gordon Kear forest has a total stocked area of 449 ha and makes up 24% of the district resources. The Turitea plantations owned by

Council make up around 8% of the resource in the district. The Council forests make up a major share of the older forests in the district.

The Palmerston North District is small in terms of forest area within the larger Southern North Island wood supply region. This region runs from New Plymouth to Rangitikei, to Taranaki and includes all territorial authorities below this in the southern north island. Within this region, Palmerston North makes up only around 1% of the planted area.

The Woodpecker Forest is significant in Palmerston North, but relatively minor in terms of the larger wood supply region. There is potential for the Council to jointly examine the harvesting and marketing of wood from Woodpecker, Turitea and Gordon Kear Forests to smooth income and potentially increase market interest.

The two Council owned forests within the scope of the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Area have different management objectives which will need to be incorporated in wider planning for the area. Woodpecker Forest has been identified as a forest area where outdoor recreational use will be very important. Motivation behind Council undertaking a forest exchange to obtain this area has been the ability to build on a concentration of recreational facilities around the Kahuterawa Road end. Management for timber production in this forest will need to avoid significant adverse affect on outdoor recreation.

Gordon Kear Forest was established to provide a financial return to Palmerston North City Council and Manawatu District Council. This forest area needs to be managed to obtain the maximum financial return. Any recreational use of this forest will need to be managed so that it does not impact on management of the forest for timber production and in any way reduce financial return.

### **Threats / Management Constraints.**

Major constraints in Woodpecker Forest are wind and fire

Wind: The level of ongoing wind exposure in Woodpecker Forest varies. Forest areas on the upper / southern boundary are exposed and have particularly poor

form. Level of wind exposure generally reduces with drop in altitude. The mature age of the forest means it is likely to be increasingly at risk from windthrow. Very wet conditions and storm winds in early 2004 resulted in small patches of wind damage, particularly in wet gully areas of Woodpecker Forest (see picture below). Careful consideration of wind risks and the potential for damage to recreational and timber resources will be required. Consideration also needs to be given to the possibility of having to rapidly harvest wind damaged areas after a major storm event.

Fire: The presence of recreational users increases the risk of fire in this forest area during low rainfall periods. The presence of the main public access from Kahuterawa Road at the base of the northerly facing slope increases fire risk. A fire starting in this area could spread rapidly uphill through the forest, particularly under a prevailing northwest wind.

### **Management actions available**

These include:

- Harvesting to remove wind risk from this mature forest.
- Developing an appropriate harvest plan that allows harvesting without significant impact on recreation.
- Careful species choice and management in the second rotation to provide a forest that is appealing and easy to manage in conjunction with recreational use. That will have less wind risk.
- Re establishing sensitive and difficult to manage areas, such as steep slopes above Kahuterawa Stream, in native forest.
- **Public** education about fire risks
- Developing a salvage plan to allow rapid response to recover logs if a major windthrow event occurs.
- Establishing low fire risk vegetation around areas of high public use and in key ignition areas.

## 4.4 Landscape

### Resource

The Kahuterawa Hub area is classified as having a Rural / Conservation landscape character under the 2002 update of landscape zones by Boffa Miskell. Important aspects of the landscape in this area include:

- Major valley systems
- Open connection to the main Tararua Range in the south.
- Large intact ecological areas
- Large areas of natural forest cover
- Pattern of pasture, exotic forest and natural forest.
- Current high landscape values

A landscape assessment of this area of the City is currently being completed. The results of this assessment will need to be taken into account as they become available.

### City / Regional context:

The area is important to the City as a high quality rural and conservation landscape within easy reach of the city population. The 2002 update of landscape zones by Boffa Miskell identified that maintenance of current high landscape values should be a goal of management.

The adjacent skyline of the Tararua Ranges is important to the Region and is identified as a landscape to be protected in the Horizons Regional Council, Regional Policy Statement.

### Management Constraints / Threats

Threats to landscape values in the area may include:

- Inappropriate rural residential development
- Exotic forest planting boundaries that are not sympathetic to the landscape
- Impact of structures such as wind turbines.
- Management actions available

These include:

- Wider consideration within other Council processes of the impacts and appropriateness of subdivision and wind turbines.
- Careful planning of any forest harvest, tracking etc to minimise landscape impacts.

## 4.5 Recreation

### Resource

#### History of use

Recreational use of the area has been important for many years, but has grown significantly in recent times with the development of additional facilities.

The Back Track was used for motorised recreation prior to its closure to vehicles due to an unsafe bridge. Gates were installed at each end of the track in 2001 to permanently exclude vehicles.

Mountain bike tracks have been developed in Woodpecker Forest over the last decade. These tracks are ridden down hill and provide a loop from the top of the Back Track. This allows riders to ride up the easy grade of the Back Track, then return down the forest tracks to Kahuterawa Road end.

From around 2000 development of the Sledge Track was begun by a group of volunteers led by Ian Argyle. The aim was to construct a track along the route of a legal road beside the Kahuterawa Stream that would eventually give access to Hardings Park. In 2002 classification of the Turitea Reserve was undertaken. This classified Hardings Park as scenic reserve with open public access. A management plan for Turitea Reserve was subsequently completed and approved in January 2004.

Car parking and toilet facilities were provided at the end of Kahuterawa Road by Council in 2002, and the Sledge Track was officially opened by the Prime Minister in April 2003.

A brief outline of the current recreational uses in the area is set out below.

### Mountain biking

Mountain biking use of the area has developed informally. Tracks through the Woodpecker Forest area were developed without the formal approval of the previous forest owners.

A 1998 study of mountain biking by Massey University researchers (Mason & Leberman 1998) found that the Kahuterawa area and Scotts Road / Gordon Kear Forest were two of the favourite tracks in the Manawatu Area. These met the preferred requirements, identified as:

- Forested – native or plantation
- Undulating single track
- A mix of physical and technical challenge (slopes of varying gradients and locations requiring gear changes).
- 2-3 hours duration.

A survey of Kahuterawa recreational users was undertaken as part of an undergraduate student project in 1999 (Kai Crow 1999). This survey involved leaving a short questionnaire and drop box at the road end for four weeks in May 1999. Questionnaires were received from users who chose to fill them in and leave them in the drop box. There are range of potential problems with this survey and it is not well reported. It can not be considered as robust information, but provides some indication of usage at that time.

A total of 493 responses were received for the month. A total of 39% of these users were mountain bikers. Around 50% of these mountain bikers reported using the area once a week or more.

The area is popular with the local Manawatu Mountain Bike Club (MMBC). Club members have been largely responsible for developing tracks in the forest area. The club currently has approximately 100 members and has been steadily growing over recent years. The club hosted a round of the national cross country racing competition in April 2005 and again in February 2008. This involved around 200 competitors for each event. National organisers were pleased with the event and received positive feedback from competitors.

