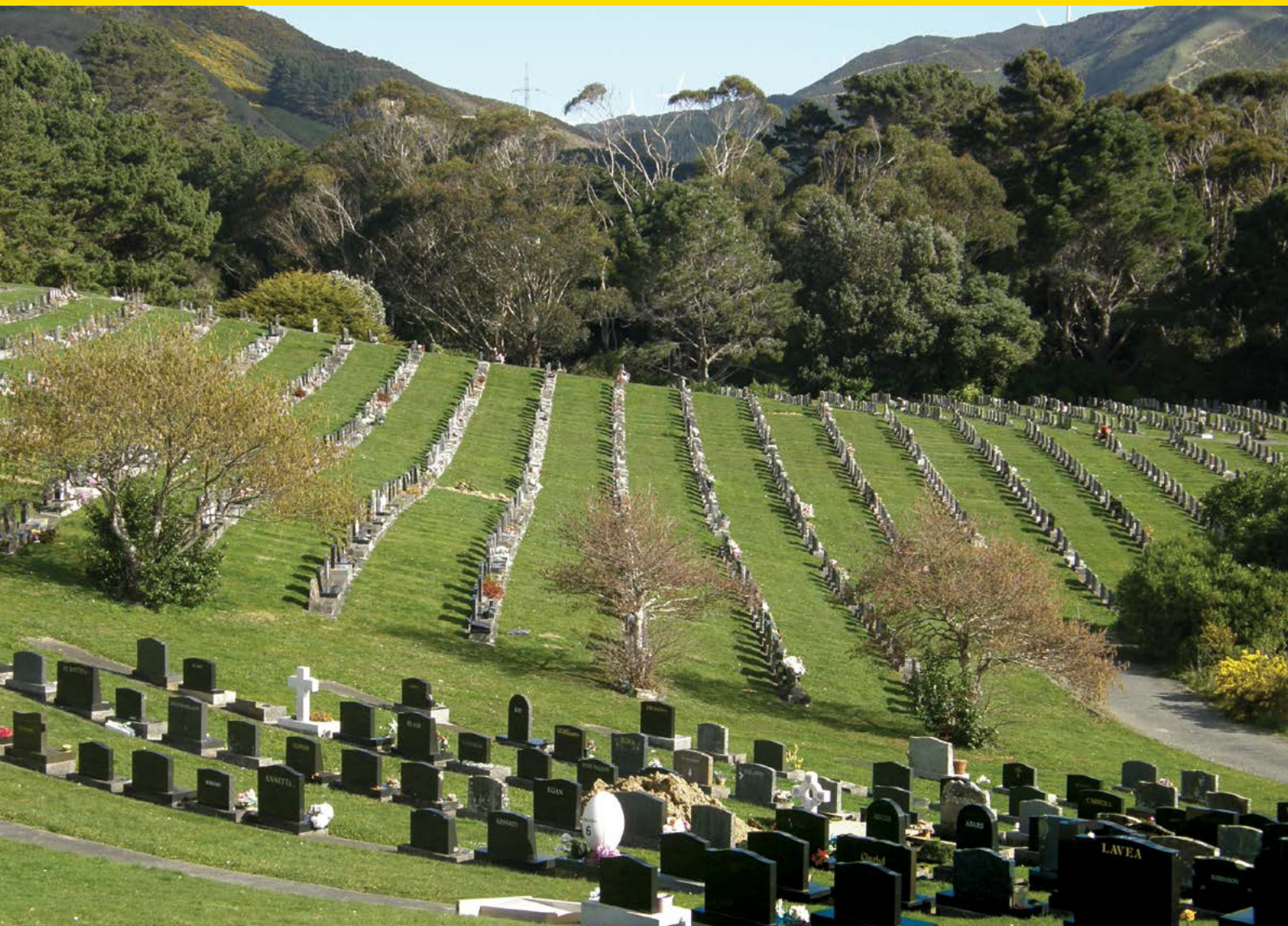


Pipiri 2021
June 2021

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

Mahere Whakahaere Urupā: Ngā Urupā o Tawa, Karori me Mākara

Cemeteries Management Plan: Tawa, Karori and Mākara Cemeteries



This strategic and management plan for Mākara, Karori and Tawa cemeteries aims to ensure we meet the short and long-term cemetery needs of our growing city.

Ihirangi
Contents

1. Mō tēnei mahere	6
About this plan	
1.1 Purpose and scope	7
1.2 Legislative and strategic framework	7
1.2.1 Reserves Act	8
1.2.2 Relationship with mana whenua	9
1.2.2.1 Opau Urupā	9
1.3 The Council's cemeteries	11
1.3.1 Tawa Cemetery	11
1.3.2 Karori Cemetery	12
1.3.3 Mākara Cemetery	12
1.3.4 Issues and opportunities	13
1.4 Cemetery trends	14
1.5 Governance and expertise	15
1.6 Plan structure	15
2. Moemoeā	16
Vision	
2.1 Vision	17
2.1.1 Key values	17
2.1.2 Goals	17
3. Ngā Whainga whānui me ngā kaupapa here	18
General objectives and policies	
3.1 Land administration and provision	19
3.1.1 Objectives	19
3.1.2 Policies	19
3.1.2.1 Land status	19
3.1.2.2 Cemetery capacity and planning	19
3.1.2.3 New cemetery master planning and landscape development	20

3.2 Customer service	21
3.2.1 Objectives	21
3.2.2 Policies	21
3.2.2.2 Respecting diversity	21
3.2.2.2 Burial and cremation rights and options	23
3.2.2.3 Remembrance	25
3.2.2.4 Gravesite maintenance	27
3.2.2.5 Quality records management and information systems	28
3.3 Heritage	29
3.3.1 Objectives	29
3.3.2 Policies	29
3.3.2.1 Landscape character and amenity planting	29
3.3.2.2 Natural environment	30
3.3.2.3 Heritage recognition and protection	32
3.3.2.4 Graves and monuments	33
3.3.2.5 Buildings and infrastructure	34
3.4 Visitor experience	35
3.4.1 Objectives	35
3.4.2 Policies	35
3.4.2.1 Public use	35
3.4.2.2 Access and amenities	36
3.4.2.3 Wayfinding, signage and interpretation	37
3.4.2.4 Public events	38
3.5 Community and partnership	39
3.5.1 Objectives	39
3.5.2 Policies	39
3.5.2.1 Partnership with mana whenua	39
3.5.2.2 Collaboration with customer service stakeholders	40
3.5.2.3 Community partnership	41
3.6 Resilience	42
3.6.1 Objectives	42
3.6.2 Policies	42
3.6.2.1 Emergency preparedness	42
3.6.2.2 Resilient communities	42
3.6.2.3 Fire	42
3.6.2.4 Sustainability and ecosystem services	43

4. Ngā kaupapa here me ngā mahi urupā-motuhake	
Cemtery-specific policies and actions	45
4.1 Tawa Cemetery	46
4.2 Karori Cemetery	51
4.3 Mākara Cemetery	69
5. Ngā ture mō te whakamahinga tūmatanui	
Rules for public use	80
5.1 Rules overview	81
5.2 Objective	81
5.3 Policies	81
5.3.1 Managed activities	81
5.3.2 Allowed activities	82
5.3.3 Prohibited activities	84
6. Te whakatinanatanga	
Implementation	86
6.1 Funding and priorities	87
6.1.1 General policy actions	88
6.1.2 Tawa Cemetery actions	94
6.1.3 Karori Cemetery actions	96
6.1.4 Mākara Cemetery actions	104
6.1.5 Summary of new initiatives	106
Ngā āpitihanga	
Appendices	108
Appendix I. Glossary	109
Appendix II. Strategic and statutory context	110
Appendix III. Historical context	114
Chronology of Tawa, Karori and Mākara cemeteries	115
Brief history of Tawa Cemetery	118
Brief history of Karori Cemetery	118
Brief history of Mākara Cemetery	119
Appendix IV. Maintenance and repair philosophy for graves and monuments	121
Appendix V. Categories of graves at Karori Cemetery	122

1. Mō tēnei Mahere

About this plan

1.1 Purpose and scope

Wellington City Council (the Council) manages four cemeteries: Tawa, Bolton Street, Karori and Mākara (see 1.3 for a brief overview).

Cemetery and cremation services are an essential part of the Council's functions and infrastructure. Under the Burial and Cremation Act, the Council has responsibilities and functions to provide for burials, manage cemeteries and keep cemetery records. Under the Local Government Act, councils are also required to periodically assess provision of cemetery and cremation services, including the current and future demand and the quality of services.

The Council provides and manages land and infrastructure for its cemeteries. It also provides customer services to the bereaved, funeral sector and the public by handling bookings, information enquiries and carrying out burials and cremations.

The cemeteries are important places of commemoration. They are also valued public open spaces with amenity, heritage, natural and recreation values. A cemeteries management plan is required to:

- ensure there is adequate future provision of cemetery land and infrastructure
- guide the management and ongoing maintenance of the city's cemeteries
- inform the Council's financial planning of resourcing requirements.

This Cemetery Management Plan has been prepared to provide a consistent policy, management and decision-making framework for the Council to manage the following:

- Tawa, Karori and Mākara Cemeteries
- cemetery records including those of Bolton Street Cemetery¹; and
- any other cemeteries or burial grounds for which the Council becomes responsible.

This plan is intended to span the 10-year period from 2021 to 2031 but within the context of a longer-term 20 to 50-year timeframe.

The plan sets the general policy direction about how the cemeteries are run and the land managed but is not a detailed operational, staff or asset management plan.

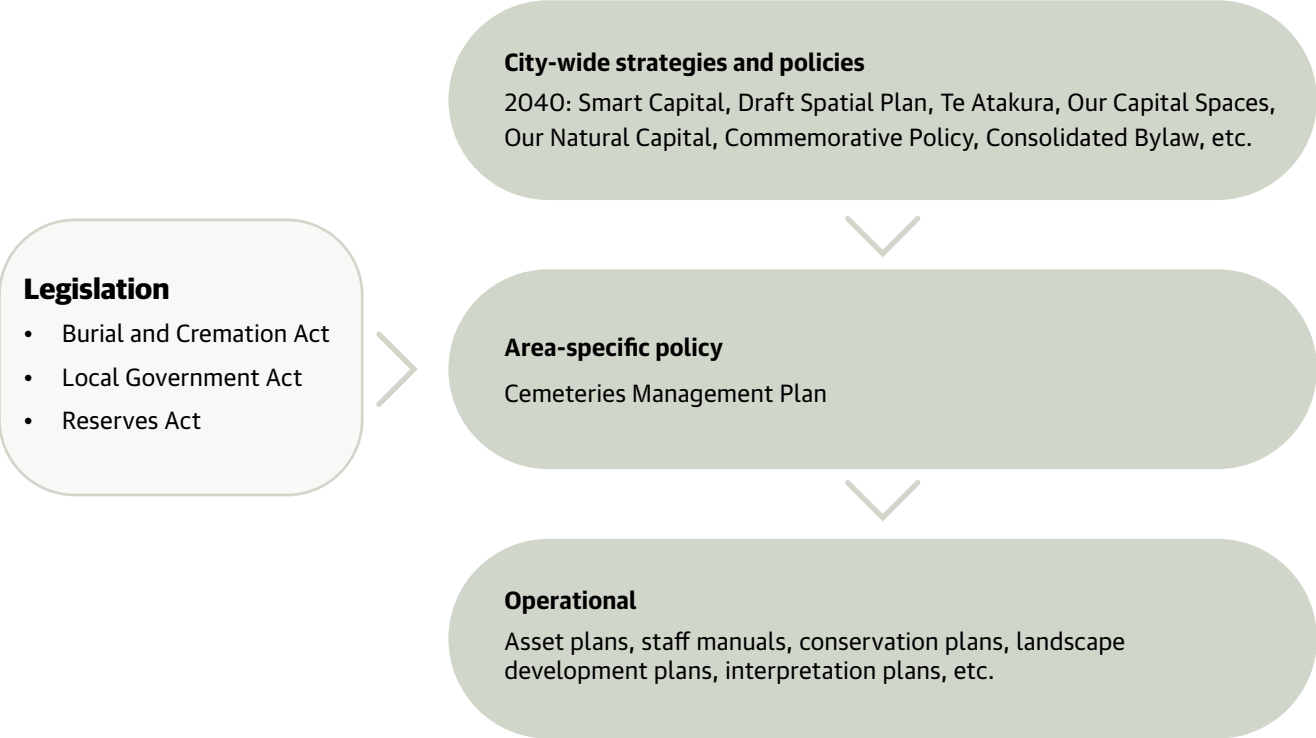
1.2 Legislative and strategic framework

This Cemeteries Management Plan fits within a broad framework of strategic, statutory and regulatory policies. The main documents are described in Appendix II, Strategic and Statutory Context.

As explained above, the Council has statutory requirements it must meet in providing and managing its cemeteries. Also important is the Council's own strategic framework which sets the broad direction on the way Wellington City will develop. Key strategies include *Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital and Planning for Growth* which focus on projected population growth. Within this context, the cemeteries are an essential part of the city's infrastructure and must be planned to ensure sufficient capacity for the growing population. The Council has also developed in recent years strategies that address climate change, resilience and the need for sustainability in the broadest sense, including *Te Atakura First to Zero*, *Wellington's Blueprint for a Zero Carbon Capital* and the *Wellington Resilience* Strategy. There are various ways in which the cemeteries management can contribute to these aspirational strategies.

¹ Bolton Street Cemetery, is otherwise managed under the Botanic Gardens of Wellington Management Plan

The relationships between this plan and the other documents are shown in the diagram below



1.2.1 Reserves Act

This management plan has not been prepared under the Reserves Act because the land within Karori and Mākara cemeteries is not classified as reserve under the Act except for two land parcels at Karori Cemetery, comprising about 1.5 hectares. These are local purpose reserves and a management plan is not required for local purpose reserves.

Tawa Cemetery is an historic reserve, which means a management plan under the Act is required for it. It is already covered under the *Council’s Suburban Reserves Management Plan* (SRMP) but the only specific policy about the cemetery in that plan is to classify it as an historic reserve. This has now been done. Tawa Cemetery is included in the scope of this plan to ensure that its special values are provided

for in more detail and that there will be a consistent approach to managing the Council’s cemeteries. However, if there is a conflict between the policies in this plan and the SRMP in respect of Tawa Cemetery, the latter will have precedence.

Note: Bolton Street Cemetery is also an historic reserve under the Reserves Act. Detailed policies for its management are already contained in the *Botanic Gardens of Wellington Management Plan* (BGWMP). If there is a conflict between the policies in this plan and the BGWMP, the latter will have precedence.

1.2.2 Relationship with mana whenua

Wellington City Council recognises the importance of the mana whenua² relationship and has formal memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika (Taranaki Whānui) and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated (Toa Rangatira), based on the following principles:

- **Partnership**
Acting reasonably, honourably and in good faith to ensure the strategic relationship has integrity and respect, in the present and for the future of Wellington
- **Participation**
Recognising that both parties can contribute, for mutual benefit, in deciding the future of the city - working towards and achieving the parties’ visions; and
- **Protection**
Actively protecting the taonga of Taranaki Whānui and the taonga of Ngāti Toa Rangatira and safeguarding cultural concepts, values and practices to be celebrated and enjoyed for all Wellingtonians.

The Council has a responsibility to take into account the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi / Treaty of Waitangi and to improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes.

Under the memoranda of understanding, each party recognises the authority of the other to exercise their responsibilities - kāwanatanga (governance) by the Council and rangatiratanga (customary authority) and kaitiakitanga (guardianship) by tangata whenua.

This plan is intended to reflect these above principles including, in particular, the key relationship understandings recognised in the MOUs in relation to council planning and policy processes and to culture and heritage. Officers will continue to work with iwi to incorporate the Māori world view and concepts into the management and project work as appropriate. The Council is currently working on implementing the 2018 Te Tauihu - te reo Māori Policy which will help inform naming and interpretation processes and partnerships with iwi and the wider community.

² Mana whenua means customary authority exercised by an iwi or hapu in an identified area.

