



PART 1

Introduction and Background

West and away from Auckland town,
A man rode out they say,
But only a few of the ones who knew
Can tell the tale today.
The others lie forgotten
In graves unmarked, uncrossed.
Their diggers' gear has rusted,
Their stories are ever lost.
Past vineyards named Mt. Lebanon,
Where grapes a growing still,
A signpost clearly points the way
Beyond to DON BUCK'S HILL.

Marianne Simpkins (ex) The Ballad of Don Buck's Hill





Summary

The reserves included in this Management Plan are Starling Park, Te Rangi Hiroa, Birdwood Winery Estate, Don Buck's Corner and Don Buck Primary Recreation Reserve. Birdwood Depot is not a reserve, but is included in this Management Plan and from here on, is included in the title Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves. The Depot is an old Council dump, a landfill site, which was once part of the original Birdwood Winery Estate. Due to its location and current state as a large vacant site adjacent to the Winery, it has the potential to join and complement the existing reserves cluster by providing a site designated for active recreation.

The Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves form a natural cluster. They lie in a confluence both geographical and natural. Geographically, they lie at the junction of Ranui, Massey and Birdwood suburbs. Apart from Starling Park, which lies to the south of the cluster, they lie naturally along the flood plain and scarp surrounding the confluence of the Momutu and Swanson Streams.

The reserves themselves have different but complementary functions. Starling Park is a developed sports field, surrounded by residential housing. Birdwood Depot is a flat, capped, landfill site. The rest of the reserves in the group are more or less undeveloped. Birdwood Estate is largely open grass space and includes the house and associated outbuildings of the old historic vineyard. Don Buck's Corner is a stream corridor and riparian margin; Don Buck Primary School Recreation Reserve is a mix of riparian margin with mixed bush and scrub. Te Rangi Hiroa itself is a mixture of pasture, (mostly grazed by Massey Pony Club), mixed bush and scrub with stream corridors and associated riparian margins.

The Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves are expected to fulfil a regional role. Council's Parks Strategy identifies Starling Park, Birdwood Estate Winery and Te Rangi Hiroa as City Wide Reserves, indicating their potential to provide recreational opportunities for the wider Waitakere City and Auckland region. They currently offer recreational facilities for these regional clubs; the Ranui Swanson AFC, Waitakere Bears Softball Club, West Auckland BMX Club, Auckland Car Club, West Auckland Darts

Club, the Western Districts Model Railway Club and the Massey Pony Club, the largest pony club in West Auckland.

The Te Rangi Hiroa reserves are also expected to serve the local community. They are adjacent to the rapidly developing, young neighbourhoods of Ranui, Massey and Birdwood, where there is increasing pressure for additional recreation facilities to meet the needs of the large youth population. The submissions highlighted the expectation that the Te Rangi Hiroa reserves provide recreational opportunities for the local as well as the wider regional community.

The stream corridor and the bush on Te Rangi Hiroa Park are identified as a priority for the Green Network. The Swanson and Momutu Streams and their riparian margins have potentially high ecological values as habitat and movement corridors for native species, including several species of threatened freshwater fish. The restoration of these corridors could also provide valuable environmental educational opportunities, especially for Birdwood and Don Buck Primary Schools, which adjoin the reserves.

The Te Rangi Hiroa reserves contain sites of considerable historical and cultural significance. Two of the most colourful pioneering figures of West Auckland once lived as neighbours within the boundaries of the reserves covered by this Plan.

To the west of the Swanson Stream, Birdwood Winery Estate is the site of a vineyard and winery that was in its heyday, equal to Corban's Estate and ranked among the three largest in New Zealand. Home of the pioneering viticulturalist and gentleman, Simon Udjur, Birdwood Winery Estate embodies the story of many of the Croatian pioneers and their contribution to the New Zealand wine industry, as well as their contribution to the economic and cultural development of west Auckland.

Downstream, to the southeast, is Don Buck's Corner, believed to be the site of the notorious gum digging camp of Don Buck. This legendary nineteenth century figure was equally as colourful as Simun Udjur, for very different reasons.





Birdwood Winery Entrance

Don Buck and his camp perhaps epitomised the tough life of the gum diggers, many of them Croatian and Maori, who made an equally significant contribution to the economy and culture of west Auckland. These two men of very different means, education and social standing, were strong and charismatic individuals, immigrant pioneers who lived side by side at Te Rangi Hiroa and left their mark on the history of the west.

This area also has historical significance to Maori, specifically Kawerau a Maki. As Tangata Whenua, their historical association and rights to cultural usage need to be acknowledged and provided for.

Combined, the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves offer a large area of open space around the flood plain and scarp of the Swanson and Momutu streams. They have inherently high regional value in terms of their unique environmental and cultural features. As City-wide and Green Network reserves they have unfulfilled recreational potential.

This Management Plan seeks to protect and enhance these special ecological and cultural values, at the same time balancing the requirements of their reserves

classifications and meeting the needs of both the regional and local communities.

This Reserve Management Plan sets out the objectives and policies for the management of the Te Rangi Hiroa group of reserves. The Plan has been produced within the context of Waitakere City's wider objectives.

The key objectives of the Draft Reserve Management Plan are outlined below:

- To increase the use and enjoyment of the reserves by the local and City-wide communities and to maximise the opportunities for appropriate, sustainable and high quality recreational activities while respecting the open space and natural values of the reserves.
- To manage the reserves in a way that ensures the protection and enhancement of their natural ecosystems. In particular, the ecosystems that support threatened species, but also including all indigenous flora and fauna on the reserves.
- To recognise, protect and, as appropriate, promote the Maori cultural and historical values of the Reserves and their wider catchment, and to work





in partnership with Iwi on the management of issues of significance on the reserves.

- To recognise, protect and, as appropriate, promote the European cultural and historical values of the reserves, and to work in partnership with the west Auckland community on the management of issues of significance on the reserves.
- To increase opportunities for people to enjoy nature and to understand and observe the natural processes and systems occurring on the reserves.
- To ensure that the landscape values of the park are protected and that the adverse effects of structures, activities and physical processes on the natural character of the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves are avoided, remedied or mitigated.
- To ensure that there is a range of park furniture and facilities to enhance the recreational use of the reserves.
- To ensure the reserves are managed in terms of their reserve classifications for the enjoyment and use of the local and regional community, now and in the future.

1.0 Context

This section introduces the context for the reserves and their Management Plans.

1.1 Waitakere Foothills Environment

The Waitakere Ranges and their foothills are a unique ecosystem. The Waitakere foothills lie on the eastern side of the Waitakere Ranges and are the rolling hills, ridges and gullies of the catchments that drain out to the Waitemata Harbour.

The Waitakere Ranges were formed by an ancient massive uplift of hard volcanic basalt. Over time, soft rock has worn away from the hills and silt has collected in the valleys and lowlands, a process facilitated by the high rainfall. In the foothills to the east of the Ranges, the soils are more sedimentary than volcanic and are known as 'Waitemata' soils.

The low-lying hills and valleys of the foothills were sheltered from the Tasman coastal airflows and, in pre-European times, they were covered by a warm

lowland forest ecosystem. Along the ridges, the emergent trees were kauri, tanekaha and rimu; on the valley sides, puriri, rata, rimu and kahikatea; in the more fertile gullies were abundant ponga, mahoe, nikau and other broadleaf shrubs and trees. The dense nature of the forest meant that lines of communication were generally along ridgelines or waterways.

The Swanson catchment is one of the major catchments of the Waitakere foothills environment and the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves are situated within this catchment. The Swanson catchment covers approximately 2270 hectares in total area. Parts of Waitakere, Birdwood, Massey, Ranui and Swanson lie within this catchment.

The Swanson Stream is the major waterway of the catchment. Fed by tributary streams, the major ones being Waikomo and Momutu, it flows from Swanson to Huruwhiri Inlet in Massey.

To the north and west of the Te Rangi Hiroa reserves, lie Swanson and Birdwood where the land use is still predominantly rural-residential in nature, with lifestyle blocks in the 2-5 ha range. To the south and east, lie Ranui and Massey, predominantly medium density, low-cost, residential suburbs. When these suburbs were first developed, little provision was made for recreational facilities and reserves. Now, with a high proportion of youth in their populations and too few local recreation opportunities, there is a demand for space in Te Rangi Hiroa, which as yet, is largely undeveloped.

1.2 Purpose of the Reserve Management Plan

The aim of the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves Management Plan is to provide for the enjoyment of a range of recreational opportunities in a manner that is consistent with the conservation and enhancement of the unique character and ecological values of these reserves. The Management Plan integrates the management of the group of reserves administered by Waitakere City, situated around the confluence of the Momutu and Swanson Streams from Birdwood Road to Don Buck Corner, where the Swanson Stream continues on to the Waitemata Harbour.