The MMBC undertake occasional working bees on the Back Track and tracks through Woodpecker Forest. Both cross country and down hill tracks have been marked in the forest. Down hill tracks are designed for riding on specialist downhill mountain bikes. These bikes are not designed for uphill riding, users generally push bikes to the top of runs.

### Hunting

Hunting is allowed under permit in Hardings Park. This is administered as part of the hunting permit system for the Turitea Reserve. Hunters generally access this area from the water catchment access track – bringing vehicles in from South Range Road.

Hunters can also obtain a permit to travel through Gordon Kear Forest to the Tararua Forest Park. Hunting is not permitted in Gordon Kear Forest.

### Walking

Prior to development of the Sledge Track, walkers used the back track. This track is still popular with walkers. Walkers sometimes return to the Kahuterawa Road end via the mountain bike tracks through Woodpecker Forest.

Since the opening of the Sledge track and links to open public access in Hardings Park, opportunities for walkers have increased. This has been further enhanced by the opening of the Te Araroa Trail which traverses Turitea Road – Greens Road – Kahuterawa Road – Back Track – Scotts Road – Gordon Kear – then south through Tararua Forest Park.

The survey by Kai Crow (1999) indicates that around 38% of users over a 1 month period in May 1999 were walkers. This gives a total of around 190 walkers per month. Around 30% of walkers were on their first visit and 30% had not visited for 6 months or more.

Track counts for the Sledge Track are shown below. There is some doubt how effectively the counter was working. Counts of around 500 – 700 per month are shown over most months in 2003. A peak occurred during April and May 2003, associated with opening of the track in April 2003. The counter failed during 2004, but is now being re-installed.

Results from the track counter on the Sledge Track are provided in the table below. The counter became unreliable from the end of 2003 and counts are not available. A new counter will be installed once the track above Argyles Rocks is re-opened.

Track Counter Results: Sledge Track		
Month	2002	2003
January		522
February		642
March		550
April		2,500
May		1,790
June		658
July		643
August		967
September		538
October	760	746
November	277	486
December	106	1,211
<b>Year</b>	<b>1,143</b>	<b>11,253</b>

It is likely that there has been a significant increase in use of the area by walkers. However this may have been offset by the more recent closure of the upper section of the Sledge Track.

Walking is identified in the recent Council Recreation Needs Assessment as having one of the highest participation rates for sport in New Zealand. There has been a trend of increased participation in walking. Walking is also a high participation activity for older people. The aging population means that demand for walkways is likely to increase.

### Running

Runners use the Kahuterawa area. Most running is likely to be on the Back Track. Kai Crow (1999) found that 6% of respondents in May 1999 were runners. A total of around 30 in the month.

### Fishing

The Kahuterawa Stream is principally significant as a spawning stream that supports the lower Manawatu River brown trout fishery. However, some recreational fishing for brown trout is undertaken in the stream. The stream holds small numbers of some good sized brown trout. It is likely that usage is in the order of 50 angler days per year. The area is important as an area where a feeling of remoteness can be obtained at a site very close to the City (Peter Taylor – Fish & Game pers comm.)

### Picnicking

Picnicking around the Kahuterawa Stream is popular. This is likely to occur predominantly over summer, and often in conjunction with swimming. Kai Crow (1999) found that 5% of respondents in May 1999 were picnicking.

Sites that are apparently most frequently used for picnicking are Kahuterawa Reserve, adjacent to the Kahuterawa Stream, around Black Bridge and also at a swimming hole several hundred metres upstream from Black Bridge.

### Swimming

A number of swimming holes are present around Black Bridge and also upstream from Black Bridge.

### Motorised Recreation - 4WD and Trailbike

4WD Users access tracks along broad ridge tops at the top of Woodpecker Forest. These areas are accessed off the end of Scotts Road. A variety of “bog holes” have developed and are apparently used by drivers to test their skills. Use of this area has developed informally – without the formal approval of the previous private owners. There is apparently occasional use of this upper area of Woodpecker Forest by trailbikers

Gordon Kear Forest is used occasionally for organized events by 4WD clubs. These groups obtain a permit from PNCC for individual events.

Consultation undertaken with 4WD clubs in preparing the 2002 Outdoor Recreation Strategy identified the Back Track / Scotts Road and Gordon Kear Forest as key areas that were used. Groups identified that they only used sites in the Palmerston North area approximately once every 2 months. The table to the right shows the type of preferences four wheel drivers have.

## Preferences of Four Wheel Drivers

Setting/ Experience Attributes	Novice Family-type 4WDs (about 40% of participants)	Experienced Family-type 4WDs (about 40% of participants)	Specialised off-road 4WDs (about 20% of participants)
Preferred Activity features	A sense of isolation is important. Views, scenery, historical interest and social contact are important attributes. Moderate technical challenge and skill development are important	Technical difficulty and skill development are the most important attributes. Social contact is also important	
Preferred Driving and Track Features	Prefer well-groomed main tracks with a few technical challenges but no significant risk	Prefer >single = tracks of moderate difficulty in generally good condition, with some elements of risk and excitement.	Prefer less well developed, rough > single= tracks.
Landscape preferences	Native forest is preferred. High vantage points (for views) are important.		
Social encounter Attribute Preferences	Generally very tolerant of other users. Drivers tend to be willing to assist other users in difficulty and in accident situations, (many local four wheel drive clubs are affiliated to Search and Rescue organisations). Most leaders will advise other users of how many individuals are following behind. Socialising with other users is enjoyed.		

### City / Regional context:

Current recreation opportunities around the Kahuterawa Hub form an key local resource for the City of Palmerston North. The proximity of the area to the City and the range of walking, mountain biking, picnicking and other opportunities present make it a very important area. Consultation around the preparation of the ORS found that the Kahuterawa Valley was used by all outdoor recreation groups including walkers and trampers, mountain bikers and motorised vehicle user groups.

The development of the ORS has raised the importance of Kahuterawa area – making the development of clustered outdoor recreation facilities at the Kahuterawa Hub a key objective.

Mountain biking opportunities around the “Kahuterawa Loop” (Back Track and Woodpecker Forest) are likely to have a regional significance – being accessed and used by people from around the region.

The potential development of the Te Araroa Trail through the Kahuterawa Valley would raise the importance of the area.

### Management Constraints / Threats

Important management constraints and threats to recreational activity that occur around the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub include

- Conflict between users, particularly between walkers and mountain bikers and between motorised recreation and other users.
- The cost and difficulty of maintaining recreational facilities in the area.
- User conflict and safety issues on the main access roads.
- Over development and over use impacting on the recreational experience.
- Litter and vandalism

- Exotic forest windthrow and fire create risks for recreation. An increase in the number of windthrown trees will reduce the appeal of the forest area for recreation.
- Conflict with neighbouring landuses e.g. – farming and dogs.