1.2.2.1 Opau Urupā

The land for Opau Urupā was set aside for Taranaki Whānui ki Te Ūpoko o Te Ika in its Treaty settlement in 2009. Close to the wild, west coast of Mākara, the site holds particular significance to Taranaki Whānui due to its connections with past settlement and the abundant seafood resources of the coast. The urupā is vested in the Trustees of Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust (PNBST) as a Māori Reservation and there is a protective covenant over the land. The urupā occupies a site of some 3.9 ha of steep hill country along Mākara Road. The urupā was opened in September 2017 and currently has two interments. The site has 25 carparks and is accessed from Mākara Road up a hill along some 400 metres of chip-sealed road. The urupā has a capacity of between 700 and 1050 standard burials along with ash burial spaces. The MOU between the Council and PNBST states that the Trust and the Council will work together to establish the mana whenua urupā provided for through the Settlement Act.



The Wellington City Council manages four cemeteries and works in partnership to support Taranaki Whānui in managing the Opau Urupā.

1.3 The Council's cemeteries

The Council manages four cemeteries - Tawa Cemetery, Karori Cemetery, Mākara Cemetery and Bolton Street Cemetery. The Bolton Street Cemetery was closed in 1892. It is an historic reserve and is managed as a botanic garden under the *Botanic Gardens of Wellington Management Plan*. A chronology of the main developments in the three cemeteries and a brief history of each is contained in Appendix III.

1.3.1 Tawa Cemetery

A small closed cemetery, which is classified as an historic reserve (see 1.2.1).



Date of first burial	1867
Date land acquired	1861
Date closed	1978
Km from Wellington centre	19
Area in hectares	0.1
Approx. number of interments (all burials)	50

Originally the churchyard of St Peter’s Anglican Church on Main Road, Tawa. The church was later moved to another site. Today, the cemetery retains something of its original country churchyard character. It is an archaeological site, with significant heritage.

1.3.2 Karori Cemetery

This cemetery is nearly full. The cemetery office is located here as well as the crematorium and two chapels.



Date of first burial	1891
Date land acquired	1890
Area in hectares	35.5
Total interments, June 2021 (burials and ashes)	86,600

A limited number of ash plots remain. Otherwise, interments (burial or ash) into existing family plots only.

An archaeological site, significant for its heritage. Has a mature landscape, including large trees. Increasing walking and other recreational use. Genealogical research has risen in recent years.

1.3.3 Mākara Cemetery

The main operational cemetery, where most burials and ash interments take place, including natural burials. Remaining capacity about 45 percent.



Date of first burial	1951
Date land acquired	1955
Km from Wellington centre	10
Area in hectares	84
Area currently in cemetery use (hectares)	10
Total interments, June 2021 (burials and ashes)	12,950

A lawn cemetery - graves maintained in mown grass and marked by headstones or plaques. Used by locals for walking.

1.3.4 Issues and opportunities

This management plan has been prepared at a critical point in planning for the future provision and management of the Council’s cemeteries. Key issues and opportunities addressed in this plan include the following:

Cemetery capacity and land development
Karori Cemetery has effectively reached its capacity. Mākara Cemetery will be reaching overall capacity for various types of interment from 2038 and some denominational areas will reach capacity sooner. Therefore, the Council needs to urgently acquire land for expansion and begin to develop the land to ensure it is ready for use when required.

Functional and efficient use of land
Most interments are in perpetuity, which means the Council has an ongoing and ever-increasing liability, as it must continue to maintain and provide public access to existing graves and keep providing more land. Options for using space more efficiently need to be considered, including offering graves for re-use after a period, while continuing to offer burial options that cater for people’s diverse beliefs and customs around death and burial.

Karori Cemetery status
Once this cemetery is full, its future management needs to be planned. Certain cemetery-related operations will continue, including cremations and chapel hire. However, there is growing interest in its significant cultural and heritage values and there is an opportunity to manage it as an historic reserve and classify it accordingly under the Reserves Act.

Heritage protection
Karori and Tawa cemeteries are archaeological sites and are significant for their heritage values. Those values need to be recognised, managed and protected.

Natural environment
The developed parts of the cemeteries are interwoven with more natural areas, including streams at Karori and Mākara. These areas need to be managed for their biodiversity values and ecosystem services, alongside their amenity value.

Gravesite management responsibilities
There is public concern about the deteriorated condition of many graves in the two older cemeteries and the Council’s level of investment in these cemeteries. However, it is often not realised by families that they are responsible for gravesite maintenance. As time passes, families tend to maintain graves less frequently, while at the same time the graves gain in heritage value. There are expectations that the Council will protect that heritage even though it is, strictly speaking, the responsibility of families and would come at an added cost to the Council (and therefore the wider community).

Gravesite decoration
Placing tributes and decorations on graves is important to grieving families but they tend to blow away after a time, creating rubbish and causing plastic pollution. Tributes, including garden planting, placed on shared lawn space in beam cemeteries can obstruct access.

Deferred maintenance of older cemeteries
The condition of graves and some other heritage features at the Tawa and Karori cemeteries have deteriorated, particularly due to damage from vegetation growth. Heritage conservation and vegetation management planning is required for both cemeteries followed by significant additional resourcing for implementation. Compliance with the archaeological requirements of the *Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014* will also need to be managed for these two cemeteries.

Recreation use and role of cemeteries within the wider open space network
The cemeteries are valued as places of quiet and tranquility, with historic interest, and are becoming more popular for recreational activities such as walking and running. There is potential

for them to be destinations within the Council’s open space networks but recreational use must be appropriate to the primary cemetery function, in particular an atmosphere of respect for the dead and support for grieving families.

Cemetery records and genealogy
Some historic cemetery records are at risk and are not easily accessed by the public because they are in paper-only form. Increasing interest in genealogy is generating increasing numbers of time-consuming enquiries because of the limited online access. A current project to digitise all records, link records to GIS data and make fully available through a new online Cemetery Management System will make the records more secure and enable direct online access.

Volunteer / community involvement
There is increasing community interest in the heritage at the cemeteries and in helping with their protection and recognition. More community involvement could aid cemetery management but volunteer effort needs to be carefully managed as many heritage features are fragile and subject to the family ownership issue mentioned above.

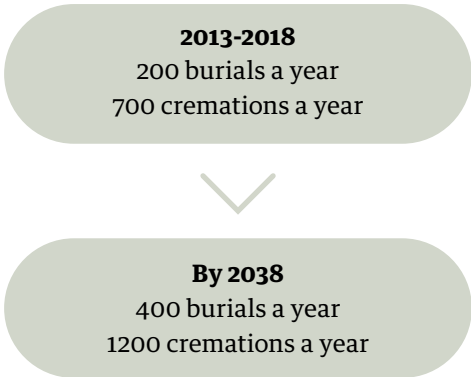
Financial investment
New investment in the cemeteries will be required over the next decade to provide for land acquisition and development, catch up on delayed vegetation maintenance and better manage the heritage values, built fabric and archaeological requirements.

1.4 Cemetery trends
There are a number of trends that are typically influencing cemetery management nationally and worldwide, which provide a context for managing Wellington’s cemeteries.

Capacity, land use and resourcing
Population growth sees growing demand for cemetery space, requiring capital expenditure on acquiring and developing more land. Traditionally, in many places, graves are held in perpetuity which means that the demand for additional cemetery space is continual

in the long-term, as cemeteries fill up. People prefer to have cemeteries within easy reach but it can be difficult to find suitable land that is affordable closer to communities. In some countries where there is limited land, new approaches are being adopted to increase capacity within existing areas, such as re-using graves. Funding cemeteries is an issue worldwide because there is a once-off charge for graves that must be maintained for decades at least, or in perpetuity.

Annual burials and cremations in Wellington City are projected to increase



New burial methods
Worldwide research and interest is increasing in interment methods that are seen as being more environmentally friendly and sometimes cost-saving. Locally, demand for natural burials is increasing - for example, of all Wellington burials the proportion of natural burials increased from 7 percent in 2008 to 12 percent in 2017. Alternative methods that are emerging include cremation by rapid composting or water resomation and use of biodegradable urns for ashes. Where land availability is an extreme issue, space-saving options are being developed, including scattering ashes at GPS-recorded locations at sea and developing vertical cemeteries in multi-story buildings that reduce the spatial footprint.

More self-help
More families are seeking to make their own burial and cremation arrangements directly with cemeteries and run their own funerals. This may be motivated by religious and cultural practices, changing preferences or by a need to save on cost.³

³ New Zealand Law Commission (2015). R134 *Death, Burial and Cremation: A new law for contemporary New Zealand*

Recreational use of cemeteries
Changing attitudes in many countries are seeing cemeteries being used for recreational activities instead of being places that people avoid. Most commonly, people visit cemeteries to walk and enjoy the peaceful environs. Increasing interest in genealogy and the history in the cemeteries is another drawcard. In some places the history has been ‘harnessed’ for people to have an interactive experience of exploring a cemetery. Examples include guided tours, digital mapping apps, 360-degree virtual tours and even concerts and movie nights. Some of these activities are being used as a way of generating revenue, as well as hiring out cemetery facilities for non-cemetery activities.

Community involvement
‘Friends of cemeteries’ groups are increasing in New Zealand and worldwide, often motivated by interest in and a desire to protect the heritage that cemeteries contain, but also by the increasing value communities are placing on cemeteries as pleasant places to visit. These groups have a significant role in helping with cemetery management, thereby stretching resources further through voluntary activities.

1.5 Governance and expertise
The cemeteries are managed under the Parks, Sport and Recreation Business Unit of the Council’s Customer and Community Group. The cemeteries manager runs a team that carries out the day-to-day operation of Karori and Mākara cemeteries. Tawa Cemetery is currently maintained under the city-wide parks and reserves maintenance programme.

Staffing is an operational matter, not governed by the policies in this management plan. However, it is noted here that a range of skills and attributes will be required to implement the policies in this plan. Historically, there was a larger cemetery team in which each person had a specific, single-focus role (such as crematorium operation, gardening, general

maintenance, chapel operation, records management). Those roles were later amalgamated into a multi-focused cemetery technician role. The cemeteries team needs to cover skills in administration, practical building and landscape maintenance, and people skills, particularly the empathy and respect required when assisting at burials and cremations. The variety of work in the technician role is advantageous because (i) staff are better able to fill in for each other during absences and (ii) the work is varied and interesting, which encourages staff to stay in their jobs.

In implementing some of the policies in this plan, it will be necessary to ensure that the following additional expertise is available from time-to-time or on a regular basis:

- Heritage advice, including archaeological and heritage conservation
- Vegetation management
- Horticulture
- Wayfinding and interpretation.

1.6 Plan structure
This plan is structured from the general to the area-specific as follows:

- **Part 2:** Vision and goals for all the cemeteries covered by this plan
- **Part 3:** General objectives and policies, applicable to all the cemeteries covered by this plan
- **Part 4:** Cemetery-specific policies and actions
- **Part 5:** Rules
- **Part 6:** Implementation according to priorities and funding.



2. Moemoeā Vision

2.1 Vision

Wellington’s cemeteries are recognised places of guardianship and remembrance where we support our bereaved, treasure our heritage and experience peace and tranquility.

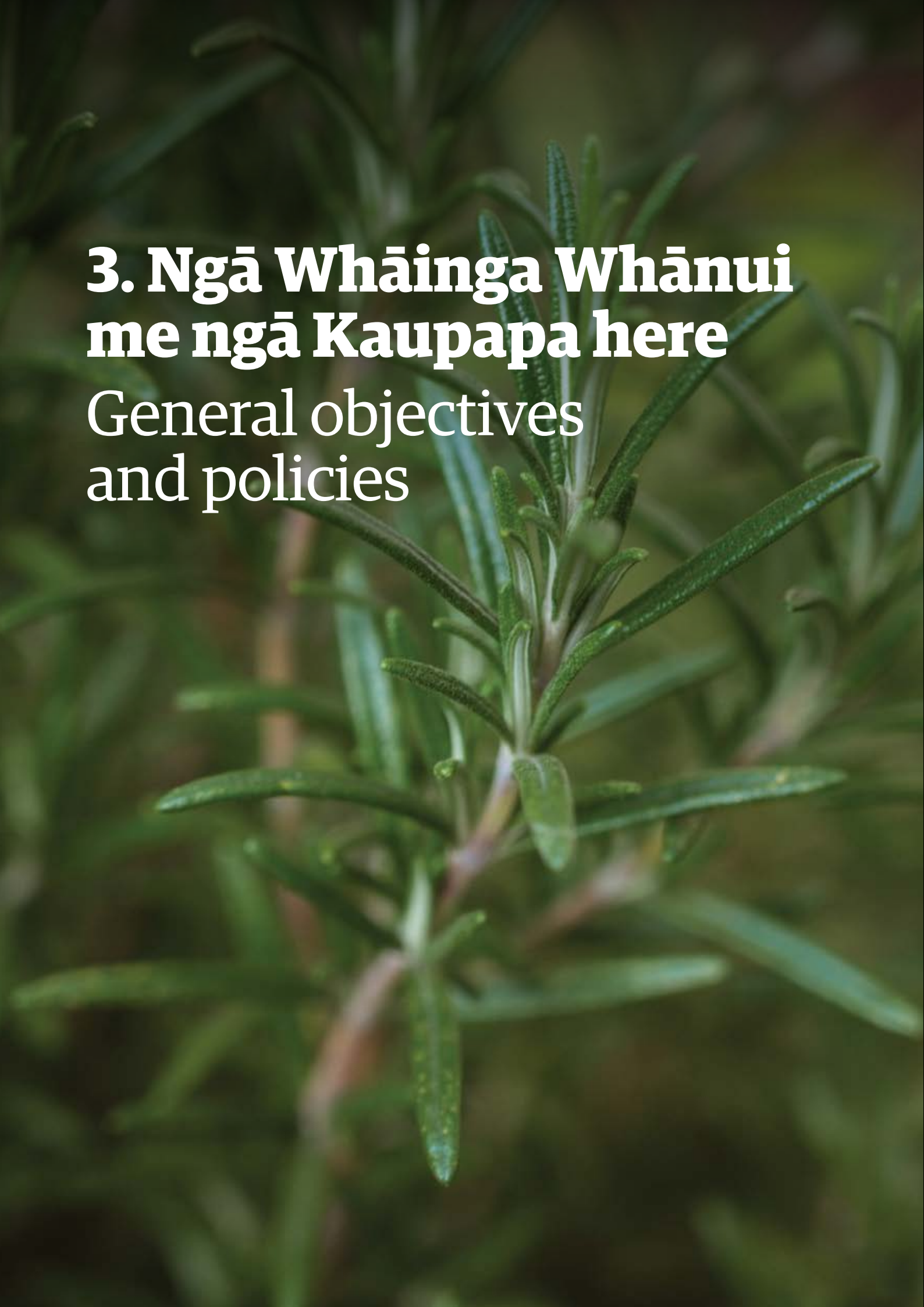
2.1.1 Key values

The vision is based on recognising and respecting the following key values associated with the cemeteries:

- **Spiritual**
Enduring places of rest for the deceased where the rituals of death are carried out with respect
- **Emotional**
Places where the bereaved feel supported in farewelling and remembering their dead
- **Tikanga**
Places where tikanga Māori is practiced
- **Heritage**
Historic places that hold individual and collective stories of our past
- **Landscape**
A tranquil setting where restorative nature is interwoven with built features
- **Community**
Places of meaning and interest that people like to visit, explore and care for.

2.1.2 Goals

- **Statutory**
Public health and record-keeping functions are fulfilled
- **Mana whenua**
Mana whenua are partners in managing urupā and the Council’s cemeteries
- **Cemetery services**
Respectful and culturally sensitive burial, cremation and memorial customer services are delivered to high quality standards
- **Sustainability**
Long-term cemetery needs are provided for and cemetery land and facilities managed to achieve a balance between community need, environmental impact and economic cost
- **Managing key values**
Cultural, emotional, heritage, landscape and community values are protected and enhanced
- **People and place**
The close connection that people feel for cemeteries is recognised and supported.



3. Ngā Whāinga Whānui me ngā Kaupapa here

General objectives and policies

3.1 Land administration and provision

3.1.1 Objectives

1. To administer and manage cemetery land and facilities in a manner that reflects their purpose and protects site values relevant to the vision in this plan.
2. To ensure future cemetery provision is adequately planned and provided for.

3.1.2 Policies

3.1.2.1 Land status

1. Designate the cemeteries covered by this management plan for cemetery / crematorium land use in the Wellington District Plan, with an underlying Natural Open Space Zone appropriate for managing the open space values and associated activities.
2. Close cemeteries under the Burial and Cremation Act once they reach capacity, to signify that they are no longer fully operational.
3. Classify closed cemeteries as historic reserves under the Reserves Act to recognise and protect the historic heritage contained within the cemeteries.