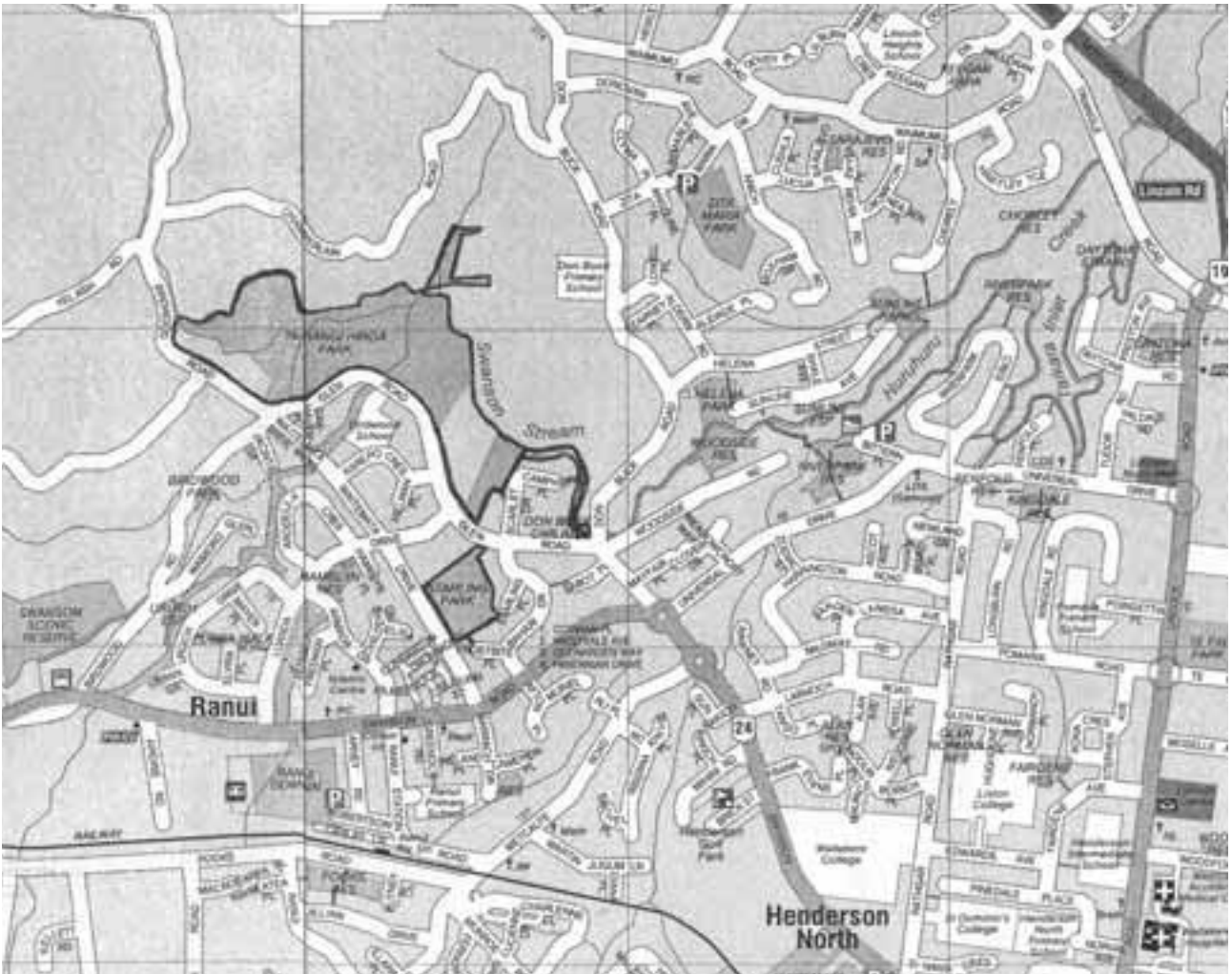


Figure 1 Context Map

This Reserve Management Plan provides a framework for carrying out the future management of these reserves in an integrated way. It sets out the governing principles for management that will be readily understood by those whose actions or interests will be affected by the Plan. This Plan has been created within the context of the Council’s Long Term Financial Strategy, Parks Strategy, Leisure Strategy and the Green Network. The Plan takes into consideration the submissions made to it and where relevant, submissions made to the Birdwood Structure Plan, the Birdwood Estate/Te Rangi Hiroa renaming proposal and

the Ranui Town Centre Revitalisation Project.

This Management Plan covers five reserves. Some are designated as Recreation and Esplanade Reserves, under the Reserves Act, 1977. Others are yet to be formally classified and gazetted as required under the Reserves Act and therefore retain old legal designations such as Pleasure Ground, Public Reserve and Recreation Ground. The Birdwood Depot is not a reserve, but is designated as a Special Area under the District Plan.

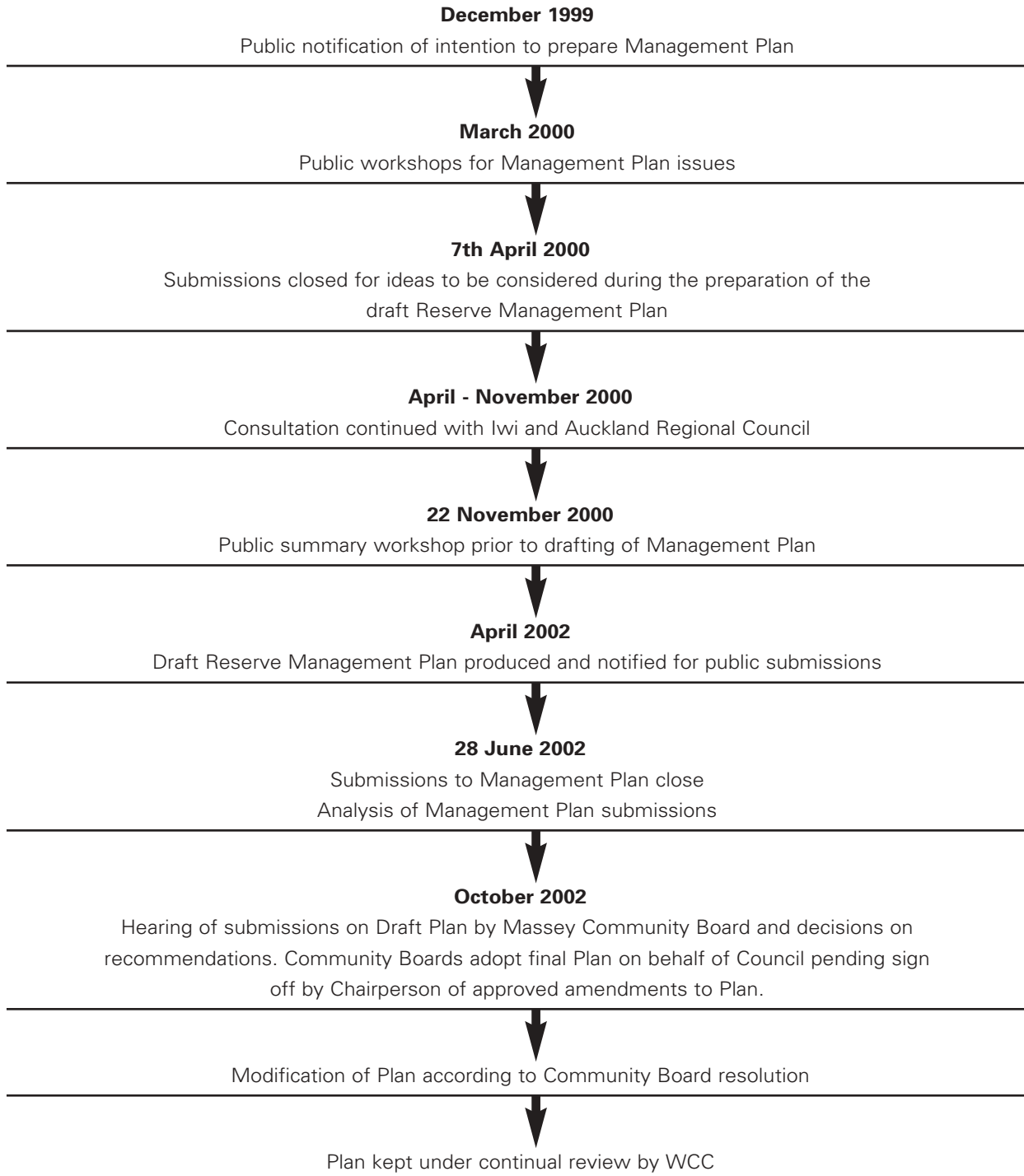
Collectively, the six reserves (including the depot), covered by this Plan cover 50.3050 hectares in total.





1.3 The Management Plan Process

The process that was followed in the production of this Plan was in accordance with the provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 and included extensive public consultation. The steps involved in this process are outlined below:





1.4 How to Use this Management Plan

This Management Plan (the Plan) is in three parts.

Part 1 provides an introduction to the reserves and includes all relevant background information. It examines the reserves physical context, their environmental and cultural values, and explains the strategic and statutory requirements that influence the Management Plan. This section also provides an index to the Reserves and their legal classification.

Part 2 outlines the particular issues arising from Part 1 of the Plan, the policy and objectives relating to each issue and the details how these are to be implemented.

Part 3 consists of concept plans which direct future development.

The Appendices outline the legal description and documentation of the reserves as well as reports on the environmental values of the Reserves.

2.0 Statutory Requirements

2.1 Reserves Act 1977

The Reserves Act requires that every reserve has a Management Plan. Once adopted, the Plan is subject to continuous review, adapting to changing circumstances or increased knowledge about the reserve. The review procedure is outlined in the Reserves Act and requires a public notification and submission process.

The intention of a Management Plan is to:

“Provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, protection and preservation, as the case may require, and to the extent that the administering body’s resources permit, the development, as appropriate, of the reserve for the purposes for which it was classified.”

The individual reserves covered by this Plan have different reserve classifications. The Reserves Act 1977 requires that all reserves be classified and gazetted according to the classifications laid down by the Act. These classifications are; Historic, Scenic, Nature, Scientific, Recreation, Local Purpose and

Government Purpose Reserve. Those Te Rangi Hiroa reserves which were created as reserves prior to the Act and have not been reclassified, are currently undergoing the formal process of reclassification. These are described in detail in the Reserves List in Section 3.0.

2.2 Resource Management Act 1991

The purpose of the Act is to:

“promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources.”

Issues which are considered to be of national importance under this Act are:

- The preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment, wetlands, lakes and rivers and their margins, and the protection of them from inappropriate subdivision, use, and development;
- The protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development;
- The protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitats of indigenous fauna;
- The maintenance and enhancement of public access to and along the coastal marine area, lakes and rivers;
- The relationship of Maori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga.

2.3 Waitakere City Proposed District Plan

Te Rangi Hiroa is set in the Waitakere Foothills Environment. The Foothills Environment is defined in the Policy section of the District Plan. This landscape is characterised by:

- Fingers of bush in upper catchments
- Streams
- The dominance of the natural over the built features
- Un-kerbed roads which follow the ridgelines
- Orchards and vineyards
- The quietness of the area
- Buildings along the roads





- Low traffic levels
- Relatively sparse settlement
- Absence of urban type activities
- Not outstanding but valued character of city

In the District Plan, all land within the region is categorised under a Natural and Human Environment rating system. Under the Human Environments system, all Waitakere City's parks are classified as Open Space Environment.