### **Management actions available**

These include:

- Separation of recreational activities so conflicting activities occur at different places and/or times.
- Provision of Information, signage etc
- Design of tracks and other facilities for low / easy maintenance.
- Development of exotic forest management approach that minimises issues from windthrow etc and maximises recreational appeal.
- Developing a variety of “start points” for recreational users to spread use.
- Working with neighbours to design and locate recreation activities to avoid problems.
- Working with neighbours to encourage their involvement in the supply of facilities for recreational users.

## 4.6 Wind Energy

### Resource

Higher elevation sites around the Kahuterawa Valley are likely to provide similar wind conditions to other areas around the City where wind generation is being undertaken or considered. Resource consent has recently been sought for the "Motorimu" windfarm on ridgelines west and south west of the Kahuterawa road end.

### City / Regional context:

Expansion of a range of wind power sites around the City and the ongoing development of infrastructure associated with these means that sites around the Kahuterawa Hub have become attractive for future development.

### Management Constraints / Threats

- Development of wind turbines around the area could potentially create a conflict with recreational activities that require a sense of remoteness.
- There is a need to consider fauna impacts from any turbine developments.

### Management actions available

These include:

- Wider consideration within other Council processes of the impacts and appropriateness of wind turbines in this area.

## 4.7 Cultural and Historic

### Resource

Kahuterawa Valley Road was first formed in 1890 as a six foot track suitable for sledges (Argyle 1984). The Road was completed to end of Scotts Road and upgraded for wagons and drays by 1900.

The Woodpecker forest area was originally known by Europeans as Mt Spires (Argyle 1984)

Forest was cleared from the area around Black Bridge from the early 1900s and the area settled. A sawmill operated in the headwaters of the Kahuterawa Valley from 1903 – 1914.

Hardings Park contains the remains of experimental platinum mines. These consist of a number of vertical and horizontal shafts on Platinum Ridge in Hardings Park. There is an interesting history around the discovery of traces of platinum in the area following exploration in 1875, a flurry of activity between around 1906 and 1920 and subsequent abandonment of the area.

The Tararua Range is identified by Rangitaane as their mountains. They acknowledge and link back to these mountains. The different trees and birds of the area were seasonal food sources for Rangitaane that they would move around following and collecting. Rangitaane have an important relationship with the area as kaitiaki. Habitation by Rangitaane is likely to have been temporary, associated with travel and food gathering.

The Kahuterawa Hub has a well documented history of European settlement, farming and sawmilling.

### City / Regional context:

There are no important cultural or historic sites in the area identified in the District Plan.

Sites are present that have a general significance to the European history of Palmerston North. This includes the history of European settlement, early agriculture and sawmilling, The presence of sites of early mineral exploration is also interesting.

The area has regional significance to Tangata Whenua as an area that was travelled through and was an area of food gathering and refuge.

### Management Constraints / Threats

Protection of existing sites from disturbance and identifying any additional sites that require protection is important.

A partnership will need to be developed with Tangata Whenua to ensure appropriate identification, and protection / management of sites of importance to them.

There need to be contingencies for protecting any new sites that are discovered during management operations or by users of the area. This can be achieved through application of an accidental discovery protocol.

### Management actions available

These include:

- Working with Tangata Whenua to ensure important sites and resources are recognized.
- Develop an accidental discovery protocol for sites discovered by recreational users or during operations such as track development or forest harvesting.
- Identifying and protecting important sites related to European settlement.

## 4.8 Access

### Resource

#### Kahuterawa Road

Kahuterawa Road is approximately 10km long from the turn off with old west road. The last 3km is unsealed. The road is a narrow winding rural road. Portions of the road, particularly between Kahuterawa Reserve and black bridge are one lane.

A small amount of traffic counter data is available for the road, as set out in the table below.

Traffic Counter Results		
Location	Date	Count (average vehicles /day)
Just above intersection with Old West Road	May 2004	370
Approximately 500m above Old West Road	June 2004	180
Just below intersection with Greens Road	July 2003	151

With the development of the Sledge Track and facilities at the Kahuterawa Road end, and development of lifestyle properties, it is likely that use of the road has increased considerably.

Programmed maintenance for the road is scheduled in the LTCCP. This is likely to involve ongoing improvement of key areas of the road for safety. Some early design work on the last section of sealed road and consultation with residents was undertaken in November 2005.

#### Scotts Road

Scotts Road is approximately 12km long. The first 4.6km is relatively straight and sealed. The remaining 7.4km is unsealed with significant sections which are little more than one lane. The quality of the road and stability of the road formation deteriorates over the section between Gordon Kear Forest and Woodpecker Forest. At this point Scotts road becomes the Back Track and is closed to vehicles.

Upgrade of the road for use by logging trucks was completed in 2005. This involved cutting back some banks and widening corners. Some widening of the lower sealed section was also undertaken.

Significant areas of forest are established on Scotts Road and harvest of the Gordon Kear Forest began in March 2007.

#### City / Regional context

Kahuterawa road provides an important local access to lifestyle and farming properties and for recreational use to access the Kahuterawa Road end.

Scotts Road provides important lifestyle property and farming access on the lower sections. Upper sections provide access predominantly for forestry operations and farming. There is also some recreational access use of the road. This includes:

- Sightseeing
- hunters travelling through Gordon Kear Forest to the DOC estate
- 4WD users accessing Woodpecker Forest, or occasionally entering Gordon Kear Forest under permit.
- Occasional access by canoeists to the Kahuterawa during high flow.

These roads are important in a the City in offering the potential to achieve separation of major forestry and recreational road use. The primary demand

on Scotts Road is currently for forestry and farming access with some minor recreational use. Demand on Kahuterawa Road is for recreational and lifestyle property access as well as farming.

### **Management Constraints / Threats**

Some constraints associated with access to the area include:

- Need to manage the demands of different users, from lifestyle block owners to recreational users, forest owners and farmers.
- Avoiding conflict between users.
- The need to maintain safety through having roads that are appropriate for traffic volumes and type of traffic.
- Potential loss of pleasant rural character through upgrade of Kahuterawa Road
- The need to retain Kahuterawa Road as the main access for recreational users, concentrating traffic on this road and reducing conflict with forestry traffic.
- Need to ensure that roads can be cost effectively maintained.

### **Management actions available**

These include:

- Designing road upgrades and or maintenance to match the needs of road users.
- Careful design of Kahuterawa maintenance works to ensure rural character is maintained.

## 4.9 Neighbouring Land Use

### Resource

#### Agriculture

Several farm properties over 100ha are present in the area around the Kahuterawa Hub. Sheep and beef farming is the predominant activity. Some raising of young dairy stock also occurs.

#### Forestry

Forest areas are concentrated in the upper Kahuterawa Valley, south from Woodpecker Forest.

In addition to the 440 Ha of Gordon Kear and 130 ha Woodpecker Forests (see above) another approximately 200 ha of forest are present. There are five main private forest owners in the vicinity of the Kahuterawa Hub. This includes Forest Endowment Ltd who are the new owners of part of Gordon Kear, following completion of the forest exchange.