Explanation

Appropriate district plan designation and zoning is required to ensure that the cemetery land and associated land use is recognised in statutory documents and considered in consenting under the Resource Management Act. The district plan is currently being reviewed and will be revised according to new national planning standards.

There are no cemetery designations in the existing plan but it would be useful for setting land use parameters on cemetery development and operation, including for any closed cemeteries, where activities like burials and disinterments can still occur. Currently, all three cemeteries are zoned Open Space B (Natural Environment), which applies to land valued for its natural character and informal open spaces and

generally applies to areas where there are minimal structures and largely undeveloped areas, though the cemeteries contain many small-scale structures and some sizable buildings.

The Natural Open Space Zone under the new standards appears to be the most appropriate, given the need to recognise that the cemeteries are managed as public open spaces suitable for passive recreation and cemetery purposes, with heritage and natural environment values important for both types of use.

Once a cemetery reaches full capacity, the general focus of ongoing management shifts towards maintaining existing gravesites, even though some cemetery operations can continue, such as extra interments in family plots or, as at Karori Cemetery, the continued operation of the crematorium. As time passes the gravesites gain in historic value. Together, closure and historic reserve classification recognise the shift in emphasis towards heritage management.

When cemetery land is acquired, there is often more land than is immediately required and land within the purchased block may be unsuitable or surplus to requirements. Some areas will be held for future development or managed to provide a setting for the cemetery. These areas may be managed by leasing out for grazing.

3.1.2.2 Cemetery capacity and planning

1. Ensure sufficient future cemetery capacity by continuing to monitor demand for different types of interment and periodically review forward planning against current and predicted trends.
2. Investigate the feasibility of interment methods that are more space-efficient than traditional burials and offer as options if acceptable to the community and there is demand.

Actions

- a) Investigate cemetery expansion options and acquire land suitable for cemetery use, to ensure adequate future capacity in Wellington City, invoking the Public Works Act for compulsory acquisition if necessary.
- b) Provide for ongoing investment in developing land held for cemetery purposes through the Council’s Long-Term Plan.

Explanation

Predicted cemetery requirements indicate that the Council needs to acquire land to meet future demand. Karori Cemetery is already nearly full, with room for burials only into existing family plots and a limited number of new ash plots. Investigations in 2018 revealed that nearly all the remaining land at Mākara Cemetery is unsuitable due to being too steep (>17⁰ gradient), unstable, flood-prone or not safely accessible. Only a 1.5-hectare area is suitable but is too small to justify the cost of bridging an intervening gully. Consequently, Mākara Cemetery, as it is currently laid out, is expected to reach overall capacity for ash plots from about 2038 and burial plots from about 2047. However, some new areas will need to be developed before then as some existing denominational areas will reach capacity sooner and new denominations and cultural groups are likely to request space.

The Council is investigating the suitability of various parcels of private land which could potentially meet the city’s cemetery needs well into the future. Land suitability is assessed against various geotechnical, hazard, ecological, accessibility, archaeological, heritage and planning feasibility factors. If there is no suitable land at Mākara, the Council will look for another site to develop a completely new cemetery, though suitable land is not easy to find in Wellington. Once suitable land is identified, at least a decade is required to undertake the purchase, master planning, consenting and development of built and green infrastructure ready for use when needed.

Different interment types and techniques use different amounts of space. For instance, the area of a standard ash plot is about 16 percent that of a standard burial plot. Natural burial plots are somewhat larger in area but can be located on sites that are less suitable for traditional burials. Vertical burials use less space but are not feasible in Wellington where hard rock is often close to the surface.

Other options for space-saving include ash niche walls, which save ground space by being vertical, or interring ashes collectively in lawn-covered buried vaults with a single shared monument. The re-use of graves after a given period is another option,

common in some cultures. Scattering ashes involves making a shared space available that can be used numerous times. New techniques in body disposal are emerging, including rapid composting and resomation (water cremation), which could be potentially space-saving if there is demand.

Optimising the efficient use of cemetery land needs to be balanced with the overall principle of providing for people’s diverse beliefs and customs.

3.1.2.3 New cemetery master planning and landscape development

- 1. Plan the staged, sustainable development of newly acquired cemetery land to ensure development is completed and well-established in time to meet demand.

Action

- a) Produce a master plan to guide and integrate planning of:
 - i. the future use and development of the existing Mākara Cemetery land, and
 - ii. the development of any newly acquired cemetery land.

Explanation

New land will need to be developed for cemetery use well in advance of when it will be needed. Time will be needed for planting to establish and for infrastructure to be installed. It has taken many years for the level of amenity now achieved in the existing area at Mākara Cemetery to develop.

The master plan will need to cover:

- the landscape and future land use considerations explained in section 4.3, if relevant
- general layout, circulation and spatial design
- landform modification and drainage
- built infrastructure (roading, water and power supply, public toilets, signage, fencing, footpaths etc)

- the potential for developing a focal area for visitors, perhaps including a suitable space for outdoor funeral or memorial services
- green infrastructure (planting of a tree framework, in particular, including quick growing, shorter-lived nurse planting in new areas to provide interim shade and shelter while taller, long-lived trees develop)
- if any land adjacent to Mākara Cemetery is acquired, a land bridge over an intervening gully to connect the existing cemetery and any new land

and take into account:

- universal accessibility design
- best practice in sustainable design
- the need for staged development and flexibility to adapt if demand changes.

The master plan should be developed by a multi-disciplinary team to ensure that the various functional requirements are well covered but within the context of designing a landscape to meet the emotional and spiritual needs of the bereaved. The team should include the following expertise: landscape architecture, engineering, mana whenua/Māori, cemetery management, horticulture, arboriculture, ecology and archaeology/heritage. Community consultation will also be required, including with the local community, denominational and cultural groups, and representatives from the disability sector.

In developing the master plan, it will be important to consider landscape management issues that have arisen at the Council’s other cemeteries and aim to avoid repeating the same mistakes. For instance, avoid the potential damage that trees can cause on gravesites if the wrong species is chosen and/or planted in the wrong place.

The plan also needs to provide for efficient use of space, while acknowledging that uptake of plots will vary between denominational areas.

3.2 Customer service

3.2.1 Objectives

- 1. To maintain quality assured standards of record-keeping, customer support and information in providing cemetery services.
- 2. To recognise and respect diversity of people’s beliefs and customs around death and facilitate personal choices as much as possible in delivery of cemetery services.
- 3. To support historic research by maintaining accurate and easily accessible cemetery records.

3.2.2 Policies

3.2.2.1 Respecting diversity

- 1. Recognise and, where possible, provide for the diversity of beliefs, customs and personal wishes that people may want to practice in farewelling and commemorating their dead.
- 2. Allocate suitable areas at Mākara Cemetery to denominational and cultural groups for their burials and/or interments, in consultation as to specific requirements.
- 3. Consult denominational groups on whether they wish to provide information about their customs to help other cemetery visitor understanding.
- 4. Continue to advise and support those bereaved who wish to make their own funeral and interment arrangements by providing clear information about statutory requirements, cemetery service options and the associated costs.

Explanation

Respect for the dead and for the bereaved is a fundamental principle that underpins customer service in the cemeteries. People’s beliefs about death and wishes about ceremonies and commemoration are deeply personal and very diverse. Having choices can make a huge difference to those who are planning ahead for their own death and to the bereaved making arrangements on behalf of a deceased person. Providing for choice and

personalisation allows family and friends to farewell and commemorate the person they have lost in a way they feel is fitting for that person. It is important in the grieving process. Within the parameters of functional cemetery management, such as standard specifications for layout and maintenance, individual choices will be accommodated if possible.

The Burial and Cremation Act provides for religious denominational areas to be set aside and for denominations to fence their areas and build a mortuary church or chapel at their own expense. The Council also defines sections for specific cultural and other groups. The current types of areas are listed at right.

Increasing cultural diversity in Wellington may see applications for more areas in future. Denominational areas fill at different rates, which means that more land needs to be developed and maintained in the short term, compared to a cemetery where everyone is buried together and the space developed and filled progressively. The Council will continue to provide separate areas and accommodate special requirements where possible, such as a particular orientation of graves.

Having different denominational areas can reduce the risk of people with differing beliefs giving offence to neighbouring or nearby plot holders. Where denominational groups wish, information they supply to help understanding of their customs will be made available online, but generally not on site, to minimise the amount of signage around the cemetery.

In recent years more people have been seeking to make their own funeral and burial or cremation arrangements. For some, this is simply a preference to plan and manage the occasion in their own way. Others seek a low-cost alternative to using a funeral director due to financial circumstances. In helping those making their own arrangements, the Council does not provide a funeral service, as arranging funerals is not considered council core business.

Nevertheless, these families have been very recently bereaved and can find it difficult to make decisions, so a high standard of clear, sensitive guidance on the processes involved and options available is required.

Areas currently set aside for specific groups

Karori and Mākara cemeteries have ‘public’ interment areas, which are non-denominational. There are children’s sections at Karori and Mākara cemeteries, and an infant’s section at Karori Cemetery. Tawa Cemetery was an Anglican churchyard. The other two cemeteries currently have areas set aside for specific denominations or cultural groups as follows.

Karori Cemetery

- Church of England
- Roman Catholic
- Greek Orthodox
- Soldiers
- Jewish

Mākara Cemetery

- Assyrian
- Chinese
- Greek
- Hindu
- Māori (Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā)
- Muslim
- Orthodox Jewish
- Pacific Island
- Plymouth Brethren
- Poon Fah
- Progressive Jewish
- Roman Catholic
- Russian Orthodox
- Serbian Orthodox
- Tung Jung
- Seyip
- Soldiers

- 3.2.2.2 Burial and cremation rights and options**
1. All existing interments are regarded as being in perpetuity unless the deed to the plot says differently.
 2. Continue to provide for interments and cremations.
 3. Continue to sell perpetual rights of interment for burial and ash plots.
 4. Continue to sell natural burial plots (single plots in perpetuity only).
 5. Continue to sell pre-purchased plots, subject to the right of burial being limited to 50 years from the date purchase if the plot remains unused.
 6. If a pre-purchased plot has not been used within 50 years of the date of purchase, make it available for repurchase for immediate use or for a further 50-year pre-purchase period, taking reasonable steps to contact and offer the plot to the plot owner’s family first.
 7. Ensure explanatory information about perpetual and, if approved under action (b) below, non-perpetual exclusive rights of interment⁴, is clearly and prominently explained in interment information online and in other formats.
 8. Consider setting plot purchase prices to reflect perpetual and non-perpetual rights of interment.
 9. Where a body has been disinterred from a single plot, for whatever reason, make good the plot, as required, and make available for re-use.
 10. Within the parameters of functional and space-efficient cemetery management, provide choices of interment plot types and groupings.
 11. Continue to provide suitable areas in cemeteries for scattering ashes, and offer as a chargeable service, the option of staff helping the family with the scattering or undertaking the scattering on behalf of the family.⁵ (See Rules 5.3.1 and 5.3.3 also.)

12. Consider offering other methods of disposing of human remains, provided the methods meet statutory requirements, particularly if the methods enhance the sustainable management of the cemeteries and meet the wishes of the deceased and family.
- Actions**
- a) Investigate the option of selling non-perpetual rights of interment to burial and ash plots and develop proposed terms and conditions, including:
 - i. The period of non-perpetual right and appropriate location, taking into account religious/cultural preference
 - ii. Options for extra interments in the plot during the specified period of interment, such as spouse
 - iii. Pricing options
 - iv. Provision for any ceremonial disinterment requirements
 - v. Options on how the disinterred remains will be treated, such as cremation, bones held in an ossuary (see Appendix I, Glossary)
 - vi. A system of maintaining family contact information
 - vii. Options to offer ashes, headstones and plaques back to families and what will happen if families do not want them or cannot be traced
 - viii. Options for families to re-purchase the right of interment for a further non-perpetual period
 - ix. Options to offer re-purchase for re-use of the plot to family members first
 - x. The requirements for all interment records associated with the plot, including photographic, to be kept permanently
 - xi. Developing an application form and a deed of right of interment for re-usable plots.
- Report back to the Council for approval within three years of the date of this plan.

⁴ On purchase of a plot, a ‘Deed of Exclusive Right of Interment’ is issued.
⁵ This can be a helpful service when family are not able to do this.

- b) Subject to council approval of the proposed terms and conditions, offer the non-perpetual right of interment option to those buying a new burial or ash plot.

Explanation

The Burial and Cremation Act allows plots to be sold for specified periods as well as in perpetuity. To date, the Council has sold cemetery plots in perpetuity except in the following two situations:

- Some lawn cemetery plots at Mākara were historically sold for a 50-year period from the burial date. The records of exactly which plots and the dates need to be verified from archived records, which will be done as part of researching Mākara Cemetery history (see 4.3.4). The re-use of these plots will be considered in the next review of this management plan.
- When interment plots are pre-purchased, the right to burial ceases if the plot is not used within 50 years. This provision ensures that plots will not remain empty in perpetuity, as might happen if a family was unaware that a plot had been pre-purchased.

There are issues associated with perpetual burial rights. Though the purchaser or descendants are responsible for the plot’s maintenance, most families eventually cease to maintain the graves. Yet for the price of the one-off fee, the Council remains responsible for maintaining access to the grave in perpetuity (as required by statute) and gradually takes on a role in maintaining the grave as time passes (section 3.2.2.4). Inevitably cemeteries containing plots in perpetuity become full and more land must be found. Suitable land can be difficult to find (see section 3.1.2.2). To increase future capacity and more sustainably manage cemetery land over time, the Council is proposing to investigate an option whereby people can purchase a plot knowing that it will be re-used after a specified period. In the consultation survey on this plan,⁶ 58 percent of respondents definitely or somewhat supported the idea, which indicates there would be uptake of such non-perpetual rights of interment. Overseas examples of non-perpetual rights of interment will be researched

in developing proposed terms and conditions. All existing interments are regarded as being in perpetuity unless the deed to the plot says differently.

The Council will consider whether to introduce differential pricing to better reflect the difference in long-term maintenance liability for the Council associated with plots in perpetuity. There are numerous factors to consider, including cemetery maintenance and development costs, the requirements for different types of interment and principles of social equity, cultural sensitivity and affordability.

Disinterment of burial remains or ashes at the request of family is not uncommon and can help to increase cemetery capacity by enabling second use of plots. Sometimes the remains are disinterred and placed deeper in a grave to make room for another interment in a family plot. At other times a family might wish to reinter the remains or scatter ashes elsewhere. In some instances, special ceremonial requirements need to be observed, such as disinterments of military personnel.

People’s choice of both burial and ash plots may be influenced by a range of factors, including the setting, memorial design preferences, environmental considerations, cost and grouping. Some areas are defined by the plot type including, the beam cemetery, plaque lawn, ash berm, ash circle, rose garden (at Karori Cemetery), niche walls and the natural burial area (see Appendix I: Glossary.) Some areas are also defined by social grouping, such as the denominational and cultural areas (see 3.2.2.1), the children’s section and the military services areas. Several ash scattering areas may be provided to avoid build-up of ash and enable choice.

Natural burials are offered as a more environmentally friendly alternative to other traditional methods, based on enhancing natural decomposition by avoiding use of chemical treatments and restoring the site to native bush (see Appendix I: Glossary for more). Double plots within the natural burials area are not allowed because a subsequent burial into the second plot, perhaps many years later, would disturb

the progressive forest restoration of the site. Ashes are not allowed as they do not conform with the natural burial philosophy.

New burial methods and technologies are emerging, such as rapid composting instead of cremation (see 1.4, cemetery trends). Their suitability at Wellington cemeteries will be considered.

3.2.2.3 Remembrance

1. Permit the personalised design of monuments, including the placement of QR codes, within the Council’s size specifications and the specifications of the New Zealand Standard for Headstones and Cemetery Monuments.
2. Offer as a commemorative option, the purchase and planting of a native tree⁷ into planting areas at the cemeteries (see also 4.3.2, action (d)).
3. Assess requests for commemorative features, such as seats or sculptures, to be installed, taking into account that the features should:
 - i. meet a need in the particular cemetery, and
 - ii. be of appropriate type and style to the cemetery, the site setting and any relevant landscape development plans.