The Natural Areas system classifies all areas of natural vegetation, wildlife habitat and potential habitat (Restoration Areas). Restoration Areas and Ecological Linkages are areas of the city that have been identified as probable linkages between isolated patches of significant vegetation, or between Restoration Areas and significant vegetation. Revegetation or restoration of those areas is considered desirable. Some Restoration Areas are themselves linkages, particularly along riparian margins. The linkage areas identified are intended to link the bush-covered ranges with remnant forest patches in the city lowlands down to the coast of the Waitemata Harbour. These Natural Areas are part of the 'Green Network' and as such are afforded special protection under the Policies and Rules of the District Plan. Restoration Natural Areas are 'gaps' in ecosystems, ie wildlife corridors, natural buffer areas or native vegetation, they are qualified as "all areas of native vegetation which are over 300m² in area and have between 20-50% native vegetation cover". Managed Natural Areas are important landscape features characterised by significant native vegetation, (greater than 50 %), wildlife habitats and water systems. General Natural Areas are characterised by little or no vegetation cover. Significant Areas have over 50% native species plus some other criteria. Ecological Linkages are "land between other areas of native vegetation, where regeneration is desirable to provide links between fragmented bush and fauna habitat".

All of Te Rangi Hiroa to the north of the Momutu and Swanson Streams is classified as either Restoration or Managed Natural Area. Don Buck Primary Recreation Reserve and most of Don Buck's Corner are classified as Managed Natural Areas. Both the Momutu and Swanson Streams are identified as Ecological Linkage Opportunities. Birdwood Depot, Starling Park and



Starling Park

Birdwood Estate Winery have a General classification under the Natural Areas zoning system. Birdwood Depot is a designated Special Area, which allows for future urban growth.

The District Plan defines heritage items as "Those structures sites and objects identified as being of particular value to the city's residents and tangata whenua, which they would like to see passed on intact to future generations". Heritage items are listed and protected by Rules within the District Plan. Heritage trees are those trees identified as being of particular heritage significance to areas within the city and are also protected under District Plan.

The dwelling at 87 Glen Road, Massey, "a turn of the century, weatherboard building", is identified as a Heritage Item in the District Plan (WCCHI1170). Its significance is attributed to historical and architectural values.

The Management Plan will be used to manage impacts on the reserves themselves. It also provides detailed management and planning for the placement of any buildings, paths, and active recreation areas in relation to the specific environment of the parks. The District Plan rules will be used to manage the effects of activities on surrounding areas, in particular, noise, lighting, traffic movements and the placement of structures at the boundary, together with effects on the natural environment with regard to earthworks, vegetation clearance and impermeable surfaces.





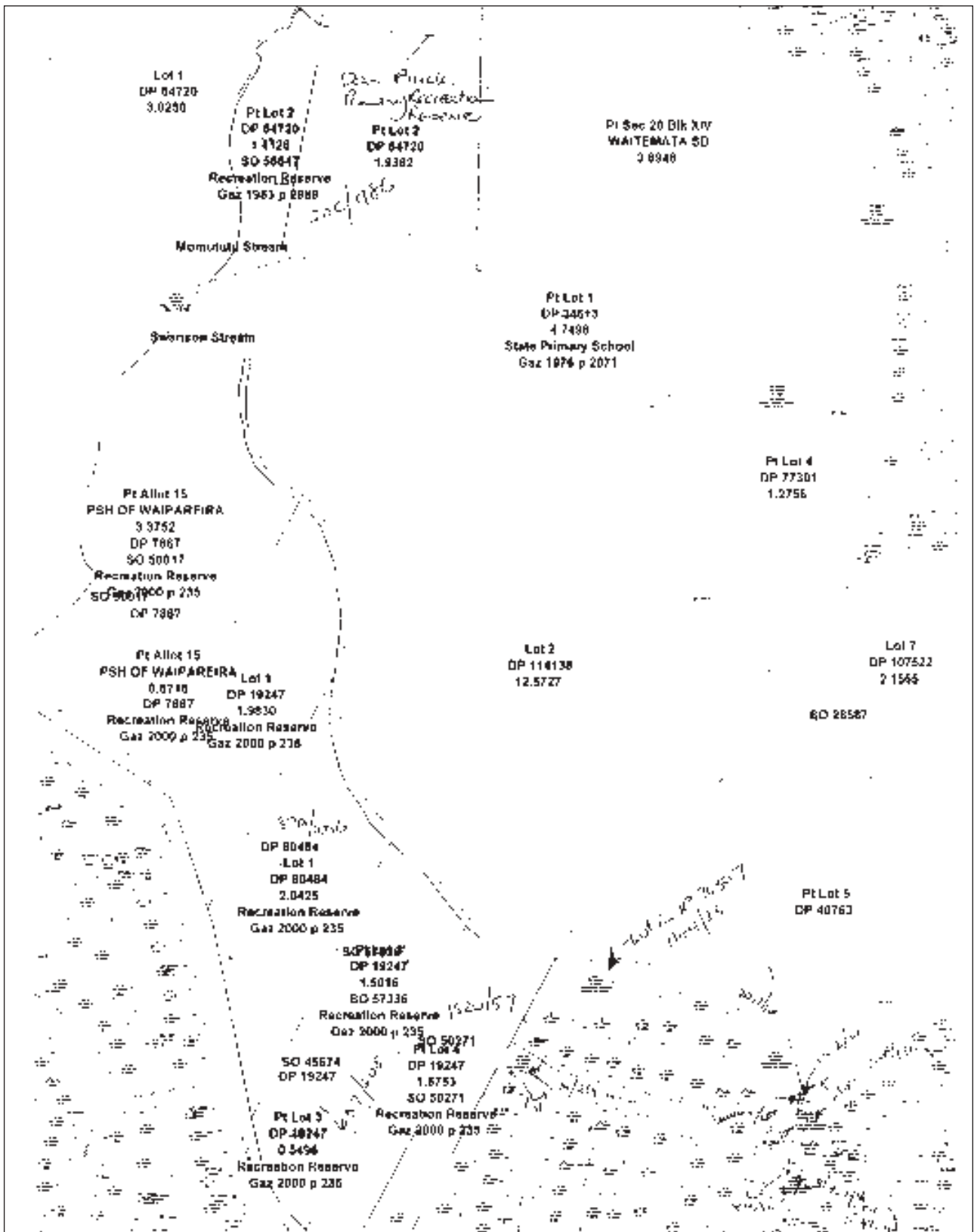


Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves Index

Reserve No	RESERVE NAME <i>Alphabetical order</i>	LEGAL DESCRIPTION	AREA (HA)	CT/GAZETTE REF:	RESERVES ACT STATUS
1	Birdwood Depot	Lot 1 DP 50606 Allotment 146 Parish Of Waipareira	3.6527 ha	CT 2087/96	Freehold
2	Birdwood Winery Estate	Lot 2 DP 50606	8.2619 ha	All CT 2B/867	Public Reserve
3	Don Buck's Corner	Pt Lot 6 DP 42849 Lot 1 DP 43970 Lot 2 DP 43970 Lot 39 DP 75594	1.1681 ha 3525m2 1629m2 506m2 6021m2	Part CT 1381/50 or 2057/16 All CT 1347/71 Part CT 1164/24 Part CT 2057/16	Possibly Esplanade Reserve Not a Reserve Esplanade Reserve Esplanade Reserve
4	Don Buck Primary School Rec Reserve	Lot 2 DP 64720	1.4126 ha	Part CT 20c/986	Recreation Ground
5	Starling Park	Lot 1 DP 163590 Lot 153 DP 74953 Lot 189 DP77830 Lot 135 DP 87373 Lot 136 DP 87409 Lot 137 DP 87410 Lot 138 DP 87411 Lot 87 DP 89138 Lot 89 DP 98057 Lot 91 DP 100575 Lot 88 DP 106953 Lot 89 DP 106953	5108m2 1.6718 8612m2 1553m2 1011m2 1704m2 2538m2 1867m2 406m2 1350 m2 3875 m2 2470 m2	All CT 98C/667 Part CT 16/A595 Part CT 31A/1093 Part CTs 44A/485 & 44A/486 All CT 45B/415 All CT 45B/416 All CT 45B/417 Part CTs 45A/984 & 45A/985 Part CT 's 49A/621 & 49A/622 Part CTs 50B/1269 & 50B/1270 Part CT 56D/1136 Part CT 56D/1136	Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Probably - (not stated) Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve Recreation Reserve



	Lot 87 DP 129440	463m2	Part CT 67C/91	Recreation Reserve
	Lot 95 DP 129440	1823m2	Part CT 67C/91	Probably - (not stated) Recreation Reserve
	Lot 105 DP 137935	1270m2	Part CT 67C/91	Recreation Reserve
	Lot 106 DP 137935	1420m2	Part CT 67C/91	Recreation Reserve
	Lot 107 DP 137935	674m2	Part CT 67C/91	Recreation Reserve
	Lot 76 DP 152620	2520m2	Part CT 67C/91	Recreation Reserve
	Lot 85 DP 159721	2659m2	All CT 96A/302	Recreation Reserve
6	Te Rangi Hiroa	4266m2 29.6060 ha	All CT 97A/447	Recreation Reserve
	Part Section 27 Block 14 Waitemata Survey District SO Plan 50427	2.3143	Part CT 13A/1460	Pleasure Ground
	Part Lot 4 DP 19247	1.5753	Part CT 1520/27	Pleasure Ground
	Part Allotment 15 DP 78674.0468		CT 206/104	Pleasure Ground
	Lot 1 DP 19247	1.9829	All CT 475/93	Recreation Reserve
	Pt Lot 10 DP 40763	294m2	Part CT 56B/632	Esplanade Reserve
	Lot 11 DP 40763	369m2	CT 1302/100	to be purchased
	Lot 12 DP 40763	25m2	Part CT 994/226	Esplanade Reserve
	Lot 4 DP 49674	392m2	Part CT 884/124	Esplanade Reserve
	Lot 5 DP 49674	215m2	All CT 42C/530	Esplanade Reserve
	Lot 3 DP 64720	278m2		Esplanade Reserve
	Lot 2 DP 70307	2536m2	Part CT 1164/23	Esplanade Reserve
	Lot 27 DP 75593	5861m2	Part CT 2057/16	Recreation Reserve
	Lot 38 DP 75593	650m2	Part CT 27A/259	Recreation Reserve
	Lot 1 DP 80484	2.0425	All CT 37A/1056	Recreation Ground
	Part Section 26 SO Plan 54875	6.2590	Part CT 726/116	Recreation Ground
	Part Lot 3 DP 19247	2.0245	Part CT 637/208	1.5016 Rec. Ground .5409 Rec. Reserve
	Lot 36 DP 75593	142m2	Part CT 2057/16	Access way





4.0 Strategic Context

4.1 Green Network 1994

The objective of the Green Network is to link existing open space, streams and bush remnants into an ecologically continuous network extending from the ranges, along the stream and road networks, and across open spaces, to the sea. The Green Network seeks to link the ranges and the sea in one continuous chain or corridor. Within this corridor the full natural progression of coastal to mountain vegetation, habitats and processes is able to take place.