#### Lifestyle

A considerable number of lifestyle properties are present that obtain access of Kahuterawa Road. A number of these lifestyle properties are adjacent to the Kahuterawa Hub.

Approximately 35 lifestyle properties are present on Scotts Road. These are all located on the lower section of the road, distant from the recreation hub.

### City / Regional context:

The farming in the area is relatively small in area and on lower quality farmland. It has relatively low significance within the District and Region.

Forestry undertaken within the area of the Kahuterawa Hub is significant as a portion of overall forestry activity in the District, but is a very small area within the wider region.

The area around the Kahuterawa Hub includes a significant number of lifestyle properties. It is likely that this will continue to increase in the future.

### Management Constraints / Threats

- Impacts on farming operations from careless recreational use including dogs.
- Increased fire risk to neighbouring forests with recreational use
- Disturbance of peaceful rural lifestyle through ongoing subdivision and increased recreational use.
- Opportunities of adjacent landowners to be involved in and supporting recreation - .e.g adjacent speciality activities – linked serviced tracks, B&B etc.

### Management actions available

These include:

- Working with neighbours to identify potential conflicts and practical solutions.
- Encouraging the involvement of neighbours in providing compatible recreation facilities, accommodation etc.

A summary of the potential positive and negative interactions between resource uses in the Kahuterawa area is set out in the following table. The relative ratings of these interactions are initial judgements only



# 5. Interactions Between Different Resource Uses

- + Slightly Positive
- ++ Moderately Positive
- +++ Highly Positive
- Slightly Negative
- Moderately Negative
- Highly Negative

	<b>Biodiversity</b> u							
<b>Water</b>	++ better vegetation provides soil & water protection		<b>Water</b> u					
<b>Mountain biking</b>	+++ presence of native vegetation and wildlife gives high quality experience. - some impact on wildlife e.g. snails.	+ adjacent high quality water improves quality of mountain bike experience. - some run off from mountain bike tracks.	<b>Mountain Biking</b> u					
<b>Wind energy</b>	- some possible small impacts during construction and operation.	-- some impact during construction.	-- loss of naturalness of mountain bike experience.	<b>Walking &amp; Running</b> u				
<b>Picnic, Swim</b>	+++ presence of native vegetation and wildlife gives high quality experience.	+++ high quality water gives good recreational experience. - litter in water way	-- disturbance of picnickers	- slight disturbance	<b>Picnic, Swim</b> u			
<b>Walking</b>	+++ presence of native vegetation and wildlife gives high quality experience.	++ high quality water gives good recreational experience.	--- disturbance and danger from mountain bikers if not well managed.			<b>Motorised Recreation</b> u		
<b>Access</b>	- may be some impact on adjacent vegetation during road upgrade	-- may be some sedimentation during road upgrade	-- increased use of road by mountain biker vehicles -- safety for mountain bikes using road.	-- increased use of road by walker vehicles -- safety for walkers using road.	-- increased use of road by picnicker vehicles	-- increased use of road by vehicles	<b>Wind Energy</b> u	
<b>Landscape</b>	+++ presence of native vegetation and wildlife improves quality of landscape.	+++ presence of high quality water improves quality of landscape.	++ high quality landscape gives improved mountain bike experience	++ high quality landscape gives improved walking experience	++ high quality landscape gives improved experience	++ high quality landscape gives improved experience -- loss of naturalness from presence of vehicles		
<b>Exotic Forest</b>	- some impact on adjacent native vegetation during harvest.	-- impact on water from sediment during harvest.	++ exotic forest provides interest for mountain biking	++ exotic forest provides interest & variety	++ exotic forest provides interest	++ exotic forest provides interest & variety - Fire risk to forest	-- moderate to high impact on landscape from unnatural structures	



# Goal 6. Getting the Most Out of Recreation Development

## Residents and Tourists

There are two broad groups of users to consider when planning for use of the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Hub – Palmerston North residents and tourists and visitors from the wider region.

Provision of recreational opportunities to Palmerston North residents will contribute to the Council's community outcome of providing lots of fun things to do. It may also provide some opportunity for development of service industries around these activities.

Providing activities that attract tourists and visitors from the wider region will potentially benefit service industries such as accommodation. It can also allow the establishment of specific businesses providing outdoor recreation experiences.

Palmerston North Residents: To make the area attractive to this group development should strive to provide a wide variety of combinations of

- Activities (e.g. picnicking, walking, mountain biking, 4wd etc)
- Levels (of expertise and fitness)
- Settings (native forest, exotic forest, open country, rivers etc)

This approach will ensure people continue to be interested in using the area. A group of people of different abilities and interests (e.g. a family group) can all be satisfied. People will keep coming back because there are things they haven't done before – or haven't done recently.

Tourists and visitors from the wider region: This group of users will generally need to be drawn to the area by something distinctive or "stand out" about the recreation experience offered. The focus should be on specific high quality activities that lead the region or country – that people travelling through will be drawn to doing and staying a night.



# Goal 7. Community Aspirations

## Focus Group Results

The results of the series of focus group meetings are provided below.

### 7.1 Recreation (non mechanized) Focus Group

#### Meeting – 12 December 2006

Note: These points are recorded as they were raised at the meeting. No effort has been made at this stage to summarise these points or consider if / how they can be practically addressed within the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan.

#### Values/Uses/Resources (What are they? Where are they?)

- There is opportunity to bike the road from Kahuterawa Reserve to Black Bridge, leaving your car at Kahuterawa Reserve.
- Native vegetation and wildlife

Note: the group did not focus on identifying the wide range of values and uses present.

#### Management Issues

- Need to manage level of use so over use does not detract. E.g. how many mountain biking events can we handle.
- Need to market areas for public use
- Kahuterawa Road upgrade important
- Camper vans an issue on Kahuterawa road
- Better / more parking is needed.
- Separation of recreational users. Mountain bike vs walkers
- High speed downhill clash with walkers
- Don't produce pamphlets etc until loops and tracks are developed

- Damage to area from forest harvest
- Forest harvest run off impacts
- Impact on snails from forest harvest
- Kahuterawa Reserve used to be "Lion Reserve:
- High wind danger issues for recreation in pine forest
- What is the history of water race – Kahuterawa?
- Fire
- Slips following harvest
- Avoiding weed growth when harvesting forest
- Helping forest regeneration
- Naming of the area (Kahuterawa:= Home of the hawk)
  - Need to be consistent
  - Naming of different areas (e.g. Kahuterawa basin, Kahuterawa basin park, Kahuterawa Recreation Park)
- Facilities need to be aesthetic – well managed
- Kahuterawa Reserve toilets are poor
- Don't take resources from inner city space
- People want 'Freedom Walking' opportunities
  - Want to be able to explore
  - Often shorter trips to get feel for area
- Need for access without cars
- Maintain naturalness of tracks
- Need range of tracks
- Disability Access

- Reserves Act status for area
  - Retain value of area
  - Secures the area
  - Needs safeguarding
  - Reserves act 1977
- Pest Management is on ongoing commitment
- What types of commercial operations are appropriate
  - Walking tours
  - Needs something special – points of difference
    - Ecological
    - Pest Control
- Vehicle break ins at end of road
- Plant pests are present - need control

#### Mutual Benefits

- Pest Control
  - Recreation more interesting because of improved wildlife
  - Improve biodiversity

#### Potential Conflicts

- Hunters vs walkers
- Trailbike – are they interested?
- Mountain bike vs walkers
- Wind turbines conflict with recreation – degrades natural setting.