Suitable commemorative features will be installed for a fee on the understanding that the feature will be maintained for a minimum of 20 years and, if removed after that time, reasonable steps will be taken to notify those who paid the fee.

4. Allow tributes and decorations to be placed on the headstone and associated concrete beam of a gravesite in a lawn cemetery area (see Appendix I, Glossary) and on non-lawn gravesites at Karori and Tawa cemeteries, provided they do not:
 - i. encroach on or obstruct access to any other plot or communal area
 - ii. require electricity, whether from cemetery power supply systems, battery or solar sources
 - iii. disturb the tranquility of the cemetery environs or cause offence to others.

5. Encourage the use of environmentally friendly tributes and decorations to reduce rubbish and pollution, including encouraging local florists to use biodegradable fixings and wrappings in bouquets for cemetery use.

6. Support remembrance days at cemeteries as appropriate.

Actions

- a) Investigate sources and options of environmentally friendly and affordable tributes and decorations, and the feasibility of selling direct to the public or partnering with community groups or businesses interested in producing and/or selling suitable products. Implement if feasible.

Explanation

The latter decades of the 20th century saw a trend towards more uniform monument design, as seen in the Public 1 section of Mākara Cemetery. This trend was partly driven by a desire to reduce long-term maintenance costs and partly by the idea that a cemetery environment should not visibly reinforce social differences, particularly financial. However, uniformity is unappealing to many families for whom the memorial is an important part of the grieving process and a last chance to recognise the personality and significance of the deceased person. At Mākara the headstones and plaques/tablets must comply with specifications of size and materials to ensure they will fit within the layout, be reasonably durable and safe. The standard is set by the New Zealand Standard NZS 4242: 2018 Headstones and Cemetery Monuments. Within these parameters, greater creativity and personalisation is now permitted than in earlier decades. At Karori Cemetery, when new headstones or plaques are occasionally installed, to mark a new burial in a disinterred plot for example, a design in keeping with the character is encouraged.

The Council often receives requests for other forms of memorials such as trees or seats to be placed in the city’s parks and reserves, including the cemeteries. These requests are managed under the *Commemorative Policy 2006*, but the policies

6 The survey was carried out from 6th November to 14th December 2020 as part of the consultation on the Draft Cemeteries Management Plan 2020.

7 A list of species to choose from will be provided to ensure the species used are suited to the site conditions and fit with the Council’s restoration planting programme.

in this plan will determine the approach taken in the cemeteries. Planting single commemorative trees into lawn areas has proved impractical as there is limited space, tree health can be affected by mower damage and trees can impede access for further burials. Instead, trees can be planted in commemorative groves of native restoration planting or as enhancement species of long-lived tall tree species within naturally regenerating bush areas⁸ (see 3.3.2.2, natural environment). Ground that is unsuitable for burial plots can be used for these commemorative plantings.

The master planning of the new cemetery area could provide for some commemorative planting areas that will help to establish the new landscape framework (see 3.1.2.3). Features such as seats will only be considered if there is a need for them.

It is accepted that people like to place tributes and decorations on plots but there are practical reasons for managing their use.

- As a matter of respect, they should not encroach onto other plots, and will be cleared away if they do.
- The placement of tributes and decorations is restricted to the headstones and immediate concrete beam foundation in the lawn cemetery areas at Karori and Mākara cemeteries because of the way those areas are laid out and managed. The actual graves lie under the lawns that separate the long concrete beams on which the headstones are placed. These graves are sold on the basis that the families will be responsible for the upkeep of the headstones and the Council will be responsible for maintaining the communal lawn areas in between. This approach reduces the long-term maintenance issues that have arisen at the Council’s older cemeteries when families have gradually ceased to maintain traditional gravesites. If tributes and decorations, including flower gardens, are placed on or blow onto the communal lawn areas they obstruct access for the mowers and the

- machinery required for interments, disinterments and installation of headstones, and they can get entangled in the mowers. Therefore, decorations, including suitably sized pot plants, are restricted to the headstones and concrete foundation.
- In the areas at Tawa and Karori cemeteries where the entire gravesite is demarcated and the responsibility of the family, tributes and decorations can be placed anywhere within the gravesite. However, the same principle applies if they encroach on public areas that the Council maintains such as pathways and lawns, as they can obstruct maintenance.
 - Decorations can blow around the cemetery, creating an untidy appearance and potentially polluting the natural environment. Plastic decorations are a particular issue as they do not biodegrade. However, the Council does not intend to ban their use at this stage because these types of decoration are a more affordable option and a ban could disadvantage low-income families. Use of biodegradable tributes and decorations will be encouraged to start the transition away from use of plastics. The Council recognises that biodegradable products are not easy to find and not always affordable. The Council will look into options to make them more easily available and will also explore the potential for growing wildflowers and other plants at the cemeteries that can be picked (see 4.3.2 (a) (ix) and 4.3.2 (c)).
 - New technology, such as in-built videos in headstones, is starting to occur overseas. It is not encouraged here due to the potential for disturbing other visitors, potential demand for power supply, pollution from abandoned batteries and potential for installations to break down and require removal in the longer term if families no longer maintain them.

After removing items, cemetery staff try to contact families and hold the items for a period so they can be reclaimed.

8 In Wellington, regenerating native bush often lacks the tall long-lived canopy species of mature native forest. Planting these species can enhance forest restoration by increasing biodiversity.

3.2.2.4 Gravesite maintenance

1. Communicate clearly that plot purchasers, their representatives or descendants (“the family”) are responsible for maintaining:
 - i. All private structures erected within the burial plot, as stipulated in the Consolidated Bylaw
 - ii. The gravesite, except those parts of the gravesite in lawn cemeteries that the Council maintains in lawn. The lawn areas cannot be maintained by family.
2. Continue with the following council responsibilities to:
 - i. Maintain reasonable access to gravesites
 - ii. Maintain any communal spaces, such as lawns in lawn cemetery areas
 - iii. Construct and maintain structures used by more than one burial plot, such as concrete beams or niche walls
 - iv. Carry out necessary safety or emergency work without prior notification to the family
 - v. Make reasonable attempts to contact the family before undertaking safety or restorative work on gravesites.
3. Continue to require that anyone intending to carry out maintenance and/or repair work on headstones and other gravesite structures must first obtain a permit from the Council.
4. Provide and promote clear guidelines and instructions on best practice non-invasive care of headstones, plaques and gravesites (see 3.3.2.4).

Explanation
Under the Burial and Cremation Act, purchasing a plot for burial entitles the purchaser, purchaser’s representative or successor to access and maintain the plot and memorial in perpetuity, or for a period specified at purchase. The Council’s Consolidated Bylaw holds the plot purchaser or representative

responsible for maintenance of structures on gravesites. Many people are unaware of the family responsibility so this needs to be highlighted in the Council’s cemetery information.

Problems arise when the deceased’s descendants have ceased to maintain a gravesite and cannot be traced or cannot afford the cost of repair and maintenance. In these situations, the Council may decide to step in. It has the power to make safe, take down or remove any monument or headstone that endangers people but generally does little more, due to limited resources. The Burial and Cremation Act is currently being reviewed and it has been noted that the legislation is somewhat ambiguous about who is responsible for upkeep.⁹ The Council will continue with its existing policy on this, subject to future review if the legislation is clarified.

Another issue is that headstones and other gravesite structures have been damaged by inexpert, though well-meaning, maintenance efforts carried out by both families and volunteers who don’t realise some cleaning products and tools can damage and adversely affect the long-term durability. For example, abrasive tools and cleaners can permanently damage surfaces, and paint can cause later maintenance problems if not consistent with heritage conservation best practice. Under the Council’s Consolidated Bylaw, permits must be issued before any maintenance and repairs are carried out so that advice can be given, the methods approved and a record kept of work undertaken. To simplify the permission process, permits are issued to cover a list of specified activities and/or for a time period, such as the following examples:

- For families, gentle cleaning, tidying and weeding of their forebear’s gravesite according to the non-invasive gravesite care guidelines (see (4) above) for a period of up to 3 years
- For volunteer groups, approved tasks for specified gravesites over a specified time period, such as one year.

9 New Zealand Law Commission (2015). R134 Death, Burial and Cremation: A new law for contemporary New Zealand, p.130

3.2.2.5 Quality records management and information systems

- 1. Manage the cemeteries according to industry best practice and maintain ISO 9001 quality management systems accreditation.
- 2. Maintain secure, up-to-date, accurate and publicly accessible cemetery records of all council-managed cemeteries, including plot photographs where possible.
- 3. Provide easily accessible information in both online and printed formats to explain burial, cremation, memorial and other customer service rights, options, procedures and costs.
- 4. Provide a streamlined, all-hours online booking system for funeral directors.
- 5. Provide timely and sympathetic advice and support to cemetery customers, including those bereaved who wish to arrange and run their own funerals.
- 6. Continue to provide a cemeteries office at Karori Cemetery as an easily accessible physical location for information, advice and administration.

Actions

- a) Complete the digitisation of historical paper-based cemetery records.
- b) Complete the current Cemetery Management System (CMS) replacement project.
- c) Develop a new user-friendly cemeteries website, integrated with the CMS project and compliant with the New Zealand Accessibility Charter.
- d) Continue to add photographs of all plots to the online cemetery records.
- e) Develop a ‘virtual tour’ of each cemetery.

Explanation

The Council’s cemetery operations have been ISO 9001-accredited since 2001. The accreditation recognises that all administration and operational procedures are formalised through quality and work instruction manuals that reflect industry best practice and are implemented consistently and to a high standard.

The Council has statutory responsibilities to ensure all official certification and paperwork is completed properly before burials and cremations can take place. It must also keep an accurate register of all burials and cremations in its cemeteries and make the register available for a small fee. A proportion of older cemetery records remain in paper-only form, which limits accessibility and risks the loss of unique historic records. The old paper-based maps and records are being checked and digitised.

Bereavement can be a time of great stress, when it is difficult to make decisions, often at short notice. Providing clear information and timely service helps both the bereaved and the funeral sector.

The Council’s Cemeteries Management System (CMS) is a database used by cemetery staff to book cemetery services and to generate and issue instructions for works to be undertaken on cemetery grounds. It is also the repository for recording and maintaining records of those who have been interred in one of the council’s cemeteries. The current CMS provides limited online public access to online records and spatial mapping information due to outdated technology. A project is currently under way to replace the existing CMS. The new CMS will improve the service to funeral directors by allowing them to make provisional bookings online at any time. People wanting to organise funerals directly will still be able to do so by phoning the Karori Cemetery office or the Council contact centre.

The new CMS will be integrated with a refreshed online search tool designed to be more welcoming through a simplified structure and improved user experience. The tool will cater better for the growing number of people interested in finding family graves and researching genealogy by linking through to the cemetery records. The Mākara Cemetery records are already available online and linked to online mapping and this will be extended to all cemetery records as the digitisation progresses. Access to the search tool will reduce the amount of staff time required to answer records enquiries and help people to locate plots. There is demand for people who cannot visit the cemeteries to be able to see the overall environment

and individual gravesites by way of an online ‘virtual tour’, to help with purchasing plots, viewing the graves of loved ones and exploring cemetery heritage.

Recent improvements in mobile technology will enable staff to access and update information directly into the new CMS system from their devices when in the field. It means less need for the cemetery office to be moved to Mākara Cemetery as had once been envisaged. The existing office at Karori Cemetery has the advantage of being more accessible from elsewhere in the city, including by public transport, for funeral directors and the bereaved making arrangements. Karori Cemetery is also where most history/genealogy researchers are likely to go in the foreseeable future.

3.3 Heritage

In the context of this plan, heritage includes the built structures, plants and introduced features that are of historical, social, aesthetic or scientific significance within the cemeteries. This term also encompasses the intangible values that cultural groups may associate with a place. The focus of natural environment values, which are also a form of heritage, is on significant components of indigenous and native ecosystems. All these aspects of heritage are interwoven within the cemeteries and the distinction between them is not always clear. For instance, native bird species are part of our natural environment but have come to depend on exotic as well as native plants for food. Exotic plants are also part of the unique character in some parts of the cemetery landscapes.

Cemeteries are valued worldwide as places that reflect the history of a locality. Wellington’s cemeteries hold some of the city’s oldest built heritage and stories of the past.

3.3.1 Objectives

- 1. To identify, recognise, protect and enhance appreciation of the significant heritage features and values of the cemeteries.
- 2. To maintain and enhance the essential landscape character of each cemetery in a way that preserves a sense of tranquility and respect for the dead and is compatible with heritage values.

- 3. To protect and, where appropriate, restore indigenous biodiversity and indigenous ecosystems in the cemeteries, including freshwater ecosystems.

3.3.2 Policies

3.3.2.1 Landscape character and amenity planting

- 1. Consider and maintain the complex combination of built, planted and natural features that contribute to the unique landscape character of each cemetery.
- 2. Ensure that a landscape management plan is part of any site development/maintenance and heritage conservation planning done for the cemeteries. This will ensure an integrated approach that will help avoid ad hoc actions and guide consistent management over time.
- 3. Manage vegetation change to enhance the amenity of the cemeteries while protecting built heritage features from unacceptable vegetation damage.
- 4. Identify and manage planting that has historic heritage value within each cemetery to ensure it continues to be a characteristic feature. When maintaining and/or replanting the identified planting, take into account the need to manage any potential for it to be a weed risk.
- 5. Plant trees to maintain the tree framework in the cemeteries but only where the roots, at maturity, will not damage graves, monuments or cemetery infrastructure.
- 6. Allow self-sown trees and shrubs to regenerate only in areas being managed as natural environment areas.
- 7. Consider the potential for providing food sources for native birds and lizards when selecting amenity planting species.
- 8. Seek horticultural, arboricultural and heritage advice to guide planting and vegetation management.
- 9. Balance demand for high-maintenance amenity planting with the need for cost-effective maintenance regimes.

Explanation

Each cemetery has a distinct character due to the different setting, scale, age and mix of built and natural features. This difference reflects each cemetery’s historic development, creating a distinct sense of place and experience for visitors.

Within each landscape, vegetation is an important element that constantly changes over time, as plants grow, change in form and, eventually, get old and die. In cemeteries this change needs to be managed, as plants have the potential to damage gravesites and built infrastructure, yet they form an important and valued part of each cemetery’s character. Excessive or ill-placed growth can also mask underlying structural problems, such as slumping or erosion, and compromise the visitor experience by obscuring graves and headstones. Vegetation also provides visual and sensory amenity, shade and shelter, and ecosystem services, such as filtering rainfall or providing wildlife habitat.

Planted vegetation may also have heritage values that should be considered. For example, a lemon tree planted at a gravesite may be indicative of a person or culture. Other planting may provide evidence of a particular aesthetic or popularity of certain species at any given time. For example, the Norfolk Island pine planting at Mākara Cemetery reflects that native specimen tree planting is a relatively new phenomenon.

Public feedback indicates that display planting, like the ash plot rose gardens at Karori Cemetery, is popular and people request that more be provided. Such planting requires considerable maintenance. [The Council generally favours lower-maintenance planting options than gardens to save on costs. However, attractive seasonal variation in shrubs and trees can be considered.

Planned and deliberate landscape management over time is required to ensure the right balance is found between protecting built heritage and public access, maintaining the complex character of the landscape and its planting, and ensuring cemetery management and maintenance is affordable for the city.

3.3.2.2 Natural environment

1. Identify and assess the areas of existing or potential ecological value in each cemetery and manage to protect and enhance that value, prioritised around:
 - i. Improving ecological connectivity with nearby natural areas and wildlife corridors
 - ii. Improving freshwater habitats and fish passage
 - iii. Enhancing species diversity.
2. Recognise the spiritual and cultural values that people associate with nature.
3. Manage exotic plants that have invasive weed characteristics but also heritage value in the cemeteries’ context, by confining specimens to the immediate area of historical association and, where appropriate, preventing seed development.
4. Manage weeds and animal pests in accordance with the Council’s *Our Natural Capital Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan* and the *Greater Wellington Regional Pest Management Plan*, with particular attention to identified Key Native Ecosystems and Significant Natural Areas within or adjoining the cemeteries.
5. Use eco-sourced plants when planting native trees and shrubs for forest restoration and commemorative tree planting purposes, including for natural burials.
6. Support, in consultation with mana whenua, research and community efforts to identify lizard populations, assess threats and identify habitat requirements at the cemeteries.
7. Continue to regularly clear and dispose of wind-blown rubbish, particularly plastics. Encourage cemetery visitors to use biodegradable tributes and decorations.
8. Implement best practice water-sensitive design in any future development, to protect freshwater values.