Old Winery Building

The Green Network will be used:

- To protect significant natural vegetation and wildlife habitats;
- To develop ecological corridors which will allow for the movement of wildlife, and the slow migration of plants;
- To protect significant landforms;
- To protect water quality in streams and waterways bordered by the network;
- To make the city a more attractive place visually;
- Potentially to service households and business needs;
- As a flood protection tool;
- To provide public access to and along the coast, streams, lakes and other waterways;
- To help integrate the City's natural and urban environments and
- To help create a new city form...separated by the Green Network but also linked by means of walkways and cycle ways.

within the City based on ten objectives. These objectives provide a framework for all park management. The objectives are:

- 1 Increase the use and enjoyment of parks.
- 2 Extend and improve the City's natural ecosystems.
- 3 Increase the opportunities for people to enjoy nature in parks.
- 4 Parks are managed sustainably as part of the wider landscape.
- 5 Improve the use, range and quality of sports facilities within the City.
- 6 Protect the heritage values within parks and increase the awareness of the local area's heritage.
- 7 To provide quality local and neighbourhood parks that are within walking distance throughout the City.
- 8 To provide in partnership with Iwi, and where relevant, the wider Maori community, the protection of waahi tapu and sites of significance found on parks.
- 9 Involve communities in the design and management of parks.
- 10 To improve the management and administration of parks.

4.2 Parks Strategy

The Parks Strategy outlines an integrated vision for the future of Waitakere City parks. It outlines a programme for change and improvement of the open space areas





Birdwood Winery Carpark

In addition, all Waitakere parks have been classified into different categories according to the particular role they play within the overall strategy. This classification system identifies several of the Te Rangi Hiroa reserves as City-wide Reserves. City-wide Reserves are seen as the key method of meeting the needs of Waitakere City in the future, and as providing a unique recreational and ecological function within the wider City-wide Parks network. "These reserves provide benefits and are distinguished by their size and multiple use nature, their importance to the Green Network, their role as a major sports park or some other feature which makes them of city wide importance. People would travel all around the city and sometimes the region, to use these parks".

The Parks Strategy makes specific recommendations for several of the Te Rangi Hiroa reserves.

- Te Rangi Hiroa is identified as City-wide multi-use and one of two equestrian centres for the City.
- Birdwood Winery Estate is identified as a City-wide reserve.
- Starling Park is identified as a City-wide sports field, a key area for active recreation.
- Swanson Stream corridor and bush on Te Rangi Hiroa Park are identified as a priority for the Green

Network - for the development of walkways and as a wildlife corridor connecting the Waitakere Ranges to the sea.

- The Swanson Stream is considered a high priority for developing public access.
- Birdwood Scarp (comprising a steeply contoured vacant lot of native bush and scrub adjacent to Te Rangi Hiroa) is identified for acquisition and has been designated in the District Plan.



Parks Strategy

Policies that relate to the Te Rangi Hiroa Management Plan



1 Increase the use and enjoyment of parks.

Adapt parks to meet the recreation needs of more people participating in casual recreation.

Te Rangi Hiroa is identified as a City-wide park of a size suitable for casual recreation.

Facilities for young teenagers should be provided on City-wide and local multi-use parks.

2 Extend and improve the city's natural ecosystems.

Swanson Stream is identified as one of three streams in the city with enough parkland beside them to provide ecological corridors. A continuous corridor of natural ecosystems should be established along the Swanson Stream.

Swanson stream corridor is identified as a City-wide park with a Green Network focus.

To restore native ecosystems so that they become self-sustaining and less susceptible to weed invasion.

3 Increase the opportunities for people to enjoy nature on parks.

Increase people's access to the natural environment and increase understanding of environmental processes. Provision of walkways and interpretative information can facilitate this.

The Strategy promotes opportunities for "restoring areas that are highly visible to the community, inspire participation and can convey to the public the concept of the green network"

4 Parks are managed sustainably as part of the wider landscape.

Especially the use of water stormwater, water treatment, reuse/recycling of water. Design of buildings to reflect local character and amenity.

5 Improve the use, range and quality of sports facilities within the city.

Starling Park is identified as a location of sports fields.

"Two equestrian parks will be provided at Te Rangi Hiroa/Birdwood Winery Estate and Henderson Park. Equestrian Clubs will be encouraged to move to these parks".

6 Protect the heritage values within parks and increase the awareness of the heritage of the city and local areas.

To more effectively identify, protect and conserve heritage features in the City's parks. To establish links between heritage features in parks and other heritage sites in the community.

To provide interpretative material on-site about the heritage features in parks to encourage public involvement in the identification, protection and conservation of heritage features in parks.



4.3 Leisure Strategy

The Leisure Strategy outlines the Council's goals for the provision of future leisure opportunities in Waitakere. The overall goal is "to improve the well being of the city's people and communities by provision and support for a diverse range of leisure opportunities". This is to be realised by the achievement of three goals:

Goal 1

Promote enjoyment of life through participation in activities which develop self-confidence, skills, physical health or fitness.

Goal 2

Promote opportunities for recreational experiences of natural environments.

Goal 3

Promote a sense of belonging and community and City identity.

4.4 Weed Strategy

The goal of the WCC Weed Strategy is the "Protection of the quality, resilience, biodiversity and ecological integrity of Waitakere City's natural habitat from the impacts of environmental weeds".

The Strategy directs Council's approach to the management of environmental weeds. It describes Council's long term goals and objectives, and provides a framework to guide the Council in carrying out its roles and responsibilities with regard to identifying, prioritising and managing weed impacts"

4.5 Te Kawerau A Maki Trust Resource Management Statement

In 1840, John White, a travelling European in the west, observes that "in the produce of the land and sea, Kawerau do not pay tribute to any chief, nor could they be commanded by any adjoining tribe or hapu to assist in any act whatever, nor could a chief go to any of the Kawerau fishing grounds without the express permission of the Kawerau people" (Rules Section, District Plan 1998 p3).

The Resource Management Statement outlines the

concerns and goals of the Kawerau a Maki Trust with regard to the sustainable management of the taonga within the tribal area of Te Kawerau a Maki.

5.0 Management Plan Objectives

5.1 An Integrated Vision for the Reserves

The Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves together make up a significant area of open space. This area of open space is a resource destined to meet the recreation requirements of local community groups, regional recreation groups, passive users, active users, teenagers, the elderly, and a variety of cultures both now and in the future, whilst preserving its historical, landscape and natural values. The requirements are bound to increase as the surrounding urban area develops. The successful management of the reserves rests on the appreciation of the need to implement a holistic approach so that the reserves are complementary in the resources they offer to the community and to Waitakere City at large.

While the ecological values of the reserves are not high at present, there is potential for the bush, streams and riparian margins to be managed and restored as a significant ecological linkage connected by walkways to other parts of the city. Te Rangi Hiroa also has considerable significance as a typical Foothills landscape, the landform of the bush-covered scarp is visible for some distance, and will become more significant as the surrounding area loses its 'natural' character.

The protection of the natural character of the reserves and provision for appropriate recreational use and development, are the primary focus of this Management Plan.

5.2 Approach to Preparing Policies

In recognition of the need to develop policy in an integrated manner and recognising that the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves will need to meet the future recreational needs of both the local and wider community, an integrated approach has been taken.





The Management Plan acknowledges that the reserves must meet the needs of many different user groups whilst retaining their environmental values. Combined, they are multi-purpose and should complement each other in order to form an integrated whole. They share many management issues, which require a consistent approach in terms of policy.

Objectives and Policies are based on the various issues associated with the reserves. In some instances there are issues and/or use and development opportunities that are specific to particular reserves. These are catered for by way of individual Concept Plans, which are located in Part 3 of this Plan and/or under the implementation bullet points for each policy.

5.3 Community Expectations for the Reserves

The process of preparing a Reserve Management Plan began with a submission period where interested people were invited to comment on any issues to be considered in the preparation of the Management Plan. This submission period closed on 7th April 2000. Due to the low public response during the initial submission period, the management plan process subsequently linked in to the community workshop being held for the Ranui Birdwood Structure Plan. Twenty-six preliminary submissions were received.

The reserves and associated buildings are currently used by several recreation groups, many of them with region-wide membership. Birdwood Estate is home to West Auckland BMX, Auckland Car Club, West City Darts Club and Western Districts Model Railway Club, as well as other casual users and events. Te Rangi Hiroa is home to the Massey Pony Club and Starling Park hosts the Ranui Swanson AFC and Beats Softball Club, as well as a range of casual users.

Members of the local community have identified Te Rangi Hiroa as an ideal location for a much-needed indoor teen facility, the Ranui Teen Centre. The majority of the submissions were from groups/clubs that currently lease the reserves and their facilities and wished to retain the security of tenure, or from those that would like to have such an arrangement, including the Ranui Teen Centre.

Starling Park appears to be well used by the community in its current condition and there were requests for the extension of the existing facilities there.

6.0 Reserve Value Descriptions

6.1 Natural Environment

6.1.1 Geology and Soils

Te Rangi Hiroa reserves can be divided into four main soil types.