#### Solutions

- Kahuterawa Road upgrade
  - Maintain bush margin
  - Balance with improving road
  - Regular passing lanes
- Specific area for Mountain Bikers
- Move some of pine to native vegetation
- Management and harvest of pine forest needs to be well planned.
- Could install signage around pine forest to keep out in high winds
- Notification of upcoming mountain bike events.
  - Others can then keep away
- **Loop** to Arawaru around the head of Quartz Creek.
- Loop – Back track - Sledge track
- Volunteer involvement
- Plan to regenerate and replant forest
- Sponsorship input – Community involvement drives this
- Lower standard of road from Kahuterawa Reserve onward
- Concrete water table on Kahuterawa Road to allow vehicle pull over
- Create walking loops
- Track from catchment access road to Hardings Park and Sledge Track
- Need to educate community
  - What is there
  - How it will be managed
- Promotion - educating community that area is available. Could promote at info centre.
- Community involvement with Kahuterawa Reserve
- Interpretation - Information signage: plants, animals, snails.
- Publicity on pest control, wildlife etc

- Signage to navigate people to the area – even sign post to sledge track from Kahuterawa reserve
- Putting counters (vehicle and foot) in now to gather usage information.
- 4WD use of area by arrangement only
- Local “ownership”
- Security camera options?
  - Carparks only
- Assessment of bird life
- Larger pest control areas - Building a combined project across private and public land to seek funding for pest control
- Potential for development of Kahuterawa Reserve
  - Pines
  - Rata (other side , on rock)
  - Swimming hole

## 7.2 Mountain Biking Focus Group

### Meeting – 13 December 2006

Note: These points are recorded as they were raised at the meeting. No effort has been made at this stage to summarise these points or consider if / how they can be practically addressed within the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan.

#### Values Resources Uses (What is important Where is it located?)

- Area is close to Palmerston North
- Works well for events. Usually based on loop track 25 minutes 5-6 laps. But changing, going for longer loops
- Run event once a year
- Some people are riding from town or go around Green’s Rd loop – use this as training for events
- Back Track is suitable for all weather use

- Canoeing of upper Kahuterawa (Gordon Kear to Black Bridge) – grade 4 in major flood top river can only do 2-3 times a year
- Run Wednesday night race series in summer. Usually 20 – 25 people
- Not much use of Woodpecker Forest in winter – too wet and slippery

#### Management Issues

- Lack of track marking – people getting lost
- Soil type difficult – gets very slippery in wet - hard to make all weather **access**. Could possibly have some all weather tracks
- Washouts on Back Track - needs water control
- Riding in wet damages track
- Standard of track construction highly variable
- 4WD access and bog holes causes drainage issues (floods from bog holes)
- Speed conflicts – Motorbikes vs Mountain bike
- Ad hoc track building - tracks are put in and then changed
- Bike jumps have been installed across main tracks
- Range of users from casual users to expert speed freaks
- Need for road upgrading of Kahuterawa Road
- Area is generally not suitable for learner riders
- Seal after Kahuterawa Reserve is most dangerous
- Safety – emergency: but haven’t been many accidents
- Long term management of pines: Don’t want to waste effort developing tracks – have it destroyed through harvest damage
- Gordon Kear a bit too far away to be valuable
- Need some parking at end of Scotts Road.
- Kahuterawa Carpark too small – park is full on good weekend
- Vandalism risk to vehicles particularly at end of Scotts Road.
- Trail bikes could be an issue, but there are not many and they are usually well behaved

- Trees in Kahuterawa Stream are dangerous for canoeing. This could be issue with forest harvest
- 4WD use of Woodpecker would increase the use of Scott's Rd

### Mutual Benefits

- Track maintenance for mountain bikes benefits walkers
- Single track is good for walkers and mountain bikes

### Potential Conflicts

- 4WD vs mountain bike
- Horses vs mountain bike
- Walking vs mountain bike. This can be easily managed by having no walkers on downhill mountain bike track.

### Management Solutions

- Use mountain bike track design books
- Create more intensive area of looping tracks at top of hill near end of Scotts Road. This could provide all weather use.
- Provide 4WD access up through forest, or Quad and trailer access, to allow ferrying of bikes for down hill races
- Provide some vehicle access for maintenance of tracks. Make vehicle access controlled.
- Install locked gate at the top of Woodpecker Forest to keep vehicles out.
- Could have high quality (easy) track that also provided vehicle access.
- Keep walkers off down hill tracks
- Segregation of users, including mountain bikers and walkers.
- Possibly hold events in Gordon Kear – longer races etc
- Marking and grading of tracks for different users.
- Work together with other users to help dispel myths about mountain biking

- Work with neighbours – e.g. have done rock picking in paddock by carpark
- Have approval / sign off of track construction by track committee
- Air ambulance has Woodpecker co-ordinates – make sure emergency system in place.
- Work to better involve downhill riders and others in mountain bike club
- Develop car park in top of woodpecker
- Mountain bike map has been prepared
- More tracks and variety of tracks will keep people apart, reducing user conflict
- In the long term work to link City landfill mountain bike area to Kahuterawa, so people can ride from one to the other off main roads.
- Be sensitivity to nature of the terrain and soil type, don't overdo use or e.g. provide unsuitable tracks.

## 7.3 4WD & Hunting Focus Group

### Meeting – 18 December 2006

Note: These points are recorded as they were raised at the meeting. No effort has been made at this stage to summarise these points or consider if / how they can be practically addressed within the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan.

### Resources/Values/Uses (What is important? Where is it located?)

- Back track used to be important 4WD resource. It was an important area because it was wooded over, challenging, and 4WD fraternity had a sense of ownership.
- Gordon Kear trips are sought after
- Some users are after "play areas" - others want to traverse over a long back country route.
- Want loops
- Want remoteness
- Want to be able to traverse areas
- Views

### Management Issues

- Issue of letting historic effort of creating Back Track road go to waste
- Burton's track (Tokomaru Stream) – paper road extends from Gordon Kear. Missing bit in middle
- Closed canopy situation more appealing
- Creating back country route through foothills
- More interest in drive around than “sandpit”
- Missed opportunity of 4WD obstacle course at dump
- North Range Road – 4WD park – 4WD club control access (being supported by farmer and the power company).
- Could provide Woodpecker “play” area - but steepness means not that safe
- Issues of H&S legal liability etc if you have a club controlled area
- If access through Woodpecker wouldn't want to rip it up with 4WD and destroy mountain bike access
- Turbines some impact on naturalness of experience

### Mutual Benefits

- Use by 4WD keeps track / road open
- 4WD provide transport for maintenance of tracks
- Disabled people access. 4WD can take disabled or elderly people to remote areas.