Action

- a) Investigate the potential for annual commemorative tree planting into new native tree groves or into existing areas of regenerating native vegetation in the cemeteries to enhance the biodiversity with long-lived ‘heritage’ species.

Explanation

Within the cemeteries there are areas where natural values predominate and/or there is potential for restoration of indigenous biodiversity and indigenous ecosystems, such as undeveloped gullies and hillsides. These areas have intrinsic ecological value and provide a setting that symbolises the cycle of life and supports peaceful contemplation. Bush areas can also provide suitable places for ash scattering or commemorative native tree planting. The emphasis is on indigenous biodiversity but it is recognised that some exotic plant species in the cemeteries can contribute to the natural environment by, for instance, providing wildlife habitat or helping to filter rainfall runoff. Conversely, some exotic plants in the cemeteries might have historic value but potentially be a weed problem.

In Māori mythology lizards are regarded as the guardians of the underworld. We know very little about the lizard populations in the cemeteries. However, graves probably provide good lizard habitat, as they have plenty of basking surfaces and crannies for cover, which should be considered when undertaking maintenance on graves.

Weeds and pest animals are managed as part of the Council’s city-wide pest management programme in collaboration, where possible, with volunteers. Weed management is prioritised across the city to protect the areas of highest natural value from the most ecologically damaging weeds. Therefore, new priorities for weed control in the cemeteries would depend on new funding being attached to this management plan. Any such funding would be prioritised to Karori Cemetery where there is potential for weeds to spread and adversely affect natural values in the adjacent Otari-Wilton’s Bush. Animal pest control includes possum bait stations, rabbit control, small mammal trapping at Karori Cemetery and goat

control near Mākara Cemetery. The short grass and sunnier slopes in the cemeteries are ideal rabbit and hare habitat and there are ongoing problems with their droppings and diggings causing damage and upsetting visitors. Rabbits are hard to control in public spaces due to public health and safety considerations. Toxins are a last resort in public spaces and rabbit numbers do not warrant their use in the cemeteries. Night shooting is the best option and carried out regularly at Karori and Mākara cemeteries.

Natural and biodegradable materials such as fresh flowers and woven flax are encouraged as a more environmentally friendly way to decorate graves instead of fake flowers, toys and other decorations that are often used. Unfortunately, a proportion of artificial decorations blow away and end up in vegetation and watercourses, causing plastic pollution. This material can end up on neighbouring properties and in Wellington Harbour or Cook Strait where it contributes to marine pollution and threatens wildlife. An integrated approach to freshwater values at a broader catchment management scale is being developed by the Whaitua te Whanganui-a-Tara Committee and the recommendations may be applicable in due course.

Traditionally, people have sought to plant commemorative trees as individual specimens within mown lawn settings. As explained in section 3.2.2.3 that approach is generally unsustainable but there is an alternative option of grouped commemorative planting, either into newly created groves or as enhancement planting within the natural areas in the cemeteries. These plantings could be an opportunity to bury ashes and plant a tree or, simply, a symbolic planting to help restore nature. Longer-lived, taller-growing species such as podocarps and pukatea could be used, including species that are now rare in the city area. An allocation of plants could be included in the Council’s annual native plant nursery production. To ensure the plants are well-suited to their sites and maintained for a period, a landscape plan of commemorative planting areas, including appropriate species, is required.

3.3.2.3 Heritage recognition and protection

- 1. Recognise that the cemeteries are within a broader cultural landscape of great significance to mana whenua and work with mana whenua to protect its mauri.
- 2. Identify the heritage values of the cemeteries.
- 3. Protect and manage the cemeteries in a manner reflecting their historic value and significance in consultation, where possible, with any directly affected groups or individuals.
- 4. Ensure that a heritage conservation plan is prepared, reviewed and regularly updated for each of the cemeteries, using appropriate multi-disciplinary expertise and ensuring that consistent heritage management principles and methodology are applied in all.
- 5. Integrate the outcomes of the heritage conservation plans into master plans of Karori and Mākara cemeteries.
- 6. Research, record and disseminate historical information about the cemeteries, including the intangible cultural heritage values of different denominational and cultural groups associated with the cemeteries.
- 7. Protect and manage historic buildings and features according to recognised conservation principles and policies.
- 8. Ensure that an archaeological management plan is prepared for Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga approval and regularly updated for cemeteries associated with pre-1900 activity and features.
- 9. Document all conservation work the Council undertakes at the cemeteries using photographic and written records to illustrate the initial and completed state.

Action

- a) Research with mana whenua in relation to land held for cemetery purposes the pre-colonial history, post-colonial history from the Māori perspective and any cultural values associated with the land and recognise according to mana whenua wishes.

Explanation

Karori and Tawa cemeteries hold significant heritage values. The monuments and graves mark the lives of prominent people, those who died in historically important events, such as world wars, the 1918 flu epidemic and the 1953 Tangiwai disaster, and collectively reflect Wellington’s history. Several buildings and structures at Karori Cemetery are entered on the New Zealand Heritage List/Rārangī Kōrero as category 1 or 2 heritage places and are scheduled in the district plan. Aside from these individually listed and scheduled structures, the heritage values are currently not recognised or protected by statutory means, except that Karori and Tawa cemeteries are archaeological sites under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014. The more recent Mākara Cemetery has a shorter history but its heritage significance will increase with time, and its archaeological values are still to be assessed.

Knowledge about the heritage values of the cemeteries is fundamental to identifying and recognising their significance, seeking their protection and planning appropriate conservation and management approaches. Research will be important to fill knowledge gaps. The cemeteries largely reflect Wellington’s colonial and post-colonial history but it should also be understood in the context of the preceding Māori occupation and culture.

The cemetery heritage conservation plans will need to cover all aspects of heritage (see introduction to 3.3) and take into account practical day-to-day landscape management and the development that may still occur, such as wayfinding signage, accessibility improvements and planting. Therefore, it is important that the heritage conservation plans are prepared and reviewed using multi-disciplinary expertise including: historic research, heritage conservation, landscape architecture, cemetery

management, vegetation management, horticulture and interpretation. A separate or associated archaeological management plan is recommended to ensure pre-1900 features and sites are recognised and protected when planning and undertaking work within the cemeteries.

3.3.2.4 Graves and monuments

- 1. Maintain and manage all historic graves, monuments and surrounds in accordance with the ICOMOS charter¹⁰ and according to the Council’s maintenance and repair guidelines for graves (see action (a) below).
- 2. Require any person or group, including plot owners, doing maintenance and repair on any graves, monuments and grave surrounds to obtain prior approval via a council permit and for the work to be consistent with the maintenance and repair guidelines (see action (a) below).
- 3. Manage vegetation around graves and monuments to protect them from damage and to maintain adequate visual and physical access.
- 4. Maintain the military services sections in the cemeteries to the standards required in Veterans’ Affairs guidelines.
- 5. Regularly inspect graves and monuments for damage from vandalism or vegetation and for signs of general decay. Address any immediate or pending issues promptly to avoid further damage or more extensive repairs in the future.
- 6. Prioritise repairs and maintenance on graves as follows:
 - a. First priority:
 - i. Immediate health and safety hazard due to the risk of headstones, walls or fences collapsing, including elements liable to collapse if people climb on them
 - ii. Damage resulting from council maintenance, particularly where families are regularly visiting graves
 - iii. Damage that has resulted from inappropriate/unauthorised repairs/work.

- b. Second priority, potential health and safety hazard: Where preventative action now will prevent graves that are structurally sound from becoming dangerous due to continued growth of trees and/or roots nearby, or by erosion.
 - c. Third priority, significant gravesites: Have historic and/or aesthetic significance and, while not being dangerous, are in need of repair because elements are cracking, broken or lost. Significance assessed according to the heritage conservation plan for each cemetery.
 - d. Fourth priority, damaged gravesites: Graves which have no special historic and/or aesthetic significance, are not dangerous but need repair because elements are cracking, broken or lost.
- 7. Wherever possible and practicable, seek to recover the cost of repairs from descendants or family, unless the repair was required because of council damage.
 - 8. Consult interested parties, such as family, provided they can be contacted, before beginning major restoration work.
 - 9. Securely store and catalogue all grave and monument fragments that are no longer in situ, to be available for restoration work.
 - 10. Keep records of all historic assets within the cemeteries and any that may be stored off-site. Keep up-to-date notes of damage and remedial work, and document all significant alterations.

Actions

- a) Develop new maintenance and repair guidelines for graves and monuments to be used in heritage management and conservation work in all the Council’s cemeteries.
- b) Publish simple ‘how-to’ guidance in online and pamphlet formats to inform family members and volunteers about how to carry out simple, non-invasive cleaning and maintenance of graves, noting that permits are required (see (2) above).

¹⁰ ICOMOS is the International Council on Monuments and Sites which has an International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites. ICOMOS New Zealand has its own charter, Te Pumanawa o ICOMOS o Aotearoa Hei Tiaki I Nga Taonga Whenua Heke Iho o Nehe, which is widely used by the heritage sector in New Zealand.

- c) Approach the Ministry for Culture and Heritage to investigate the potential for a partnership approach in managing the memorials of prominent people in the cemeteries.

Explanation

The graves and monuments are the most notable historic features of our cemeteries. They are a valuable historic record and a source of great human interest. Many are fragile and vulnerable to damage. Council uses maintenance and repair permits to maintain high standards of work and to track who has carried out work if damage occurs, which can be upsetting for families (see also 5.3.1). Access to the graves is important for both families and interested members of the public. Therefore, it is essential that reasonable access be provided to graves so that visitors will not be compelled to clear vegetation and potentially damage the graves.

The Council works with Veterans’ Affairs to ensure the military services graves (or ‘war graves’) are maintained to high standards that meet public expectations. Veterans’ Affairs provides funding that enables a higher level of maintenance, including regular cleaning of headstones.

The proposed new maintenance and repair guidelines will be based on the principles of the ICOMOS Charter for the Conservation of Places of Cultural Heritage Value, widely accepted in New Zealand and Australia as providing a benchmark for conservation practice. The guidelines will recognise the over-riding principle of doing the minimum required, as the best guarantee of retaining the authenticity of each grave. In the words of the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand, “*do as much as necessary, and as little as possible*”.

Conservation work is planned from this starting point, with levels of increasing intervention as required: Doing nothing, cleaning, weeding, general maintenance, stabilising, repairing, restoring and reconstructing (see Appendix IV). Most graves will require cleaning and general maintenance at one time or another but work at a higher level of intervention should be assessed according to the priorities and

long-term maintenance programmes determined under each of the cemetery heritage conservation plans. In setting those priorities the views of submitters on this plan should be taken into account.

Most ranked the following four types of work to protect the built heritage of old gravesites in the following order: Removing trees where roots are causing damage, maintaining a representative sample of graves from different eras and cultures, maintaining graves from historically important events, and maintaining graves of famous people.

The Ministry for Culture and Heritage arranges for the maintenance of former Prime Minister Peter Fraser’s memorial and the Marble Arch memorial at Karori Cemetery. However, there are memorials of other nationally notable people in the cemetery and there has been community concern that the standard of care is inadequate. It is possible the Ministry could work with the Council to help maintain other memorials.

3.3.2.5 Buildings and infrastructure

1. Maintain to a good standard the built infrastructure required to manage and develop the cemeteries and provide for visitor amenities, including roading, water supply, power supply, signage, public toilets and utility buildings.
2. Ensure that a current conservation management plan guides any additions and alterations to:
 - Existing heritage-listed buildings or structures
 - Existing buildings and structures with heritage value that are currently not scheduled in the district plan nor listed by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.
3. In preparing any plans for alteration or addition to any building with heritage values, consult:
 - Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga if the building is currently or potentially listed on the Heritage New Zealand/Rārangī Kōrero List
 - The Council’s heritage advisors if the building is currently or potentially scheduled in the district plan.

4. Ensure that any new buildings or structures complement the heritage values and landscape character of the relevant cemetery and of individually heritage-listed and scheduled buildings or structures in their vicinity.
5. Ensure that new buildings or alterations and additions to existing buildings are of a scale and design that is in keeping with the landscape character of the relevant cemetery and the immediate site setting.
6. Ensure that all relevant consents (building/ resource) for work covered under 3.3.2.5 (1) and (2) are applied for.
7. Advise denominational and cultural groups that they are responsible for the financing and ongoing upkeep of any buildings and structures within their areas of the cemeteries.

Explanation

The provision of well-maintained infrastructure is an essential part of the Council’s responsibility to provide cemeteries. Maintenance of the built infrastructure is managed through separate asset management systems so the provisions in this plan are primarily to give direction about the appropriate use, statutory context and proposals for significant new development or upgrades, particularly where additional expenditure might be involved.

The built infrastructure varies between the three cemeteries. There is very little at Tawa Cemetery other than fencing, and considerably more at Karori and Mākara cemeteries. At Karori, the focus is largely on maintaining older infrastructure in the context of a heritage landscape. At Mākara, the infrastructure is more recent. Much focus over the next 10 years will be on development associated with any land the Council acquires for cemetery expansion (see 3.1.2.3).

The Burial and Cremation Act provides for religious denominations to build a mortuary church or chapel within their denominational area, at their own expense. Currently there are two such structures – the Jewish Prayer House and the Greek Orthodox Chapel – both at Mākara Cemetery.

3.4 Visitor experience

3.4.1 Objectives

1. To enable the bereaved to farewell and pay tribute to their dead in a supportive atmosphere.
2. To enable the public to explore and appreciate the cemeteries in a manner that is appropriate to places of burial.

3.4.2 Policies

3.4.2.1 Public use

1. Support grieving families and friends by maintaining a tranquil atmosphere with places for contemplation and facilities for tending graves.
2. Encourage and provide for informal passive recreational activities that are appropriate to the respectful and peaceful character of the cemeteries (see Part 5, Rules for more on types of activity).
3. Support those interested in tracing family history and researching genealogy by:
 - i. Making all cemetery records readily available online
 - ii. Providing clear plot location information linked to interactive online digital mapping
 - iii. Continuing to add photographs of the gravesites to each plot location record
 - iv. Improving wayfinding at the cemeteries (see 3.4.2.3).
4. Promote the cemeteries to Wellington’s residents and visitors as pleasant and unique open spaces of historic interest.

Explanation

It is a priority to ensure the atmosphere and amenities in the cemeteries are appropriate for visits related to mourning and remembrance – the primary purpose of cemeteries. These visits include attending funerals at the chapels, attending burials, scattering ashes, unveiling headstones and tending graves. Feedback indicates that visitors coming for these reasons appreciate a peaceful, respectful atmosphere with opportunities for contemplation.

People are also increasingly visiting cemeteries for other reasons, including walking, dog walking, relaxation, exploring, learning about local history, researching genealogy, cycling and even geocaching. Provided that an appropriate atmosphere is maintained for the bereaved, this more diverse use benefits the wider community by providing a type of public open space valued for peacefulness, interesting landscape character and historical associations. Recreational use also helps prevent anti-social behaviour through the passive surveillance provided when more people visit the cemeteries. More diverse use requires management to avoid or minimise inappropriate or conflicting behaviour. For instance, disrespectful and potentially damaging mountain biking behaviour on and around gravestones has been reported. Additional guidance about activities is set out in the Rules section.

Interest in family history and genealogy has been increasing for some years. A growing number of people visit the cemeteries in person to see the records that are still held in paper-only form and to find family plots. There is a growing expectation among those who can’t visit in person to be able to search cemetery records online and, preferably, ‘virtually visit’ the cemeteries by seeing images of the graves and the cemetery environment. While the Mākara Cemetery records are available online, most of Karori Cemetery records are still in paper form. Consequently, the cemetery office staff are spending the equivalent of nearly two days a week answering genealogy information requests and helping people to locate plots, because people have difficulty finding their way around. A fee is charged for requests involving multiple plots.

Two current projects - digitising the cemetery records and mapping database and the replacement Cemeteries Management System (see 3.2.2.5) - will provide an improved service. These projects will enable researchers to find information for themselves, without a fee, and more easily locate plots through the improved mapping. The number of requests should drop significantly, freeing up staff for core cemetery services. By supporting the interest in cemetery records, the Council also hopes to foster

people’s interest and involvement in volunteering opportunities and maintaining graves and headstones.