- 1 **The Swanson Stream bed**, (channels and riparian margins) - whakapara silt loam and clay loam, flood plain soil, well to moderately well-drained, typical of this area.
- 2 **The rest of the reserve lowland**, (including Starling Park), - undulating terraces and lowland soils, well to moderately well-drained.
- 3 **The hills** - characterised by layers of Waitemata group sediments - sandstones, siltstones and mudstones.
- 3b **The northern scarp** (across the Momutu Creek from Birdwood Depot and also Birdwood Primary Recreation Reserve) - Cornwallis Series, brown granular loams and clays and related steepland soils. Alternating sandstone and mudstone.

Generally, the lower-lying areas consist of eroded sediment derived from the surrounding hills and interlaid with organic soils and pumice silts and sands. The dominant feature of these lowland and flood plain soils is undifferentiated alluvium. This is very thinly to thickly bedded, variously coloured, angular to well-rounded, mixed sizes of sand and gravel, comprising rock fragments and weathered rock residue from the hinterland. It includes some beds of black, humus rich clay and fibrous peat. It is unconsolidated to very soft, and unweathered.

Groundwater levels tend to be very high due to the proximity of the stream channels. Material is prone to accelerated erosion with increased channel flows from uncontrolled stormwater discharges or catchment land use changes. Hazards include the potential for flooding and generally poor building foundation conditions.

Generally, soil types in the catchment are of low to





moderate value for food production. Issues are erosion and sedimentation around the watercourse and flood plain, water drainage and instability of slopes.

6.1.2 Vegetation

The ecological state of the Te Rangi Hiroa reserves is typical of the Birdwood and Swanson catchment area in general. The catchment landscape is characterised by rolling land, fairly steep ridges planted in macrocarpas and pines, and remnant pieces of native bush in the gullies. Little original forest remains and all remnant sites have varying degrees of weed infestation, due to their repeated clearance, small size and continued grazing by stock.

A survey of Te Rangi Hiroa carried out in 1999, found that generally the ecological values are low. The land has long been cleared for grazing and any pockets of native vegetation or revegetation that remain have survived because they are on hillsides or gullies less hospitable to stock. Overall, the scrub on the south facing hillsides and the stream margins is in poor condition, heavily infested with invasive weeds.

Most of this regenerating native bush is found on the north side of the Momutu Stream, on the Te Rangi Hiroa scarp. Overall, the bush area is mixed in quality, ranging from low to moderate and there are no climax species present. It is composed primarily of a limited range of pioneering species and can be roughly divided into three different categories:

The large knoll, across the Momutu from Birdwood Depot where the canopy is a stand of maturing pine trees. Here the undergrowth is thin, there are some regenerating natives, mostly ferns, and invasive weeds have not yet established up the hillside.

The strip of scarp bush, to the east of the pines, across the Momutu from Birdwood Winery Estate. Here the canopy is comprised of a significant populations of tree ferns which, in the absence of other species, are

visible across the flood plain. Of note are specimens of tree fuchsia surviving in this bush remnant. As these are highly palatable to possums, this may indicate low possum numbers.

The riparian margins, where invasive weeds are at their worst, forming dense, impenetrable thickets which in many places block access, prevent native regeneration and threaten to smother native canopy species.

A 1997 vegetation study mentions Birdwood Primary School gully as having the most significant, potentially self-sustaining, vegetation in the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves. This gully contains an unnamed tributary to the Swanson Stream and two small feeder gullies. The bush is a reasonably sized remnant, and is in fairly good health with good native canopy cover present. The area designated as reserve includes the riparian margin and is a valuable ecological link. There is also a side gully adjacent to this which is connected to the larger gully and offers an opportunity for an ecological link up to the school.

The Council is proposing to purchase additional land along the scarp to the northeast of the Swanson Stream. While this is currently in poor condition and has a canopy of wattle, it will be a valuable addition to



Weeds cover the Swanson Stream





the Reserves and Green Network. The inclusion of land on both sides of the Swanson Stream in the Te Rangi Hiroa reserve will buffer the stream, reduce the edge effect and create a larger, more sustainable area of bush.

The overall quality of the vegetation in the reserves is poor, native species such as there are, are mostly common, colonising species like coprosma and hangehange. There are significant populations of native fuchsia and tree ferns, both cyathea and dealbata spp. which make up the canopy in places on the northern scarp. Generally, weed infestation, particularly along the stream corridor, threatens to overwhelm and destroy the native revegetation altogether and makes access to the stream and the northern scarp almost impossible in places. If the bush is not to collapse altogether, a systematic programme of weed control needs to be implemented. Despite the scale and cost of this exercise, it would be of benefit because of the strategic value of the scarp and the stream corridor as ecological linkage. While the Te Rangi Hiroa reserves are not ranked as containing 'significant' vegetation, they are strategically placed to buffer and join other areas of 'significant' vegetation in the Green Network.

6.1.3 Fauna

The 1999 Ecological Study found that there is no evidence of any notable native bird species in the reserves. Avifauna recorded was limited to common native and exotic species.

The Study found that native birds present in the area include plovers, fantails, waxeyes, pukeko, harrier hawk, kingfishers, ruru (morepork), rosellas, a few kereru and grey warblers. There are significant populations of pest birds such as magpies and mynas, which, along with the lack of suitable habitat and predation by mustelids, possums and rats, may inhibit the establishment and expansion of native bird populations.

The bush of the nearby Waitakere Ranges provides a much better quality habitat for avifauna, in particular kereru. Their proximity helps support local bird life and the Swanson Stream corridor is used as a link to this better quality bush.



Regenerating natives on northern scarp



More weeds....

A survey of the streams of the Birdwood catchment prepared by Ecowater in April, 2002 measures the water quality and invertebrate communities of the Swanson and Momutu Streams. The report is included as Appendix 4 to this Plan.

6.1.4 Landscape

The meandering stream corridor and associated flood plain and scarp are distinctive landscape features, a typical Waitakere Foothills formation. Birdwood Scarp runs along the far bank of the Momutu and Swanson streams and dominates the skyline along the northern boundary of the reserves. A landscape assessment done for the Birdwood Structure Plan gives the scarp a reasonably high sensitivity rating. This is due to it's homogenous tree cover and the fact that the trees are sited on a distinctive steep slope, highly visible from the surrounding areas and the local park which lie at the foot of the scarp to the south.





The District Plan provides the following criteria for determining the sensitivity of ridgelines and scarps:

- Whether the ridge is visible with a backdrop of either sea or sky when seen from a public place.
- Whether the ridge has been modified or is predominantly natural.
- Whether the ridge is steep, moderate or broad.

The reserves landscape is uniquely distinguished by the complementary elements of the flood plain and scarp, separated by the stream corridor. The scarp is steep, high and dominated by scrub, the flood plain is flat and low and covered in pasture. The stream floods regularly, affecting the soils and vegetation in the paddocks on the flood plain. Thus the landscape demonstrates the interrelatedness of form and function. This distinctive 'working' landscape will become even more precious as what is left of the surrounding countryside is consumed by housing development. The Council acquisition of 5.58 ha of adjacent land continuing the scarp to the northeast will extend the landscape sequence and further enhance the reserves network. (See map 104 Don Buck Road - Page 27).

Additional landscape features include elements of the cultural landscape. The avenue of pleached Cypress trees at the entrance into Birdwood Winery Estate off

Glen Road stems from the European tradition of marking vineyards with an impressive entrance, so that anyone passing by on a country road knew they were passing an estate of worth.

The grove of magnificent old plum trees on the flats in Te Rangi Hiroa is the remnant of an old orchard. These plum trees are of considerable value as specimens of genetic heritage now lost to everyday use. The age of the trees, the lack of any protection or care and the ongoing damage by horses has meant that some of them have fallen over and many of those remaining are in poor condition. Nonetheless, the remnant and now imperfect, rows of these grand old trees are still worthy of preservation as testament to a landscape and way of life now past.

6.1.5 Water

There are 3 streams that run through the Reserves. The Swanson Stream joins the Momutu Stream between Birdwood and Te Rangi Hiroa. A little further downstream an unnamed stream flows along the boundary of the Don Buck Primary Recreation Reserve and joins the Swanson Stream from the north. The Swanson Stream flows a short distance through Massey out to the Huruheru Inlet of the Waitemata Harbour.

These streams form part of the lower Swanson Stream watershed.

Parts of the reserves have high groundwater levels. At Birdwood Depot shallow flow groundwater runs in a northeasterly direction toward the Momutu Stream, however deep groundwater flow is expected to flow east to the Waitemata Harbour.

A survey of freshwater fish and habitat values done in 1997, took samples from three sites within the Te Rangi Hiroa reserves. The survey recorded numerous native fish at these three sites.

Site 1(Don Buck's Corner) common bully, long finned eel, shrimp and



Scarp with Birdwood floodplain in foreground







rarely, whitebait.

Site 2 (Momutu above Swanson confluence) occasional common bully, koura and shrimp.

Site 3 (Above Birdwood Depot) crans bully, koura and shrimp.

The Ecowater Water Quality Programme Report for Birdwood records Banded Kokopu, being sited in the unnamed tributary to the Swanson, below the Momutu confluence.

With some diversity and a general abundance of freshwater fishes, the major factors compromising the health of the streams are lack of, or incorrect riparian vegetation and poor water quality.



Horse Crossing - Swanson Stream

Freshwater fish depend on benthic species and insects for food, and also on in-stream cover such as logs and stones. The value of habitats is compromised by the absence of, or incorrect species of, tall woody riparian vegetation on the stream banks. The absence of riparian vegetation results in direct sunlight hitting the stream, raised temperatures and algal blooms. Where there is riparian vegetation, willows are the dominant species, choking the waterways, stagnating the water and encouraging oxygen fluctuating growths of algae and bacteria. The willows also cause increased rates of sedimentation, the sediment smothering benthic species. Flooding events are also greater and more frequent in these heavily choked streams.