### Potential Conflicts

- Mountain Bike vs 4WD
- Size difference creates hazard
- 4WD and orchids/snails

### Management Solutions

- Provide safe “play” areas close to town – areas where can roll onto side without danger
- Public days where there is 4WD access.
- Mountain Bike ferrying
- 4WD clubs run navigation training for scouts etc
- Provide trips for disabled people
- Need to see if there is interest from trail bike clubs, quad bikes
- 4WD vs Mountain Bike downhill access. Could provide 4WD access in Woodpecker that could also be used for ferrying downhill mountain bikes. - But not challenging for 4WD
- Night runs. This can make trips more interesting and avoids conflict with other users.
- Occasional organized trips 4WD trips. E.g Turitea catchment access road.
- Facilitate occasional access across private land

## 7.4 Biodiversity & Natural Values Focus Group

### Meeting – 14 December 2006

Note: These points are recorded as they were raised at the meeting. No effort has been made at this stage to summarise these points or consider if / how they can be practically addressed within the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan.

### Values, Resources, Uses (What are they? Where are they?)

- Snails – Powelliphanta traversi tararuaensis (Nationally endangered)
- Native fish in the stream (short jawed kokopu, koaro)
- Kamahi remnant - dieing
- Ambience and landscape value, undisturbed landscape needs to be maintained
- Snail population close to research agencies
- Sphagnum moss in pond at top of Woodpecker

- Te Araroa Trail
- Orchids in pines between gate and ponds
- Scotts Road has rural feel good for mountain biking
- Birds in area – will increase with pest control
- Eight species of orchid on back track (on sides of track where light, Banks at top of Back Track)

### Management Issues

- Damage to Kahuterawa stream from forest harvest
- Lack of parking at end of Scotts Road
- Turbines would spoil Greens Rd Loop
- Wind turbines major issue for landscape, shifting the feel from natural to industrial.
- Subdivision already planned will increase pressure on area
- Major impact of turbines on local lifestyle
- Need to be careful expecting too much from volunteers. There area also OSH issues with using volunteers.
- Native falcons may be impacted by turbine blades
- What is long term plan for closed section of Green's Road
- Turbines on Browns Flat would dominate Kahuterawa Reserve
- Turbine noise would be a major impact on recreation and neighbours
- Need to protect native vegetation when maintain / upgrade Kahuterawa Road.
- People bike up from Kahuterawa reserve
- Campervans in Kahuterawa reserve – could be a problem
- Spraying around Kahuterawa reserve trees is bad
- People hack trees for wood at Kahuterawa reserve
- Rubbish and glass. Biggest problem is at Kahuterawa reserve
- Weeds around sledge track

- Health and safety – maintaining Sledge track standard
- Vehicle track on neighbours property, erosion, rocks coming down
- Stoats and other pests need to be controlled.
- Road reserve on Greens Road needs planting with natives
- Dogs are an issue on tracks
- Logging impact on snails, orchids, fish
- Honeysuckle on Kahuterawa Road needs clean up
- Mares tail weed on sledge track (400m up from start)

### Mutual Benefits

- Control of pests and weeds benefits recreation as well as biodiversity
- Potential for education, understanding ecology. Benefits management of area and wider community.
- Te Araroa trail benefits to users
- Combined respect of natural values

### Potential Conflicts

- Wind Turbines have negative impact on recreation, landscape and biodiversity.
- Motorbike vs mountainbike
- 4WD and Motorbikes impact on recreation

### Management Solutions

- Public transport options. E.g. to Kahuterawa Reserve
- Pest control (possums, rats)
- Protect orchids by not clearing the Back track
- Monitoring of snails, distribution, effects of predators
- Bird monitoring – are they increasing?
- Pest control along Kahuterawa Valley
- Need recreation user surveys – also counters on sledge track and vehicle

- counters on Kahuterawa Road
- Protect lump at top of Woodpecker Forest with drosera (sundew) & orchids
- Need to clarify subdivision plans - understand potential pressure
- Cat free subdivision
- Loop walk from Back track to Sledge Track
- Maintain integrity of stream and tributaries
- Learn from other areas
- Educate mountain bikers about snails, orchids etc
- Potential carpark at end of Scott's Road
- Kahuterawa Reserve - plant around trees and weed eat (avoid current spraying)
- Need for formal gazetted of areas as reserve under Reserve Act
- Assessment of turbine impacts on Manawatu Walkway (will help identify issues in terms of recreation)
- Investment in possum killing rather than roads
- Control vehicle movement within Kahuterawa reserve – avoid loops
- Include Greens Road loop in the project
- Get users involved in volunteer work
- Judder bars on Kahuterawa road
- Involve people on ground, create ownership
- Designated passing areas rather than complete widening of Kahuterawa Road
- Get PD workers, volunteers etc involved in weed control.
- Maintain rural feel of road
- Need to work on tributaries on private land in headwaters
- Keep quiet, rural feel of road
- Possibility for separate walking access up Kahuterawa road
- Green Corridor along Kahuterawa Stream
- Need specific people responsible for management
- Volunteer wardens?

- Mirrors on Kahuterawa road blind corners
- Track linking Sledge and Hardings Park
- Animal control – Back Track, Sledge Track Kahuterawa Road, Gordon Kear. Potential to protect and restore kamahi
- Restore native vegetation
- Contract work to volunteers and assess performance
- Give reserve status to Woodpecker – so can access wind farm money
- Education and interpretation
- Motorised access to Gordon Kear
- Maybe have areas where can have dogs off leash e.g. in pine block
- Need to have a good look at weeds, control early
- Potential to leave some pines for other benefits
- Give people the resources to do work.

## 7.5 Neighbours Focus Group

### Meeting – 11 December 2006

Note: These points are recorded as they were raised at the meeting. No effort has been made at this stage to summarise these points or consider if / how they can be practically addressed within the Kahuterawa Outdoor Recreation Plan.