3.4.2.2 Access and amenities

- 1. Maintain a practicable network of drive-on and pedestrian access-ways as required in each cemetery to service the gravesites, facilities, utilities and special features of the cemeteries.
- 2. Make access ways as accessible as possible, where practicable and cost-effective, provided that the integrity of heritage and landscape character is not compromised.
- 3. Make known that family and friends of the deceased who cannot reach the gravesite without assistance due to limited mobility can request personal assistance with access from cemetery staff.
- 4. Provide site furniture to facilitate safe access, amenity and appropriate recreational activities in the cemeteries.
- 5. Where appropriate, develop and maintain tracks additional to the paths and access ways needed for cemetery use to provide complementary recreational opportunities linked where possible with the Council’s adjacent or nearby track network.
- 6. Provide information about public transport and other transport services to the cemeteries.

Explanation

A system of roadways, drives and paths is required to enable visitors, service vehicles and cemetery staff to reach gravesites. This system is broadly organised in a hierarchy from wider, paved main routes to narrower throughways and paths, which may be paved or maintained in lawn, depending on the age and character of the section in the cemetery. A 10 km per hour speed limit is set on the vehicle access way for the health and safety of visitors on foot and to preserve a quiet respectful atmosphere. The roadways need to be wide enough to allow for a vehicle to stop with enough room to help passengers with mobility problems including transfer in and out of wheelchairs.

Accessibility is an issue at the cemeteries. A comparatively high proportion of the bereaved are elderly and less mobile. The extent to which universal accessibility standards can be achieved within the existing gravesite areas is limited by the historical layout of graves and access ways and the topography. For example, where the access way is up a steep slope, regrading or constructing steps would impact the adjacent graves. The wider drive-on routes bring visitors within a certain distance of graves but some have difficulty with access beyond that point due to the sloping terrain. Installation of handrails is often unfeasible because they can restrict machine access for preparing new interment plots or installing headstones, obscure the visibility of adjacent gravesites and obstruct physical access to graves for maintenance. New burial areas are laid out to follow the contours where possible to ease access gradients but the topography is often a limiting factor. Levelling new burial areas is another option but would increase environmental impacts and development costs. Recognising the accessibility constraints, cemetery staff provide assistance on prior request, such as temporarily placing ramps and mats to provide improved surfaces for wheelchairs.

Site furniture is the small-scale items such as seats, water outlets, rubbish bins and drinking fountains that are specifically provided for visitor convenience. Regularly spaced seats provide resting places for visitors who are frail and/or have limited mobility as well as places for contemplation. Water is provided at the entrance to the Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā to cater for customary practice and at intervals through the cemetery for washing monuments and tending graves.

The Open Space Access Plan (OSAP) is a strategy to strengthen and improve Wellington’s open space access network. It sets out to provide opportunities for recreation and tourism, ensure that tracks cater for a range of user interests and abilities, and provide a network that enables residents to enjoy the city’s open spaces. All three cemeteries are destinations that can be incorporated into walking and cycling routes and local loops, which is a focus area in the Council’s open spaces and recreation framework, *Our Capital Spaces*. The cemeteries have a unique function within the Council’s reserves and open spaces that brings

different functional and user requirements to its access network. Therefore, the cemetery access rules vary from the OSAP, in particular, stipulating that tracks in cemeteries will not be open for biking unless specified (see Part 5, Rules).

People already enjoy exploring the two larger cemeteries within the existing cemetery access network. Karori Cemetery is already well-linked to the adjacent reserves and tracks and there is potential to develop tracks on areas unsuitable for cemetery use at Mākara Cemetery, potentially linking into the wider track network.

3.4.2.3 Wayfinding, signage and interpretation

- 1. Use on-site signage, map boards and way markers to guide visitors at each cemetery about:
 - i. The layout, main circulation routes, and entrances
 - ii. The location of main facilities such as chapels, toilets and drinking water
 - iii. The location of denominational and cultural areas
 - iv. Restrictions on types of recreational use
 - v. The heritage and natural environment values
 - vi. Recreational opportunities, including connections to nearby open spaces.
- 2. Determine a logical hierarchy of site circulation routes and entrances at each cemetery to guide the development and maintenance of wayfinding signage and mapping.
- 3. Ensure that signage is:
 - i. Sufficient to enable visitors to find their way around the cemeteries but does not create visual clutter
 - ii. Is of a scale and design to complement the distinctive character of each cemetery
 - iii. Is of high-quality design and durable materials.
- 4. Develop interpretation material to help visitors appreciate the unique heritage at each of the cemeteries, and its significance.

5. Provide easily accessible wayfinding and interpretative information about the cemeteries in a range of formats, including on-site, online and printed.

Action

- a) Develop a high-level visitor experience strategy for council’s cemeteries, with guiding principles for developing individual cemetery interpretation plans, covering:
- i. Key messages and themes including interweaving nature/culture/history/ sense of place
 - ii. The target audiences and how to engage with them
 - iii. How the interpretation will fit with and complement other Council interpretation plans, for example the neighbouring Otari-Wilton’s Bush interpretation, the existing Bolton Street Cemetery interpretation, and at places of memorial such as Pukeahu National War Memorial Park.

Explanation

Wayfinding and interpretation needs differ between the cemeteries according to their comparative size, complexity of the landscape and their cultural and heritage values. As a basic principle, good wayfinding and well-placed signage can greatly enhance the visitor experience. It can be distressing if people cannot find their way to key locations at times of bereavement and frustrating if plots are hard to find for those tracing family history. Good wayfinding needs to be based on a logical hierarchy of main and side routes that helps visitors to orientate themselves and find destinations without having to signpost every path and feature.

Interpretation enhances people’s understanding and appreciation of the places they visit. Feedback from engagement indicates there is interest in having more interpretation about the cemeteries, especially the two older ones. In developing interpretation, it is important to recognise the great diversity of people buried in the cemeteries and the different combination of location, history and cultural associations at each cemetery. They each tell a local story but their significance and points

of interest are often interwoven with other stories about nearby places or themes of city-wide and national significance. The Council is developing an Interpretation Strategy to guide storytelling in the Council’s public spaces. Within this framework, the proposed high-level Visitor Experience Strategy will ensure that the cemetery interpretation brings out what is unique about each cemetery and how each can contribute to wider interpretation themes. More detailed interpretation and wayfinding plans would then be developed.

A balance is required between the need for on-site signage and the intention to keep the cemeteries as simple places of peace and calm. Too much signage and written interpretation can be upsetting for the recently bereaved, if it makes a cemetery feel more like a park and the people buried there a part of its historic fabric. Interpretation needs to be sensitively worded, subtly designed and located and the potential for virtual interpretation considered, including through QR codes. Improved online mapping through the replacement Cemeteries Management System (see 3.2.2.5 action (b)), will also provide the GPS co-ordinates of plot locations, together with wayfinding directions, to help visitors find their way.

3.4.2.4 Public events

1. Provide and/or support public remembrance events at the cemeteries that offer an opportunity for people to come together to remember loved ones, subject to considering the impact on the cemetery environment and on cemetery visitors of:
- i. The proposed scale
 - ii. The frequency
 - iii. The temporary nature of infrastructure and services required to provide the event
 - iv. Compatibility with other users and the possible need to temporarily restrict access to some areas
 - v. Cumulative effects of the event alongside other events happening in the course of a year.

Explanation

Large public events are not generally considered appropriate in the cemeteries except where the focus is on remembrance in a context of community support

and shared experience of loss. The value of these sorts of communal events in the grief process for some people is recognised. For example, some funeral homes offer annual remembrance services, as do hospices. Some denominational groups already gather at the cemeteries on certain holy days to remember their dead and no special booking or application process is required because those events are relatively private and small in scale. However, if a larger public remembrance event is contemplated then its impact will need to be considered in the context of what is appropriate in a cemetery environment. Events could take the form of quite formal occasions with prayers or something more informal like open days on popular visiting days, such as Mother’s Day or special denominational days, when help with transport could be offered and the chance to buy fresh flowers to place on graves. An annual remembrance event around Matariki is another possibility suggested during engagement on this plan (see 4.3.6 action (a)).

Other events that may be held in the chapels, such as funerals or weddings, or interments or memorial installations outside are regarded as private events and managed through the cemetery bookings and permits system (see Part 5, Rules).

3.5 Community and partnership

3.5.1 Objectives

1. To plan for and work in partnership with mana whenua.
2. To collaborate with local, regional and national stakeholders who have particular interest in the delivery of cemetery services, to maintain high standards and respond to changing needs.
3. To encourage and support appropriate involvement of individuals, community groups, neighbouring land owners and organisations in working towards the vision of this plan.
4. To promote awareness of the cemeteries as places that contribute to Wellington’s sense of place and people’s quality of life.

3.5.2 Policies

3.5.2.1 Partnership with mana whenua

1. Encourage Treaty partners and the wider Māori community to help determine how this plan can be implemented, including:
- Working in partnership to co-manage sites of significance to mana whenua
 - Supporting the practice of tikanga.
2. Ensure that mana whenua are kept informed about cemetery management through regular contact and reporting.
3. Use and encourage more use of te reo Māori in relation to place names and the key tikanga concepts carried into this plan.
4. Maintain a list of kaumātua and Māori clergy who are available to support Māori whānau at times of bereavement.

Action

- a) Develop a partnership that will enable both Taranaki Whānui and the Council to fulfil and plan for their mutual undertakings in the Memorandum of Understanding, including for Taranaki Whānui to realise their plans for the Opau Urupā.

Explanation

The Council’s relationship with mana whenua¹¹ is managed through Memoranda of Understanding with the mandated iwi entities, Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust and Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira Incorporated, based on principles of partnership, participation and protection of taonga and cultural heritage. The Council has a responsibility to take account of the principles of Te Tiriti – Treaty of Waitangi and to improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making processes.

The development and management of the cemeteries has been largely based on a European approach that does not necessarily reflect mana whenua’s relationship with the land. This was partly recognised in the opening of the Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā in 2011 at Mākara Cemetery, which came about in response to comment received from the Māori community. People who request interment in the urupā are likely to be of

11 Mana whenua means customary authority exercised by an iwi or hapu in an identified area.

Māori descent (whakapapa), partners and whāngai, or any person who has an affinity with the Māori culture. Wellington City Council will not refuse a request for burial in the urupā.

The way in which mana whenua wish to collaborate in managing the cemeteries and recognising Māori protocols and customs needs to be explored and planned for further. There may also be opportunities for active partnership in activities such as habitat restoration. Supporting iwi capacity and capability to be active partners is an aspect to be considered.

The Council’s Te Tauihu: Te Reo Māori Policy aims to support more everyday usage of te reo Māori. Recognition and use of Māori place names is one way to do this but so too is the use of Māori terms for natural elements and tikanga.

Māori whanau who are distant from their own tribal area and/or do not have local connections may wish to contact kaumātua or clergy for support, such as karakia, during grieving and attendance at the cemetery.

The Opau Urupā is owned and managed by Taranaki Whānui but the Council can provide expertise, advice and practical help in planning, management and maintenance of the urupā, delivery of cemetery services and record-keeping. A partnership arrangement will be progressed between the Council and Taranaki Whānui for the Opau Urupā.

3.5.2.2 Collaboration with customer service stakeholders

1. Maintain good working relationships with customer service stakeholders and customer groups through:
 - Regular communication and information updates
 - Inviting feedback and suggestions.
2. Consider opportunities for appropriate partnerships with external entities that may enable an expanded range of cemetery services and/or revenue sources.

Explanation

Customer service stakeholders include funeral directors and monumental masons who deal with the Council on behalf of the bereaved. The stakeholders also include official organisations that the Council deals with in delivering cemetery services, such as the Health Department, the Births Deaths and Marriages section of the Department of Internal Affairs, Veterans’ Affairs and Ministry for Culture and Heritage. Customer groups include denominational and cultural groups, including mana whenua, who have designated areas within the cemeteries.

Regular contact and proactive communication with these stakeholders and groups is important to ensure customer service is responsive and meeting changing needs. The Council works together with the funeral sector to make this happen and also works directly with families who choose to make their own arrangements. A fundamental principle is to recognise the importance of every burial or cremation running smoothly and in a way that feels right for the bereaved. The replacement online Cemeteries Management System currently being developed is the result of stakeholder and customer group feedback (see 3.2.2.5).

The natural burials area at Mākara Cemetery is an example where cemetery services were extended through partnership. The Council works with a not-for-profit organisation, Natural Burials, which provides the information and requirements about natural burial and organises the bookings. The Council carries out the actual burial. Natural Burials was set up in response to concerns about the environmental impact of traditional burial and cremation practices. The uptake was slow at first but demand has increased in recent years. There may be other partnership opportunities in future that reflect a new trend or demand in the way human remains are dealt with. There could be also opportunities for ancillary services that are not considered core business for the Council. For instance, there have been requests for catering and for family who live at a distance to be able to order a tidy-up of the grave and placement of fresh flowers on a special day of significance.

3.5.2.3 Community partnership

1. Encourage, support and provide opportunities for individuals and groups of all ages, and businesses, to help manage and maintain the physical environment, public use and general awareness of the cemeteries, and help monitor outcomes.
2. Encourage and support volunteers and volunteer groups who have a mandate to undertake proposed work by:
 - i. Communicating regularly and having clear agreements (usually Memoranda of Agreement) that define responsibilities and set out the group’s objectives, health and safety requirements, and how achievements will be measured
 - ii. Working with volunteers to plan their activities realistically, taking into account the time needed for ongoing tasks such as maintaining planting
 - iii. Providing practical advice, training and, subject to council resourcing, help with tools, materials and storage
 - iv. Promoting collaboration and sharing of skills and resources between different volunteer groups
 - v. Recognising and celebrating volunteers’ efforts and achievements.
3. Maintain open communication with volunteers, volunteer groups and communities and constructively exchange feedback, knowledge and new ideas about how best to work together to achieve goals.
4. Work with other agencies and organisations, such as Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage, Veterans’ Affairs, Royal New Zealand Returned Services Association - Te Ratonga Kahui Morehu a Tu o Aotearoa, and the New Zealand Society of Genealogists, to co-ordinate overlapping responsibilities, interests and opportunities for collaboration.
5. Work collaboratively with communities and interest groups to co-design and explore funding options for projects within reserves.

Explanation

In recent years increasing numbers of individuals, community groups, businesses and nearby residents have volunteered their time and energy to help manage the Council’s open spaces. There are numerous benefits. More is achieved than the Council could achieve alone and volunteers often get huge satisfaction from helping to care for places they care about and contributing to a ‘greater good’. Communities become more resilient as people meet and work towards common goals, potentially being better placed to help each other in hard times and emergencies.

Community involvement in cemeteries has been spurred most by people’s interest in the heritage, as seen through the Tawa Historical Society’s involvement at Tawa Cemetery and the recently established Friends of Karori Cemetery (see 4.1 and 4.2). There is potential for more community involvement with the growing interest in genealogy and history and the increasing popularity of cemeteries as places of recreation and refuge. Natural environment volunteering such as animal pest control and restoration planting is another opportunity.

The Council needs to invest time and resources into managing volunteer partnerships to foster a mutually beneficial relationship. Voluntary effort needs to be well managed to sustain people’s enthusiasm over time, including taking into account what can realistically be managed in terms of time and capability. The Council can provide support with practical advice and resources and a collaborative way of working. In cemeteries, communication is key to ensuring volunteers follow best practice in gravesite maintenance and understand that prior permission is required (see 3.3.2.4). Volunteer groups can also benefit through sharing skills and experience. For example, the Friends of Bolton Street Cemetery have gained considerable experience in heritage conservation which would be invaluable to volunteers in other cemeteries.

Also important is the need to optimise positive outcomes in terms of the Council’s overall management objectives and related budgets. Greater recognition of the heritage in cemeteries

comes with a corresponding desire to conserve it and that comes at a cost. Community partnerships and appropriate sponsorships can potentially help to stretch the Council’s budget allocations further through volunteer effort and fundraising.

3.6 Resilience

3.6.1 Objectives

- 1. To contribute to the city’s resilience through emergency preparedness of cemetery services.
- 2. To contribute to the city’s resilience and climate change response through ecosystem services on cemeteries land, where appropriate and within the scope of the cemeteries’ vision.