There is past evidence of stream pollution from contaminants leaching from the Birdwood Depot. Leachate sampling done in 1998 showed evidence of high ammonia and COD levels, indicating that any leachate concentration entering the Momutu Stream may have been toxic to aquatic life. An Environmental Site Investigation of Birdwood Depot by Pattle Delamore Partners Ltd 1994, concluded that potential contaminant pathways to the Momutu Stream were the stormwater and open drainage system in the

Depot. As no service plans are available for the site, the report presumes that the Depot underground drain transports stormwater and possibly leachate directly to the Momutu Stream. "The stormwater sewer is expected to drain to Momutu Stream or a tributary of Momutu Stream". The sewer running through Te Rangi Hiroa from Birdwood is also identified as a potential contaminant pathway.

A more recent survey of water quality has been undertaken to determine possible levels of stream contamination from leachate from the Birdwood Depot. The report, by Environmental and Earth Sciences, Feb 2002 (Appendix 3), collects and analyses samples from the Momutu Stream and compares them with water samples taken for the upper Swanson stream "The results from the limited sampling carried out indicate that the historical filling activities do not appear to have a major impact on the water quality in the adjacent Birdwood (Momutu) Stream".

The latest report from Ecowater (Appendix 4), identifies the limiting factor for native species in the Swanson Stream as the lack of variation of the stream flows, eg eddies, pools, rapids etc which are conducive to stream health and habitat. Correct riparian planting





should help to re-establish these natural variations in the current.

A major source of stream contamination within the reserves is that of stock grazing the stream margins and having access to the streams beds.

The streams are degraded as a result of weed infestation, grazing access and water pollution. Even so, they have potentially high ecological values, especially as habitat for increasingly rare, native freshwater species. Significant populations of the threatened Banded Kopuku (*galaxias fasciatus*) were recorded in the upper Swanson Stream in 1997. This species migrate from the sea as whitebait, so changes in habitat in the lower reaches of the Stream could jeopardise these valuable populations.

The streams and their margins also have considerable aesthetic value and value as part of the Green Network. Momutu Stream, where it enters Te Rangi Hiroa, has a 15m riparian margin, which is reduced to 10 metres through Birdwood Estate. Swanson Stream has a 20 m margin.

6.2 Cultural Heritage And History

6.2.1 Maori Heritage

The land between the Waitakere Ranges and the Waitemata has a long history of human occupation dating back to at least the Kawerau people in the 16th Century, if not earlier. In pre-European times, the land around Swanson (Waitakere Foothills) was heavily forested and damp, with heavy clay soils. For these reasons it was not desirable for habitation and was never an area that was permanently occupied by Maori. However, the main ridgelines in these foothills were well used by Maori as pathways between the Waitakere Ranges and the Waitemata. It is also likely that the navigable waterways, such as the Swanson (and possibly the Momutu) Stream, were well used, giving access to forest and stream resources. The most important tracks for portage and movement in this area were; the Whau portage, the Riverhead portage, the Kaipara to Whau walking track and the Te Henga to Whau walking track. It is likely that the ridgelines of Don Buck Rd accommodated tracks

linking to these major routes and formed part of a comprehensive communications network.

6.2.2 European Heritage

The story of European settlement in West Auckland is embodied in the history and development of the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves in the Birdwood foothills. According to historian Kevin Lynch, Birdwood was named after "General William Birdwood, an Imperial Indian Army officer who planned the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli and subsequently commanded New Zealand and Australian troops in bloodbaths at the Somme and Ypres in World War 1".

Generally, the southwest aspect of the Birdwood Basin and its poor soils did not favour settlement by either Maori or European. However, two of the most famous and colourful European pioneers of the west settled as contemporaries and neighbours beside the Swanson Stream in the early years of the 20th century. The one, near Don Buck's Corner, the other, on Birdwood Estate. The history of the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves is best told through their stories.

Don Buck

European settlement in West Auckland began in the 1840's following purchases of land by the crown and individuals. By the 1850's, Henderson, Waitakere and Swanson were established centres for the timber industry. As timber supplies dwindled, farming and gum digging became the principal means of employment. By 1885, the foothills area was thriving, its pioneer economy based on timber, flax, gum and farming.

Gum digging, which required only rudimentary tools and skills, began to assume an important role in the settlement of the area. During the late 1800's, a number of camps sprang up accommodating itinerant diggers. One of the most notorious of these was that of Don Buck at Birdwood. Don Buck, a Portuguese, whose real name was Francisco Randolph Figuero, was described as a benevolent hardman, whom few crossed. He rode a black stallion, often carried a pistol and sported a drooping black moustache.

Don Buck persuaded magistrates in town to sentence

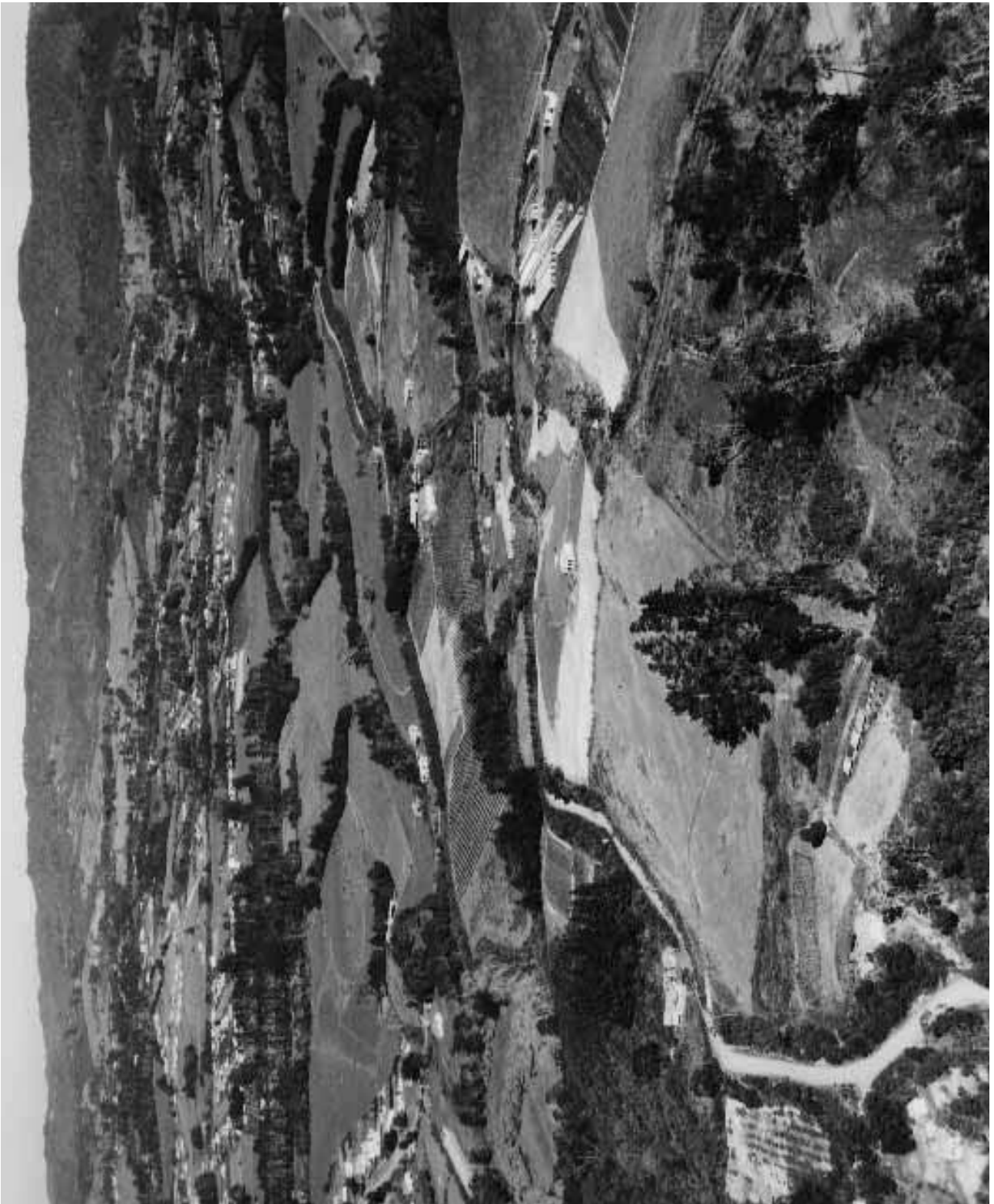




petty thieves and drunks to “two weeks in Mt Eden Prison or the same in Don Buck’s Camp” and he went once week to town to collect those choosing the camp in a cart. Other troublemakers, who, having completed their sentence had no place to go, were released directly into his care. Once in the camp they were given accommodation, tools, a wage and set to work digging gum. He was reputed to be fair in all his dealings and locals tell of his kindness to those who were on hard times. In the 1900’s local vineyards started producing sherry and wine, and the camp developed a reputation for drunken orgies. There were drunken brawls, drinking sprees that lasted for days and several murders. The camp became notorious as a haven for vagrants, criminals and the discards of society. In 1912, a magistrate ordered the camp closed “in the interests of society”. Don Buck himself was never seen drunk nor in the company of disreputable women. The camp closed upon his death about 1914. The campsite of Don Buck has never been formally identified but is believed to have been located on the river flat lying between Glen Road and Swanson Stream, immediately west of the Glen Road/Don Buck intersection. Between 1904 and 1913, Figuero purchased parcels of land totalling 831 acres between Huruuru Creek and the junction of Momutu and Swanson streams. It is highly likely that the area was dug over by gum diggers, significantly modifying the turn-of-the-century landscape.

From Top: Don Buck’s Corner Walkway, Don Buck’s Playground, Don Buck’s Plaque





Aerial view of Massey showing Birdwood Winery at centre





Birdwood Estate

Birdwood Winery Estate was the home of Simun Ujdur, it's founder. Together, they made a significant contribution to the development of the New Zealand wine industry, to the Dalmatian community in New Zealand and the development of West Auckland as a whole.

The vineyard was established in 1914 and was well known both for it's wines and as a place for immigrants to stay when they arrived from Yugoslavia. Today many West Auckland residents remember the pioneering days of the vineyard.

The Birdwood Vineyard was established by Simun Mijo Ujdur. Born in Gradac in 1882, Simun arrived from Croatia in 1895. As a lad he toiled on the gum fields and in 1905 became a freelance photographer based in Dargaville. In 1911, he shifted his studio to Federal Street in Auckland and bought 30 acres of scrub and swamp from Mr Joe Crowe in Ranui. His neighbours were Joe Crowe, (the original owner), and the infamous Don Buck. By 1914, he had established the 'Birdwood Vineyard' which became a flourishing business complete with underground cellar, the only one of its kind in New Zealand at that time.