### Resources & Values of the area – what are they?

- Privacy
- Conservation of the area.
- Lack of impacts from recreational or other public use
- Native fish
- Snails
- Birds

## Management Issues

- Need to keep the area natural and unspoiled
- Parking in front of driveways blocks private owners access
- Weeds – including weeds from dumping and road metal. Weed problems include wandering tradescantia (wandering willie) at end of road.
- Lack of recreational user knowledge of private land areas (that they should not be entering).
- Hunting – should not be people out with guns in main recreational areas.
- Theft – Scotts Rd and other areas.
- “Boy racers” on unsealed road areas.
- Boundary fencing – particularly southern boundary of Woodpecker
- Broken glass – cut feet of recreational users
- Accident reliance: Recreational users start relying on neighbours to help them if there is an emergency (e.g. injury, lost, crashes, breakdown). This a cost to neighbours.
- Fires – need fire place at carpark – particular area where fires are allowed
- Car dumping and burning
- Toilet maintenance – needs to be of a high quality for toilets at car park and Kahuterawa Reserve.
- Dogs
  - Animal health issues: sheep measles, mauling
  - Lost dogs
- Trespass onto private land
- Cannabis growing
- Convoys of 4WD vehicles – causes problems when lots on the road together.
- Fire danger – climate change may increase this issue
- Vandalism & theft
  - Theft of stock

- Shooting road signs
- Traffic safety
- Recreational use of Scotts Rd is inevitable – needs to be planned for
- Pests – possums: Need control, don’t want to create a reservoir of pests in area.
- Tree damage to mature forest at Woodpecker – broken tops etc.
- Gate not adequate – need some form of substantial security gate
- Army use of the area. There is a need to keep in contact with them.
- Access to private properties can be blocked by recreational user vehicles.
- Rubbish
- City Council arrogance over road upgrade etc – need to hear local views and take advantage of local knowledge.
- 4WD use of Woodpecker Forest – potential for 4WD vehicles to tip over and start forest fire.

## Possible Mutual Benefits

- Increased security
  - Ranging
  - Surveillance camera(s)
  - Increased user numbers
  - “Friends of” groups
- Define boundaries of private and public access land on the ground – so users know.
- Improve Kahuterawa Road corner by carpark. Could have direct access road into carpark rather than last blind corner.
- Improve parking (gets overfull in peak times)
  - Kahuterawa Road
  - Scotts Road (very little parking at present – causes problems)
- Look at crash sites on Kahuterawa Road
- Get neighbours input to road planning

- Users and landowners working together
- Use of volunteers with a range of abilities
- Good communication and information – make sure neighbours know about big events etc.

### Potential Conflicts

- Traffic safety conflicts – e.g. vehicles vs bikers
- Camping may conflict with privacy of neighbours – would need to be very carefully controlled
- Horses
  - Need bigger car park for horse floats
  - Traffic issues on road with horsefloats
  - Conflicts between horses and other users – runners, bikers etc

### Solutions

- Roads are the top priority – shouldn't promote the area until roads are good enough.
- Needs to be well cared for area
- Avoid impacts on neighbours privacy or rights to use of their land
- Provide enough facilities to accommodate increased number of users.
- Find a way to deal with the small number of problem users – 99% of people will be great.
- Speed restrictions on road
- Surveillance rather than speed humps to control boy racers etc
- Need strategic approach to upgrade of Kahuterawa road
  - Improve sight distances
  - More regular maintenance
  - Possibly increase camber
  - Improve water tables

- Need sensible approaches to avoiding illegal dumping
  - e.g. free dumping for people cleaning up the area
- May be opportunities for occasional organised 4wd access to private land with permission from land owners.
- More visitors to the area may result in reduced illegal activities.
- Some form of policing, ranger system, monitoring
- Curfew on access to the area?
- Educate users – what is allowed, the protocols to follow
- Dogs should be kept out?:
  - Disturb wildlife
  - Problem for other users
  - Worry stock
  - Introduce stock disease
- Look at other models of areas managed for recreation and other users to see how issues can be resolved.
- Surveillance camera signs
- Surveillance camera on Kahuterawa Road.
- Better system of securing road signs and other signs. So they can't just be unbolted and stolen.
- Sensible harvest or thinning of Woodpecker Forest
- Possibly shift Black Bridge gate down to nearer carpark (to stop vehicles parking at end of road and blocking farm access across Black Bridge.
- "No Parking" sign at the end of Kahuterawa Road
- Keep corners in Kahuterawa Road – to keep speed down
- Cannabis growing may reduce with greater recreational use of the area
- Ensuring that recreational users "buy in" and are involved in the management of the area.
- Making sure there is contact between users and landowners – so understand

each others needs (why not a Party!)

- Install solid signs and gates.
- Possible development of a education centre / ranger station. Possibly at Kahuterawa Reserve.
- Clearly identify recreational access areas and need to keep clear of private land.
- Signage to identify private property boundaries.
- Provide car parking at end of Scotts Road
- Mapping and signage setting out different access areas, key rules etc.
- Make sure neighbours are clear on public and private areas as well.
- Make people aware of picnic sites and particular use areas.
- Keep 4WD out of Woodpecker Forest – vehicle access by permit or key only.

## 7.6 Summary: Areas of some agreement or consistency Values

- Proximity of area to Palmerston North
- Turitea – Greens Road loop is important to walkers, runners, horseriders
- Scotts Road has some value for mountainbikers and others because it is rugged and undeveloped
- Local wealth of important biodiversity including:
  - Nationally endangered snail *Powelliphanta traversi tararuaensis*
  - Good diversity of native fish species in Kahuterawa Stream including rare species such as short-jaw kokopu
  - Important flora remnants and species including kamahi forest and native orchids
- High quality peaceful rural landscape for visitors and property owners.
- Provides a natural “get away” close to the City that has the values and feel of a larger wilderness
- High quality grade 4 canoeing in flood conditions (2-3 times / year)
- Provides hunting access to other areas.

- A range of groups have already been involved in this area and are keen to maintain and increase their involvement.
- High quality mountain biking resource with potential to provide national quality facilities
- Only “real” mountain biking area close to Palmerston North
- Resource for outdoor recreation, sport and fitness close to the City
- Opportunity for community environmental education

### Management Issues

- Impacts on private landowners
  - Blocking driveways
  - Trespass
  - Vandalism and theft
- Not enough parking or poorly designed parking.
- Potential road safety issues with increased use of Kahuterawa Road.
- Important to protect the natural values and rural feel of Kahuterawa Road.
- Upgrade of Kahuterawa Road may increase vehicle speeds
- Ad hoc track building and lack of track marking
- Soil type means off road mountain bike tracks are not good in winter.
- Don’t want track building effort destroyed by forest harvest
- 4wd are often after the ability to traverse an area
- Fire danger needs to be taken into account
- Need to avoid reliance on neighbours in accident and emergency situations
- Potential damage to biodiversity, waterways etc from harvest of exotic forest
- Long term stability and danger to recreation from exotic forest stands
- Avoiding impacts on snails from recreational use
- Increased recreational use may result in over use – impacting on the natural values and sense of wilderness.