3.6.2 Policies

3.6.2.1 Emergency preparedness

- 1. Maintain operational plans to ensure the provision of cemetery services in the event of emergencies involving high numbers of deaths and/or high public health risks.
- 2. Co-ordinate emergency planning and operations with the New Zealand Police, Ministry of Health, Regional Public Health, hospitals and other local authorities in the region and with the funeral/ memorial sector.
- 3. Plan emergency operations to avoid potentially damaging use of significant heritage and natural environment areas in the cemeteries if possible.

Explanation

Events such as natural disasters, pandemics or civil emergencies such as bombings or plane crashes can result in heavy demand on cemetery services at short notice. Large numbers of deaths can represent a public health hazard, particularly when a pandemic is involved, which may need specialist advice from the health sector and close attention to protecting the health and safety of cemetery staff. The Council maintains a business continuity plan to ensure

that cemetery services can continue with minimal disruption in various emergency scenarios. The pandemic response plan was recently updated and implemented during the Covid-19 outbreak this year and includes ensuring provision for emergency storage facilities and mass burials if the need arises.

3.6.2.2 Resilient communities

- 1. Promote the health and wellbeing benefits of cemeteries as a place with opportunities for physical activity, relaxation, connection with history and place, contact with nature, and community involvement.
- 2. Help build communities by encouraging citizens to protect and care for cemetery heritage together.

Explanation

During the community engagement for this plan people commented that it is important for cities to have quiet places of contemplation, places of special meaning and green spaces – for people’s health and wellbeing. As the city grows and the density of urban development intensifies, demand for these values will increase. People sought out Karori Cemetery during the Covid-19 lockdown as a place to walk and relax.

3.6.2.3 Fire

- 1. Manage fire risk by:
 - i. Appropriate management of activities that are a potential fire risk
 - ii. Co-ordinating with Fire and Emergency New Zealand (FENZ)
 - iii. Working with neighbours to co-ordinate cross-boundary fire mitigation and planting fire-resistant species in areas of high fire risk.

Explanation

Fire has the potential to threaten safety, assets, neighbouring properties and set back ecosystem restoration. Open fires and fireworks are prohibited in the cemeteries (see 5.3.3, Rules).

3.6.2.4 Sustainability and ecosystem services

- 1. Manage the cemeteries in a sustainable manner to reduce the environmental impact of cemetery operational activities and public use.
- 2. Manage the cemeteries’ natural areas so that ecosystem services help sustain a healthy and robust environment.
- 3. Apply best practice sustainable design, such as water-sensitive and energy-efficient design, in planning and implementing future development of existing and newly acquired land.
- 4. Encourage the use of coffin handles that can be recycled or safely burned and return plastic coffin handles to funeral directors.

Actions

- a) Review and develop a sustainable system for managing green waste and surplus soil in the cemeteries.
- b) Undertake a sustainability audit of the cemetery operations to inform future management.
- c) Investigate the potential for carbon zero cemetery operations.

Explanation

Cemetery operations involve activities that consume energy and resources and potentially pollute the environment. The activities include those carried out directly by the Council such as cremation and mowing large areas, and activities by others such as the embalming and purchase of products like coffins and non-biodegradable decorations on graves. The Council manages these impacts in a number of ways. For instance, the cremator, which was replaced in 2016, has an automated energy efficiency system and operates under a resource consent that meets air discharge standards, and the toilets at Mākara Cemetery are solar-powered. However, the need to mow large areas in the lawn cemeteries has an ongoing impact. During cremations it is necessary to remove the plastic handles, which release pollutants if burned and these handles are effectively waste if

not re-used. Metal handles, on the other hand, can be recycled. Non-biodegradable grave decorations can create rubbish when they blow away or deteriorate. Plastic flowers, in particular, have been found blown into nearby streams. Composting floral tributes was suggested during community engagement but is not feasible due to the wires, ribbons and wrappings that are often included. QR codes attached to headstones and plaques are becoming popular as another option for virtual tributes and cemetery interpretation. The potential of this technology for reducing on-site decorations and signage is not yet known, nor its longevity, so should be monitored.

Some of these impacts relate to the choices that cemetery customers make and managing the impacts needs to be balanced with the principle of respecting people’s customs and choices about death. For example, cremation will be the preferred choice for some people for religious reasons while others will choose a natural burial. The Council works from the principle of supporting people’s choice where possible (see 3.2.1) and will encourage sustainable practices where possible – for example, by encouraging the use of biodegradable decorations as a way of moving away from plastics (see 3.2.2.3, action (a).) By returning plastic coffin handles to funeral directors, the Council can encourage their re-use or the alternative use of wooden handles that can be safely burnt.

Green waste is disposed of on-site at the cemeteries and can be a source of weeds if not well managed. Surplus soil, generated from grave digging, must be stockpiled until needed for grounds maintenance and can potentially be a source of sediment in runoff. Factors to consider in sustainably managing both green waste and surplus soil include suitable locations separated from watercourses and natural areas, good containment of material and, in the case of green waste, effective composting.

On the other side of the sustainability equation are the ecosystem services that the natural areas within the cemeteries provide. Vegetation cover, in particular, contributes to clean air, water quality, soil conservation and flood control (by filtering and

retaining runoff), and carbon storage. Almost 20 hectares of land at Mākara Cemetery are included in Permanent Carbon Sink Initiative covenants (which will soon be transferred to the reformed Emissions Trading Scheme) and there is potential for more.

A sustainability audit of the cemetery operations will help understand the impacts of current practices and the potential for improvement. It will also help inform decisions made during the master planning of the new cemetery area (see 3.1.2.3) and what would be involved in achieving a zero-carbon cemetery operation to contribute to the Council's aspirations under *Te Atakura First to Zero*, *Wellington's Blueprint for a Zero Carbon Capital*.



4. Ngā kaupapa here me ngā Mahi Urupā-motuhake

Cemetery-specific policies and actions

4.1 Tawa Cemetery

4.1.1 Landscape character and amenity planting

- 1. Assess and enhance Tawa Cemetery as a heritage landscape, as guided by the proposed Tawa Cemetery heritage conservation plan (see 4.1.2 action (b)).
- 2. Maintain vegetation to prevent damaging the gravesites.

Action

- a) Investigate the stability of the back (western) boundary bank and undertake remedial action if necessary.

Explanation

Tawa Cemetery is a small and simple cemetery landscape. It sits several metres above Main Road, with a pleasant outlook across Linden to the hills beyond. The gently sloping site is mainly in grass, except for a small group of trees near the centre and a band of vegetation on the back boundary. The headstones reveal a range of styles from the very simple to more elaborate, particularly the prominent Thomas Earp memorial, which is a dominant visual feature. Much of the original layout of graves is evident but the vegetation on the back boundary has overgrown and is obscuring the back row of graves. The entrance is well marked with a lychgate. Maintenance currently comprises regular mowing/ weed eating of the lawn areas. The overgrowth on the back boundary needs to be assessed and removed or trimmed to protect the graves from further damage, as guided by the proposed heritage conservation plan (see below). Regular maintenance should include the removal of self-sown tree and shrub seedlings from the graves to avoid future regrowth and root damage.

4.1.2 Heritage recognition and protection

- 1. Protect, manage and promote Tawa Cemetery as an historic reserve.

Actions

- a) Consider scheduling the Tawa Cemetery as a heritage area in the district plan.
- b) Prepare a Tawa Cemetery heritage conservation plan, including an archaeological assessment and management plan, and a long-term maintenance plan with associated guidance on best practice maintenance of the graves and the vegetation.
- c) Support the Tawa Historical Society in researching Tawa Cemetery records and add to the cemeteries’ database whatever verified burial information about the cemetery is available.

Explanation

Tawa Cemetery is an archaeological site under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, as it was established before 1900. The land was gifted by Edward Gibbon Wakefield, a prominent figure in the early colonial history of Wellington. The cemetery also tells a story about the early colonial settlement of Tawa, its people and its subsequent development (see Appendix III for a brief historical summary).

Tawa Cemetery is classified as an historic reserve under the Reserves Act to protect and preserve it in perpetuity. District plan scheduling is subject to a separate decision-making process that would require further research, assessment against the heritage criteria and thresholds. Given it would require a district plan change, it will be considered at the same time as possible scheduling of Karori Cemetery.

A conservation plan for the cemetery is proposed to guide future management of the heritage. It will involve assessing the significance and condition of the heritage features and landscape, and set out future maintenance requirements. The conservation plan will guide prioritising future maintenance and repair work. In addition, a separate or associated archaeological management plan is recommended to ensure that all work within the cemetery recognises, manages and protects pre-1900 features and sites.

The conservation and archaeological plans should take into account the pre-colonial history of the land or any special significance it may hold for mana whenua. A research project with mana whenua is proposed (see 3.3.2.3 action (a)).

Tawa Historical Society has done considerable research into Tawa Cemetery burial records as it seems they may have been historically mislaid at the time the cemetery was transferred to Tawa Borough Council (see Appendix III). Further research continues and burial information that has been verified by research will be used in the cemeteries database.

4.1.3 Graves and monuments

Actions

- a) In consultation with Tawa Historical Society, prepare a prioritised list of graves needing maintenance and repair, using the assessment approach outlined in section 3.3.2.4.
- b) Seek funding to enable gravesite restoration work to be progressively carried out over a number of years.
- c) Carry out the prioritised maintenance and repairs as resources permit, including using volunteer help when available for suitable tasks.

Explanation

The graves at Tawa Cemetery are in mixed condition. Some of the more prominent memorials appear to have been recently cleaned by unknown people but others are in variable condition - broken, fallen over and overgrown. Prioritising and planning the work will be guided by the conservation plan. Tawa Historical Society is knowledgeable about the cemetery’s history and the volunteer efforts in recent decades to tidy up and better recognise the cemetery. The society may wish to be involved in further work.

4.1.4 Visitor experience

- 1. Periodically update the on-site interpretation board as required to reflect visitor needs.

Action

- a) Promote the cemetery as a destination of interest by incorporating it into information about local walking opportunities and through the proposed new council cemeteries website (see 3.2.2.5).

Explanation

The Tawa Historical Society continues to research the cemetery’s history and the people buried there. The first interpretation board was installed through the society’s advocacy in 2009 and has since been replaced once to include new information.

4.1.5 Community and partnerships

- 1. Continue to work with and encourage Tawa Historic Society in its ongoing research and advocacy for protecting the cemetery’s heritage.

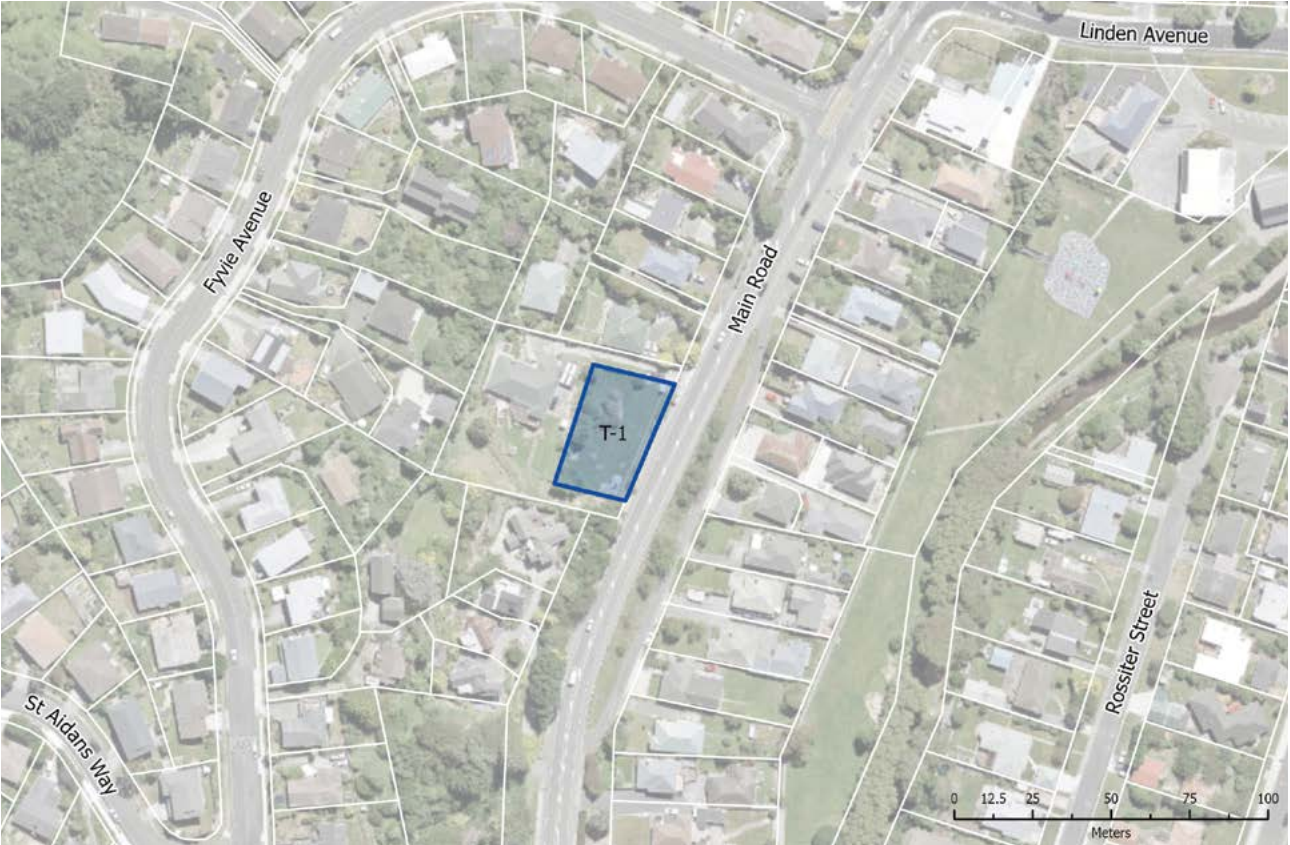
Explanation

Tawa Historical Society has been instrumental in researching most of what is known about Tawa Cemetery and its work to date will be invaluable for the proposed heritage conservation plan. There may be further opportunities to work together on planning and implementing the cemetery’s heritage conservation.

Tawa Cemetery



Tawa Cemetery Land Schedule



Mgmt Plan schedule #	WCC site #	Legal description	CT ref	Land area	Reserve description	Gazette ref	District plan zoning	Notes/actions needed
T-1	1816	Part Section 52 Porirua District	352/277	0.0986 ha	Historic Reserve, (named Tawa Cemetery Reserve)	NZ Gazette 2013/3958	Open Space B	Currently comes under the Northern Reserves Management Plan but practical management to be guided by this Cemeteries Management Plan in future.



4.2 Karori Cemetery

4.2.1 Land administration

Actions

- a) Rationalise the land held for Karori Cemetery by:

i. Classifying as scenic reserve the area at the north end to formalise its existing management as part of the Outer Green Belt, subdividing the land parcel(s) and amending the land titles as necessary to clarify that the land is no longer held for cemetery purposes.

ii. Stopping the road where graves are located on Rosehaugh Avenue road reserve and vesting it in the Council for cemetery purposes.

iii. Legalising the formed roadway between Rosehaugh Avenue and Seaforth Terrace and disposing of surplus land in the vicinity.
- b) Investigate potential uses of vacant land adjacent to the Standen Street entrance.
- c) When all remaining ash plots have been purchased, close Karori Cemetery under the Burial and Cremation Act.

Explanation

Some cemetery land at the base of Johnston Hill and adjoining Otari-Wilton’s Bush is managed as part of the Outer Green Belt (see maps at end of this section). This land is steep and forested and has not been used for burials. It has significant natural values and the Outer Green Belt Management Plan (OGBMP) notes that the land requires reserve protection. It will be classified as scenic reserve in accordance with the OGBMP¹² and no longer part of the cemetery. In the meantime, if there is any policy conflict in relation to this land between this plan and the OGBMP, the OGBMP will take precedence.¹³

An area at the end of Standen Street has not been developed for cemetery use as the ground is unsuitable and the location isolated from the

rest of the cemetery. This area has been suggested as a potential site for a playground to serve the northern end of Karori but is considered unsuitable due to its secluded location. Alternative uses as part of the open space network are being investigated.