During the First World War and in subsequent decades, Simun Ujdur was at the forefront of the Dalmatian-Croatian community's battle for acceptance and recognition as New Zealanders. Ujdur also became a prominent figure in the pioneering wine making industry, and was president of the New Zealand Viticulture Association for 20 years from its' founding in 1926. He had close links with Maori, both from working the gumfields and as neighbours and workers at the winery.

An innovative pioneer, he was an astute and enterprising man, a generous host who was renown for his interest in photography, books, politics, winemaking, wine marketing, diplomacy and philanthropy. Intelligent and hospitable, he was perhaps best known for his remarkable library, a magnificent collection of valuable written material regarded as a mecca for teachers, professors, theologians, doctors, solicitors, masons, gum diggers and MP's. This library



From Top: Birdwood Winery buildings, Birdwood Homestead

was reputed to contain 35,000 volumes, and was considered to be the largest private library in the Pacific at that time. Men from the RNZAF stationed at Hobsonville and Whenuapai were always welcomed at Birdwood. Ujdur imported a brandy still from France and used a system of wires and cowbells strung all over the vineyard to scare off birds. He became a collector of old New Zealand arts and crafts, pottery and music. He was also an early enthusiast of Esperanto.

Ujdur's reputation and that of Birdwood vineyard were one. Between 1920 and 1940 Birdwood vineyard was a well-known landmark in the city. It was one of the





Auckland Literary Group outside Birdwood Vineyards library 1920's (R Sunde Collection West Auckland Historical Society)



Birdwood Vineyards founder S.m. Ujdur outside the summer house





largest and finest vineyards in New Zealand. During the 1930's it ranked among the 3 largest wineries in the country, the others being Corbans and Vidals.

In 1944, New Zealand Customs placed all of Birdwood's operations under quarantine for three years after receiving what may have been false information that Ujdur was selling illegal spirits. Ujdur was forced to release 60,000 gallons of wine losing six years of trade. According to his nephew, this was a blow from which the vineyard never recovered. Simun Ujdur never married, and upon his death on Christmas day in 1953, he left the vineyard to his brother and nephews. They continued to run the vineyard until 1966. Over the years, it went into decline until, in 1970, the final vintage was made. After years of languishing under the strain of death duties and crippling litigation, the estate and its chattels were auctioned off in 1977.

Today, remnants of the estate can be seen in the outbuildings and plantings, perhaps most notably the impressive entrance to the old estate. The driveway is lined with pleached Japanese cedar, *Cryptomeria japonica* 'elegans', planted by the Ujdur family some 80 years ago.

When the Model Railway Club moved into the cellar of the old Winery building in the 1980's, they found it to be permanently damp. It had been built over a streambed in order to cool the wine. This stream was subsequently diverted into a drain where it remains today.

Birdwood Depot

In 1969, a block of Birdwood Estate was acquired by Waitemata City Council for \$10,000, under the provisions of the Public Works Act, for use as a tip and works 'depot'.

Located at 98 Birdwood Rd, the site is 3.6527 ha (8.95 acres). It extends 420 metres along Birdwood Road and the Momutu Stream forms the northern boundary. The land is irregularly shaped with artificial contours dropping steeply to the Momutu Stream. Prior to 1940, some of this land had been used as a night soil dump. The dump site was somewhere on the far western end of Birdwood Depot, although the exact location, the amount of soil dumped and the period of time it was in use have not been recorded.

Birdwood Depot is made up of two sites, Lots 1 & 2. Lot 1 (3 acres), on the northeast section of the site near the BMX, was the old Council Works Depot. This was a legal depot and was used as an interim municipal disposal site after the closure of the Taikata landfill until 1972. In 1973, the Depot was developed for roading and stormwater operations and vehicle maintenance and storage buildings were also built.

Lot 2, the vacant land to the west, is elevated from landfill and is covered with grass and weeds. This has been used for both legal and illegal dumping.

The BMX site may also have been used for filling, as there is some sign of debris there, but there has been no investigation.



From Top: Birdwood Depot, Lot 2 - Before Council clean up, Birdwood Depot, Lot 1 (Birdwood Estate in Background) - post clean up





The illegal dumping of rubbish was first noted in 1967. Car bodies have been dumped on the site since 1972. The stockpiling of cars and inorganic rubbish dumping were the primary purposes of the Depot from 1975 – 1995. It is thought that, during the 1980's, as many as 1800 cars were dumped per year. During this period, cars and trucks were dumped in the Momutu Stream. Many bitumen drums were also dumped in the Stream and on the bank. Spillage, generally from bad handling practises, was by all accounts common. Pesticides were stored at the site during the 1990's.

In 1994, the Depot was closed and offered back to the original owners. From 1996, it was used to store relocatable houses and for the maintenance and storage of vehicles.

Leachate seepage into the Momutu Stream has been recorded. There are records of on-site spills into stormwater or directly into the Momutu Stream. There are also issues of instability of the landfill on the stream banks on the south side of Momutu Stream. The steep slopes (5.5m) running down to the Momutu Stream are potentially unstable. The relative steepness makes it almost impossible to access the Momutu Stream from this site.

Over recent years, a variety of reports relating to the Depot have been commissioned. A 1998 report defines the site as 'A closed sanitary landfill that has not been required to meet previous engineering or environmental regulations'. The Depot is currently registered as a hazardous site. In 2002, Council initiated a clean up of the site. The remaining car bodies have been removed from the stream, the drains flushed and cleared and the surface areas of contaminated topsoil and debris have been scaped clean and the material stockpiled.

Te Rangi Hiroa

In 1977, the vines were pulled up and the remaining 20 acres of the vineyard, including the old cellar, were sold to the Waitemata City Council as an addition to their adjacent parcels of reserve land. The reserve was initially known as Glen Rd Reserve, however it was soon named Te Rangi Hiroa after the prominent Maori figure Sir Peter Buck, whose Maori name was Te Rangi Hiroa.



From Top: Pony Club Bridge, Oikoumene entrance, Remnant Plum grove, ...Plum trees





Of Maori and Irish heritage, Te Rangi Hiroa was a figure of national importance. During the late Nineteenth Century he became a renowned doctor and academic. He achieved fame working for the Department of Health and was Medical Superintendent of both North and South Island hospitals and was also involved in the reform of national hospital and health services. He was a much-honoured academic who worked closely with both Maori and non-Maori on New Zealand history. Better educated than most Pakeha, he had a strong significance for Maori people as a man who could move in both worlds and who did much to protect and nurture cultural values and aspirations. Called by some 'the great soldier scholar', he volunteered for service in World War 1, despite deep Maori resentment and bitterness over the confiscation of Maori lands. In a time towards the end of the last century, when the Maori race was in serious decline, Te Rangi Hiroa helped inspire renewed hope and initiative among depressed Maori long before he acquired fame in medicine, politics, genealogy and literature. He was also MP for Northern Maori.

The naming of the reserve was intended as a salute to Maori people in general rather than a direct connection with the site. The name was adopted by the Waitemata City Council following their policy at that time to give parks and reserves Maori names wherever possible, and to get away from naming parks after adjoining roadways. The intention was to bring Iwi into the city and highlight Maori heritage, as it had been overlaid and often eradicated by development.

The reserve was known as Te Rangi Hiroa Reserve from 1977 on. In 1996, there were calls from some sections of the community to have Te Rangi Hiroa Park renamed Birdwood Winery Estate in recognition of the significant Croation history. The move, endorsed by the Massey Community Board, brought calls from other sections of the community to leave the name as it was. After some heated debate over the issue, Council researched the exact boundaries of the original winery and came up with 4 options for naming the park, which then went back for a further round of submissions. Finally, in 1997, after extensive public consultation, the original 12 ha of the winery, (20% of the park), minus the Depot, was renamed Birdwood Winery Estate in



From Top: TARARA - Maori-Croatian Plaque, Simon's Stockade

recognition of the Croation history. The rest of the park, 80 % of the total 60 ha area, which had not been part of the winery, remained as Te Rangi Hiroa Reserve.

Te Rangi Hiroa was conceived as a major recreation reserve in the 1970's and since the first major purchase of land to form a central core, areas have been added to it as they have become available, gradually building up the Park to its originally planned size. The remaining land earmarked for addition to Te Rangi Hiroa Reserve is part of Lot 104 on Don Buck Road. The purchase was delayed by litigation between the Council and the owner over its designation under the District Plan. The land being acquired is 5.58ha situated to the north east





of the Swanson Stream running down to Don Buck's Corner. (p. 25) The land has been identified as Managed Natural Area and is to be vested as a Local Purpose (Esplanade) Reserve.

In 1999, a plaque commemorating the shared history of the Maori and Croatian communities was erected on the Birdwood Estate. In recent years the reserve has been the site of annual Tarara Day celebrations, commemorating the shared history of the Maori and Croatian communities in New Zealand.

Much of the information presented in this short history has been gleaned from the wonderful stories and personal accounts of the many people who presented written submissions to Council during the process of public consultation over the renaming of the reserves.

6.3 Recreation And Use

The Te Rangi Hiroa reserves are the focus for a range of recreational activities, drawing both local and regional participants. These pursuits are both formal and informal and include:

Horse riding - Massey Pony Club Te Rangi Hiroa

BMX bike racing – West Auckland BMX Club
Birdwood Estate

Driver training - Auckland Car Club Birdwood Estate

Indoor darts – West City Darts Club Birdwood Winery Building



Bamboo hedge on Glen Road boundary of Birdwood Estate

Model rail – Western Districts Model Railway Club
Birdwood Winery Building

Soccer - Ranui Swanson AFC Starling Park

Softball – Waitakere Bears/Ak Softball Association
Starling Park

Skate park Starling Park

Volleyball Starling Park

Kilikiti – Funafuti Community Group Starling Park

Children's playground Starling Park

There are other regular and casual users of the reserves and their facilities.

The Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves are sought-after sites for recreation pursuits, due to their size, their location and their semi-rural nature. This semi-rural condition suits the Pony Club in particular, who require a large amount of land for grazing and events in order to stay afloat. It also suits the Car Club and BMX Club as there are few neighbours to complain about the noise. The size and layout of the reserves means that there is ample room for what might otherwise be conflicting activities, to coexist. Moreover, the fact that the reserves, apart from Starling, are relatively isolated from residential areas means that the recreational activities do not conflict with neighbourhood values.

The majority of reserve use is through organised club activities. There is very little passive or informal use. The lack of formed pathways and the relatively undeveloped nature of the reserves, apart from Starling Park, mean that they do not attract a wide range of individual or casual users. The main users at present are the Clubs. Nor do the reserves in their current state, provide much for the elderly, women in general, minority groups or older teenagers. Areas that might be used as passive open space and attract a range of informal users outside of the Clubs are generally unattractive and unsafe. In addition, the stream banks, which might otherwise be a draw card for walking, running and playing, are so weed-infested that they are at best uninviting, at worst impenetrable. The grazing horses and electric fences may also be a deterrent to casual users.





From Top: Birdwood flood plain - site for Auckland Car Club events and Massey Pony Club cross country, Massey Pony Club Arena, Pony Club bridge

Apart from the Waitemata Drive entrance to Starling Park, access into the reserves is off Glen Rd. Car parking facilities are located only at the entrance to Birdwood which requires leaving a car in a secluded area or parking on the side of Glen Road and getting over a fence into a paddock. The lack of a footpath on the reserve side of Glen Road compounds the problem. The bamboo currently prevents visibility into Birdwood Estate. The remoteness, the lack of pathways, the weeds, the unorganised nature of the place, the lack of visibility and the relative distance to neighbouring properties are all likely raise safety and security issues and limit the use of the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserves by casual passive users.

Massey Pony Club currently has 80 members and is the largest Club in West Auckland. There is increasing pressure on other West Auckland Pony Clubs as land they have traditionally leased is taken for development. The Council's Leisure Strategy identifies Pony Clubs as one of few outdoor recreational pursuits available for girls. The Parks Strategy identifies Te Rangi Hiroa as one of two equestrian centres for the City. The Massey Club is self-funding and provides a valuable year-round presence in the reserves. The Club contributes by paying for the upkeep and maintenance of facilities, security, and the provision of toilets. They have invested money in an all-weather arena, and have new facilities on the way. They host large events that attract over 100 people. The BMX Club also provides an excellent and popular facility, which caters for families and youth of all ages. They have regular club nights, which are well-supported and host club championship events attracting crowds of several hundred. Like other clubs in the reserves, they are run by volunteers and need security of tenure to invest their own time and money in the development of their facilities. All the clubs provide a valuable presence in the parks and contribute to the daily upkeep and maintenance of the reserves and their facilities.

The development of walkways and passive recreation open space is compatible with the continuing presence of the current users. Increased informal usage and improved facilities should improve safety for all users. Fenced walkways would improve access by separating the horses from passive users and also from the





riparian margins.

Large undeveloped areas close to the city such as these reserves are increasingly rare. There will be increasing pressure on the reserves to provide a range of facilities for both the local and region-wide community, including meeting the expectations of a bigger range of ages and cultures. It is important that the reserves retain the flexibility to meet the needs of the widest possible range of users. This Management Plan looks at how those sometimes conflicting needs can be best met within the confines of the reserves environment.

6.3.1 Facilities

There is a range of facilities in the various reserves, some of which are provided and managed by Council, others by the Clubs themselves. These include:

Birdwood Winery Estate:

Toilets - as part of the old Winery building, these are maintained by the Darts Club and are available to the public - including the BMX Club, as part of the lease conditions, but are only open on Darts Club nights. The BMX Club provide their own portaloos for weekend events and events at times when the Darts Club is not open.

Carparking – the area of sealed parking in the Winery is maintained by Council.

Starling Park:

The toilet block, carpark and clubrooms, sports fields, playground and skate park are Council facilities.

Te Rangi Hiroa:

The Massey Pony Club provide all their own buildings and associated facilities in the park. They also provide and maintain their own jumps and the arena. The toilet block provided by the Pony Club has been open to the community as a public toilet. There is often no public toilet facility available in either Te Rangi Hiroa or the Birdwood Winery Estate. There is a tractor shed in the park, which is used by the Pony Club. The Pony Club is committed to building an upgraded clubhouse in the park, pending the availability of finance, as shown in the Concept Plan, Part 3.



Right: Model Railway - Winery building basement

6.3.2 Leases

Birdwood Depot

In 2002, Waitakere City Council initiated and carried out a substantial clean-up the Depot site, including the removal of the old car bodies from the Momutu Stream and the removal of the surface material from the areas of contamination as recommended in the URS Report. Following this clean-up, and pending any decision on the long-term future of the Depot, Council is looking at various options for the short-term lease of the site. It is expected that any lease arrangements will take the form of a combination of leases, particularly the granting of leases to parties requiring storage facilities for short-term operations such as the selling of firewood.

Birdwood Winery Estate

The right to lease part of Birdwood Winery Estate, (Lot 2 Deeds Plan 50606, 8500 m²), has been granted to the Waitakere BMX Club Incorporated. The leased area does not include the Momutu Stream bank, a 20-metre strip of esplanade reserve. The lease is for a term of ten years commencing on the 1st April 2000 and expiring 31st March 2010.

The West City Darts Club have been granted the right to lease the top floor of the Birdwood Winery building and the Birdwood Winery homestead at 103 Glen Road. The lease is for a term of twenty years commencing on





From Top: BMX start, BMX track, West Auckland Darts Club - Birdwood Winery Building.

July 1st 1986 and expiring July 1st 2006. The lease for the top floor of the Winery building is for 481m2 and allows for the casual use by several community groups of other parts of the building..." TO THE INTENT that the facility is utilised by the inhabitants of the district as fully and completely as is possible and appropriate to the particular circumstances". The lease may be terminated without compensation if the Lessor considers that the premises are not being sufficiently used for the above purposes.

The homestead is situated at 103 Glen Road and the tenancy agreement provides for the occupier, to be a member of the Darts Club and to fulfil a caretaking role for the Old Winery building.

While there are other community groups using facilities in the Birdwood Winery Estate, it appears that there is no formal agreement with any users other than those listed here.

The Western Districts Model Railway Club Incorporated are model rail enthusiasts using the basement of the Old Winery building. Although they have been resident in the building for some years, it appears that there is no current formal lease.

The Auckland Car Club are also using designated areas of the floodplain on the Winery Estate to carry out Club activities, including driver training. There appears to be no formal lease arrangement in place, however the Car Club use the Parks Booking system to book the site for their activities. The same area, the Birdwood Winery flood plain, is used by the Pony Club as part of their cross-country course on event days.

The upper part of this paddock in the Birdwood Estate, is used by the Pony Club on event days for parking, particularly the parking of trailers and horse floats.

The reserve is also booked out on a casual basis for large one-off events, such as the Tarara Day celebrations.

In 2002, parts of the main Winery entrance were closed off by bollards in order to prevent access to the reserve paddock after hours following incidents of arson, illegal car racing, dumping and vandalism. Keys were distributed to the clubs requiring access.





Starling Park

The right to lease the sports facilities at Starling Park was granted to the Starling Park Sports Club Incorporated in 1995. This lease was granted for a five-year term, with a right of renewal for a further five years, expiring in 2005. This Club combines both softball and soccer clubs.

Starling Park and the facilities are well used. In the summer, the fields are booked almost daily by the Waitakere Bears Softball Club and occasionally, the Auckland Softball Association. The Funafuti Community Group also books the field for kilikiti. At present, kilikiti is being played on the sand field and is damaging the surface.

During the winter months, the fields are generally used for soccer and the Ranui Swanson Amateur Football Club are the most frequent users, with United Soccer also frequently booking the field. There are many other casual users of the park, especially of the skatepark and volleyball facility, which appear to be well-used by the local community.

Te Rangi Hiroa

The right to lease parts of Te Rangi Hiroa Reserve was granted to the Massey Pony Club on the 16th October 2000 for a term of twenty years, less one day. The expiry date is 30th June 2020. Under the terms of the lease, the Pony Club has the right to two areas, Areas 'A' and 'B'. Area A, the "core" area is to be leased for 20 years less one day, while Area B is to be leased for 20 years less one day, but is able to be removed from the leased area at the Council's discretion, subject to one year's notice in writing. The Pony Club is responsible for the maintenance of the land and their facilities and is required to "ensure that members of the public are allowed to cross the land leased to the Tenant for the purpose of having access to the Swanson Stream and its tributaries and the esplanade reserve adjacent to those streams and shall not impede the use of the esplanade reserve by members of the general public".

Techscape Nursery currently has a lease for a site for a commercial operation within the Te Rangi Hiroa Reserve. The lease is for five years, commencing in October 2000 and expiring in September 2005. The



Top and Centre: Tarara Day 2002.
Above: Elvis - Tarara Day 2002





house and garage at 79 Glen Road are also leased by the nursery and occupied by the manager. Under the terms of the original contract, issued in 1987, the tenant is required to carry out caretaking, custodial and managerial duties in the park.

The house at 77 Glen Road is included in the Techscape lease. This house is in poor condition and the house is currently unoccupied.

Hoani Waititi Marae have, for some time, leased the house situated at 55 Glen Road in order to provide temporary emergency housing, however, there is no formal lease for this arrangement. The Massey Pony Club have expressed an interest in taking over the lease of the house at 55 Glen Road, an option that would likely improve surveillance for their own facilities in the Park and improve the safety and security of the park for all users.



In March 2002, a suspicious fire burnt the Pony Club clubhouse, which was reported by the lessees in the nursery house at 79 Glen Road. A week earlier, there was a suspicious fire in a portaloos hired for Tarara Day in Birdwood Estate. It is recommended that Council support the increased presence of legitimate users and facilities in the park in order to minimise the risk of such further incidents.



From Top: Location of proposed mountain bike trail, skate facility at Starling Park, Proposed site for skate facility - Birdwood Depot