- Damage is occurring to remnant trees and natural values in Kahuterawa Reserve.
- Ongoing damage by possums is occurring and the area provides a reservoir for pests
- Problem weeds are present that need to be controlled
- Subdivision is placing pressure on the area
- Windfarm development around the area has potential to significantly damage the peace, quiet and natural landscape values that are important to the areas use for outdoor recreation.
- 4wd use would impact on other recreational users and biodiversity
- Dogs are a nuisance to neighbouring landowners and biodiversity
- Toilets and other facilities need to be well maintained.
- Potential conflicts between different user groups need to be managed

### Solutions

- Improve management of Kahuterawa Reserve to provide increased opportunities for easily accessed picnicking and swimming.
- Enhance opportunities for people to park at Kahuterawa Reserve and cycle to end of road (Black Bridge)
- Improve parking at Kahuterawa Reserve, Black Bridge and end of Scotts Road.
- High priority to undertake appropriate improvement of Kahuterawa Road before promote greater recreational use of the area.
- Careful upgrade of Kahuterawa Road to maintain rural feel, particularly focussed on improving sight lines rather than speed.
- Create a loop track from Back Track to Sledge Track through Woodpecker Forest.
- Create walking tracks linking Hardings Park and Gordon Kear Forest.
- Careful planning of a network of walking and mountain bike trails in Woodpecker Forest to provide opportunities and avoid conflict.
- Provide a wide variety of opportunities for different users and abilities.

- Encourage communication between user groups
- Examine legal status of areas and potentially give reserve status under Reserves Act 1977.
- Provision of good quality public information on tracks and facilities etc
- Provision of environmental interpretation / education.
- Involve users in the development of the area.
- Improve security for parked vehicles, local landowners property etc.
- Good communication and working with neighbours to avoid conflict.
- Use of volunteers
- Careful planning of forest harvest and management for Woodpecker exotic forest area.
- Important focus on management of snails and other biodiversity resources of the area.
- Maintain the peace, quiet and natural values of the area for recreational users and residents.
- Undertake control of plant and animal pests.
- Avoid significant adverse impacts of wind turbines on important values of naturalness and recreation in the area.
- Facilities such as toilets should be well managed and aesthetic.

## 7.7 Tangata Whenua

The following input was obtained from a range of contacts and meetings with Tangata Whenua.

### Values/Uses/Resources

- Traditional area of historical and cultural significance
- Rangitaane track supporting movement from the east to west (vice versa)
- Potential area of food gathering also (anything in particular?)
- Native species significant to Rangitaane, native flora & fauna

### Management Issues

- Ongoing pest management control
- Recognition of iwi and the significance this area has for them
- Rubbish collection/waste management
- Current toilet facilities – what are there?
- Protection, enhancement, restoration of Kahuterawa Stream and native flora/fauna

### Mutual Benefits

- Pest Control (Weed & Animals)
- Conservation & Restoration initiatives
- Educational benefits

### Potential Conflicts

- Types of pest management and its control
- Enhancement and protection of the trout fishery – protection of native fish species
- Higher recreational use of the area may result in negative impacts on the environment

### Management Solutions

- Monitoring of the following;
  - Native birds – population growth/decline, distribution, etc
  - Native Snail distribution, population growth/decline
  - Pest control – effectiveness
- Eco-friendly toilet facilities – something like that of the Kapiti Island facilities
- Practical strategies for the management of rubbish from picnic areas, tracks
- Equal focus on conservation/restoration and recreational enhancement
- Planting along Kahuterawa Stream – riparian margin
- Possible planting native vegetation in areas lacking this – if any.

# References

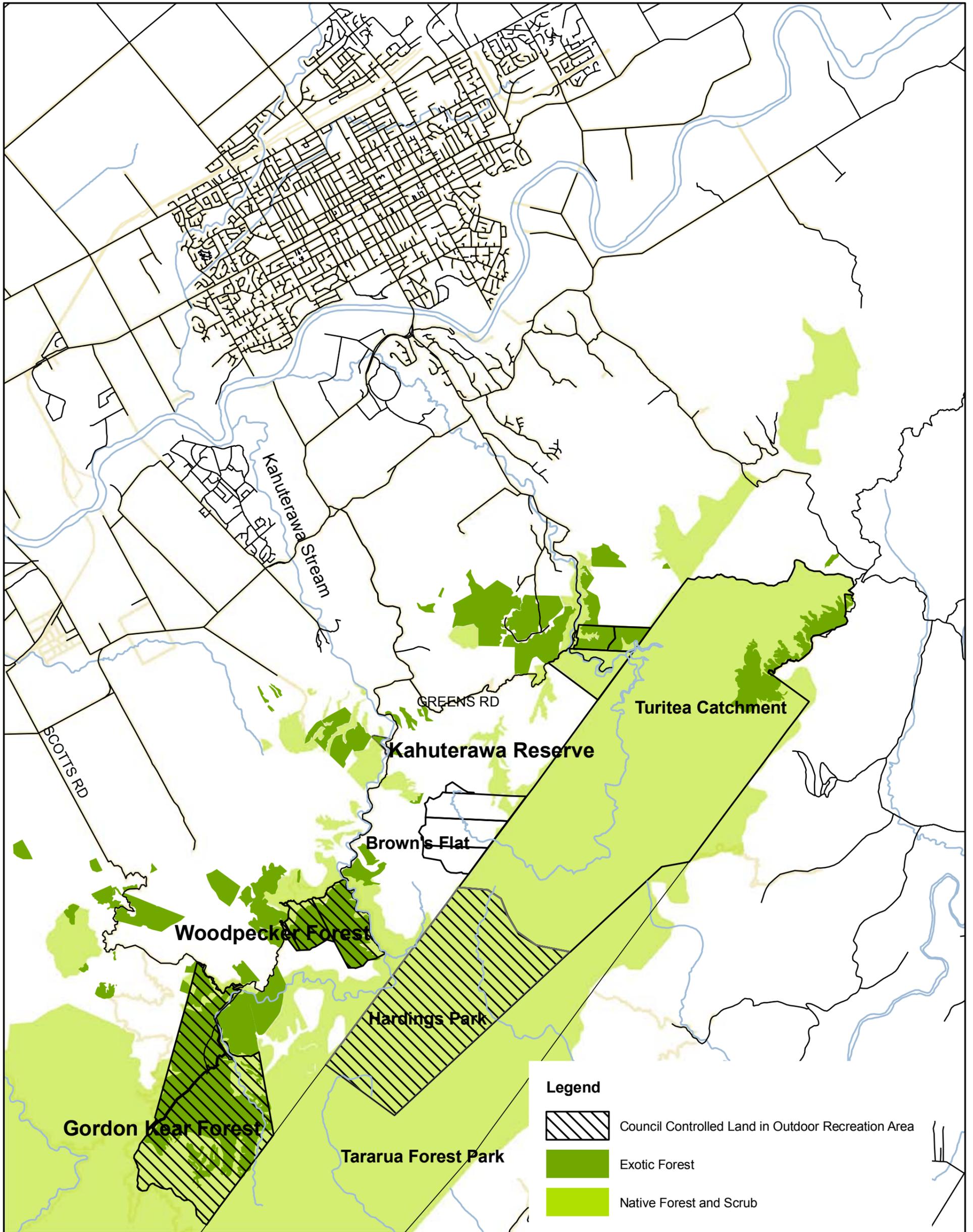
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# Appendix One: Location Map





# Appendix Two: Resource Context Map