Council manages land parcels in the Seaforth Terrace/Rosehaugh Avenue area, which are surplus to cemetery needs and would be suitable for selling for residential housing (see maps at end of this section). However, inconsistencies in the land status of the formed road need to be sorted out first. Rosehaugh Avenue is a legal road but part of it contains graves and is managed as part of the cemetery. That part needs to be stopped and vested in the Council for cemetery use. The formed road from the end of Rosehaugh Avenue to Seaforth Terrace is not legal road. It needs to be legalised to regularise its use and to give adjoining surplus land a street address so it can be rezoned and sold. The land that is managed for cemeteries purposes cannot be sold directly by the Council. Council must work with the Crown to sell land and determine what, if any, proceeds of sale the Council can then use for other activities, such as reconfiguring the carpark at Rosehaugh Avenue to be a more efficient layout and purchasing new land (see 3.1.2.2).

4.2.2 Landscape character and amenity planting

1. Maintain and enhance Karori Cemetery as a heritage landscape, as guided by the updated Karori Cemetery Conservation Plan (see action 4.2.4. action (a)).

Actions

- a) Assess the impact that vegetation is having on the heritage in Karori Cemetery and identify the areas where work is required to reduce the risk of vegetation damage to graves, structures and infrastructure, such as retaining walls.

12 OGBMP, Policy 4.1.2.1 (2).

13 Note: Otari-Wilton’s Bush adjoins the northeast corner of the cemetery land to be reclassified and transferred to the Outer Green Belt. Though Otari-Wilton’s Bush is part of the Outer Green Belt, its primary management document is the *Botanic Gardens of Wellington Management Plan* and will take precedence if there is any conflict between it and the OGBMP.

- b) Prepare a landscape management master plan of Karori Cemetery to integrate the long-term management and maintenance of the land, vegetation and built features. It would include heritage conservation work (see 4.2.4), clearly identifying areas of unique character and whatever long-term management is required to protect the character and/or manage change over time.
- c) Prioritise funding for an ongoing programme of proactive vegetation management at Karori Cemetery.
- d) Develop a list of plant species that will be appropriate to the landscape character of the different areas and site conditions in the cemetery to guide future planting. It would take account of the need to manage potential invasive weed and fire risk when implementing the overall landscape master plan.

Explanation

The combination of built and natural and planted elements at Karori Cemetery results in a diverse and unique heritage landscape.

The built landscape is notable for its variety. Each section of the cemetery has a distinctive character. The large areas of densely developed concrete graves are strongly influenced by topography, with some stepped down steep slopes and others aligned in an obvious grid pattern on level or gently sloping ground. In contrast, the areas of lawn cemetery, notably the armed services section, are much simpler and evenly graded. Similarly, the circulation pattern varies from wide paved roading to narrow mown pathways to steep tracks and steps. Some parts of the cemetery have a quite formal, traditional character where the grid layout is clearly evident. In other parts graves are sited less formally on steep slopes or in out-of-the-way corners. At the detailed scale, there is a fascinating range of styles and detailing evident in the graves and larger monuments and buildings (see sections 4.2.4 to 4.2.6 for policies on the cemetery’s built features).

The natural topography and drainage patterns have influenced the overall layout. To the north, the steep

forested slopes now managed as part of the Outer Green Belt remain undeveloped and provide a visually important forested backdrop to the cemetery. A tributary to the Kaiwharawhara Stream flows through this northern area and a second stream flows into it from the cemetery. This second stream cuts across the middle of the cemetery in a steep-sided gully, which is the main natural area. It divides the cemetery at a broad scale north and south and contains some visually dominant stands of mature pine and macrocarpa. The Kaiwharawhara Stream defines the east boundary of the cemetery. See 4.2.3 for policies on managing the cemetery’s natural environment.

The vegetation outside of the natural areas (see maps at end of this section) is managed as amenity planting as it relates closely to the developed areas in the cemetery and needs to be managed accordingly. The amenity planting varies according to the history of cemetery development, the topography, aspect and levels of past maintenance. The types of vegetation, broadly simplified, are as follows:

- Formal lawns of the armed services and lawn cemetery sections
- Informal grassed areas on sloping ground
- Gardens, such as the ash plot rose gardens, and various shrub and herbaceous borders
- Planted and self-seeded trees dispersed through the gravesite sections, including pathways
- Stands of mature exotic conifers, mainly associated with the steep gullies but also overhanging roadways and some burial areas
- Regenerating native vegetation, mainly in the gullies and stream riparian margins
- Invasive weed growth, especially along steam margins, but also dispersed through the graveyard areas (see more under 4.2.3 natural environment).

While the lawn areas, rose gardens and some herbaceous borders are regularly maintained, there are significant deferred vegetation maintenance issues throughout the cemetery that relate mainly to damaging tree growth, despite work that has been

done to remove trees causing damage. Many of the problem trees were planted but there are also self-sown trees that have developed on, or too close to, graves and structures such as retaining walls. Some shrub planting is also problematic. For example, flaxes have been planted directly in front of graves, blocking visual and physical access and developing invasive root growth. Flax and cabbage trees produce volumes of strappy fallen leaves that must be cleared before mechanical maintenance, such as weed eating, can happen. Some other planting, such as recent hybrids, are out of character with the historic era of the cemetery.

Maintenance in recent times has improved but there is little staffing capacity for more than the regular mowing and weed eating routines. Self-sown seedlings are now removed from graves before they develop. Clearing away accumulated plant debris, which could be flammable when dry, will help to reduce fire risk within the cemetery and the potential for fire to spread into the adjacent native forest of the Outer Green Belt and Otari-Wilton’s Bush.

The Council holds data in its GIS tree database on more than 1000 trees or tree groups in the cemetery. The trees are monitored under the city-wide tree hazard programme and are surveyed after storms for additional damage and hazard risk. Most of the tree work is reactive, dealing to urgent tree hazard risks. There is also some scheduled tree work, however additional assessment of the threat to graves and other built heritage features is required to help plan and quantify future work. The impact of kaka damage on trees will also need to be assessed. In assessing and prioritising the work a balance will be needed between reducing the threat of damage to heritage values and the benefits of tree cover, such as visual amenity, shelter and wildlife habitat.

Blanket removal of trees is not advocated as it can result in greater exposure of graves to weather and potential erosion from increased direct runoff and large-scale tree removal often results in adverse public reaction. Instead, a gradual thinning of large trees

is likely and, where necessary, removal of smaller trees. Under this approach a lighter tree canopy will be maintained in future. Replanting will be needed to maintain the tree framework but should be carefully planned to match suitable species, including smaller growing ones, to suitable sites where there is room for them to mature.

Funding will need to be prioritised for this work to reduce ongoing vegetation damage to the graves and provide for site remediation/replanting as well as removal. The work should be incremental, via an annual vegetation work programme, so that the change happens gradually and can be monitored and adapted if need be. Adequate resourcing will be key.

Overall, a landscape masterplan for the cemetery is required to pull together the various aspects of heritage conservation, vegetation management, natural environment management and visitor needs, such as wayfinding. Considerable work will be required to get the existing situation under control and then maintain it in future. The masterplan will provide a clear integrated direction for the long-term management and decision-making.



Eucalyptus trees planted on the eastern side of the cemetery in the 1970s to screen it from Wilton are now mature. While they provide shade, shelter and bird habitat, their root growth and fallen branches threaten to damage graves and the leaf and bark debris builds up.

4.2.3 Natural environment

- 1. Manage cemetery land within the Western Wellington Forests Key Native Ecosystem (KNE) and/or draft Otari-Wilton’s Bush Significant Natural Area (SNA)¹⁴ under the Outer Green Belt Management Plan (see 4.2.1 action (a)).
- 2. Protect and restore the freshwater ecology in streams that cross and border the cemetery by maintaining or establishing streamside buffer vegetation and reduce erosion.
- 3. Support community initiatives to care for the streams and monitor stream health through partnerships and wider programmes within the Kaiwharawhara catchment, such as Sanctuary to Sea/Kia Mauriora te Kaiwharawhara.



Trees have been planted or allowed to develop between graves in narrow spaces that are not big enough to accommodate the mature tree. Roots often extend into nearby graves causing damage.

- 4. Encourage native forest to regenerate in the stream gullies except where there are records of burials being present.
- 5. Continue to monitor the exotic conifers in the natural area of the cemetery and allow them to age and fall naturally, subject to selective pruning or removal where necessary and feasible for safety or heritage protection.
- 6. Manage weeds and pest animals in accordance with *Our Natural Capital Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*.
- 7. Encourage and support community participation in weed and pest animal control, restoration planting and ecological monitoring.

¹⁴ The KNE has been identified by Greater Wellington Regional Council under its KNE programme to protect some of the best examples of ecosystem types in the Wellington region. The SNA (No. WCO61) was mapped more recently under the significant natural areas mapping being done as part of the Wellington City District Plan review. The draft SNAs are subject to consultation and review at the time of writing this plan. The KNE and the SNA largely overlap within the cemetery.

- 8. Apply best practice water sensitive design when developing new infrastructure or maintenance works within the cemetery, to protect freshwater values.

Actions

- a) Prepare a Karori Cemetery weed list and weed management plan and apply for dedicated implementation resourcing.
- b) Work with the community and experts to investigate how to manage the riparian bank above the Kaiwharawhara Stream for stream health without damaging the graves on the lower slope.
- c) Consider the potential ecological impacts, including fire risk, of some heritage plant species and how to manage those impacts when developing the amenity planting list (see 4.2.2 action (d)) and the new graves and monuments maintenance and repair guidelines (see 3.3.2.4 action (a)).

Explanation

The Karori Cemetery is located in an area that would originally have been clad in native lowland forest. The cemetery land was cleared for settlement but secondary forest has regenerated on the slopes and stream gully at the north end of the cemetery. That regenerated forest is part of the regionally significant Western Wellington Forests KNE and the draft Otari-Wilton’s Bush SNA, which largely lie within the Outer Green Belt. The KNE/SNA part of the cemetery will be classified scenic reserve and added to the Outer Green Belt for consistent management with the larger forest areas. The relevant Outer Green Belt policies will be applied to that part of the cemetery in the interim. The remaining natural environment areas (see maps at end of this section) will be managed according to this plan.

The cemetery lies within the Kaiwharawhara Catchment. Kaiwharawhara Stream flows along part of the cemetery’s eastern boundary. It is an important freshwater environment and wildlife corridor that connects Zealandia, Otari-Wilton’s Bush and Te Whanganui a Tara (Wellington Harbour).

It’s protection and restoration are objectives in the Council’s biodiversity strategy, *Our Natural Capital*. The collaborative initiative, Sanctuary to Sea/ Kia Mouriora te Kaiwharawhara, aims to protect these values in the catchment. There are some graves located quite low down the slope above the Kaiwharawhara Stream. The recent removal of some large trees in the vicinity for clearance below a power pylon has opened up the area to weed growth and revealed the proximity of some graves to the stream. Any riparian restoration should take into account the potential impact on these graves.

The tributary stream across the cemetery is fed mainly from suburban stormwater sources and flows into the cemetery near the end of Standen Street. There are two culverts, the lower of which was remediated for fish passage in 2017. In 2018, students from Wellington East Girl’s College surveyed the water quality, habitat, macroinvertebrate and fish population as part of the ‘Te Awa Kaiwharawhara Restoration Plan’, a restoration partnership under the ‘Mountains to Sea, Wellington’ education programme. Banded kokopu and a long fin eel were found. The stream’s ecological health was found to be moderate to good but with increasing problems of sedimentation due to bank erosion, riparian weed growth, moderate contamination and rubbish. Plastic flowers blown from the cemetery pollute the stream and eventually end up in the harbour. Objectives of the ongoing project are to stabilise the banks and riparian stream margin to improve stream habitat, keep the stream clear of rubbish and improve water quality.

The Council generally manages exotic conifers on its reserve land for ecological and/or recreational benefits, allowing trees to age and fall naturally. Those in the natural areas of the cemetery will be managed in this way. Their gradual thinning is an option but must be done carefully to avoid destabilising the whole tree group and their removal is considered of lower priority than other exotic confers and tall trees growing within developed areas of the cemetery.

Weed and pest animal control is managed as part of the Council’s city-wide programme, taking into account the cemetery’s proximity to the ecologically significant native forest in Otari-Wilton’s Bush and the Sanctuary-to-Sea corridor down the Kaiwharawhara Stream valley.

A specific plan is required to understand the extent of the weed problem in Karori Cemetery and prioritise the species that most threaten the health of the Otari forest. Invasive weed species currently present include old man’s beard, blackberry, Japanese honeysuckle, Darwin’s barberry, tradescantia, bamboo and ivy. These species have the potential to spread via birds, wind or streams - invading built heritage in the cemetery, obstructing access and spreading beyond the cemetery into Otari-Wilton’s Bush with adverse impact on natural values. One aspect of heritage planting in the cemetery that should be considered is the weedy nature of some plant species that might have been used traditionally. Where the heritage value indicates continued use, management methods will be needed such as confining to small areas or preventing berry/seed development, as is done at Bolton Street Cemetery.

Pest animal control is carried out in Karori Cemetery¹⁵ as part of a wider network of traps and bait stations in the adjacent Outer Green Belt, targeting mustelids, rats and hedgehogs. The network is managed collaboratively between the Council, GWRC and the RAMBO and KATCH22 volunteer groups¹⁶. The area is expected to come under the Predator Free Wellington programme within the timeframe of this management plan. Rabbits are managed under a regular shooting programme (see 3.3.2.2). Cat sightings have been reported. The Council is limited in its legal ability to manage cats but is committed to reducing the impact of stray and feral cats and will endeavour to do so where possible. The Council also encourages responsible pet ownership to reduce the impact of pets on wildlife.

4.2.4 Heritage recognition and protection

- 1. Protect, manage and promote Karori Cemetery as an historic place in a manner that is compatible with its continuing cemetery purpose.

Actions

- a) Review the *Karori Cemetery Conservation Plan 2003*, update as necessary, including consideration of vegetation management as part of the cemetery’s heritage landscape. Include a long-term maintenance plan with guidance on best practice maintenance, integrated with the proposed landscape management master plan for the cemetery (see 4.2.2 action (b)).
- b) Seek to have the heritage at Karori Cemetery recognised and protected in the following ways, after the cemetery is closed:
 - i. Nominate the cemetery as a Historic Place in the Heritage New Zealand List/Rārangi Kōrero
 - ii. Classify as an historic reserve under the Reserves Act (see 4.2.1 action (c))
 - iii. Consider scheduling the cemetery as a heritage area and the Main Chapel, Servicemen’s Arch and two columbaria as heritage buildings or objects in the Wellington City Council District Plan.
- c) Consult mana whenua and the community about renaming Karori Cemetery to reflect the original Māori name for the area.
- d) Carry out an archaeological assessment and prepare an archaeological management plan of Karori Cemetery to identify the areas, including graves, where an archaeological authority from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga would be required before work could be completed.

Explanation

Karori Cemetery is an archaeological site under the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, as it was established before 1900. The cemetery holds significant history about Wellington’s colonial settlement, its people and its subsequent development (see Appendix III for a brief historical summary). Therefore, the Council intends to manage the cemetery as an historic place while also maintaining an appropriate atmosphere for a cemetery. Funerals and cremations at the chapels and crematorium, interments and disinterments can continue even after the cemetery is closed under the Burial and Cremation Act.

The 2003 conservation plan included information about the condition of the cemetery and recommendations for action. Another 17 years have passed and little heritage conservation work has occurred. It is timely to update and review it in light of subsequent change in the condition of the cemetery and the need to plan for better vegetation management (see 4.2.2). The updated heritage conservation plan will guide prioritising future maintenance and repair work. It needs to be integrated with the master plan to ensure long-term heritage conservation of structures and graves is co-ordinated with the long-term landscape management and maintenance.

The Cemetery Management Plan 2003 and *Karori Cemetery Conservation Plan 2003* both proposed the forms of recognition and protection in action (b) above but these were not actioned. Comprehensive research was carried out at that time, which demonstrated the high heritage value of the cemetery and the features within it. Any potential nomination to the Heritage New Zealand List/Rārangi Kōrero or decision to schedule the cemetery in the district plan would need to consider the implications for ongoing cemetery operations alongside heritage protection.

The Council will therefore pursue a nomination for listing by HNZPT and consider scheduling the cemetery in the district plan once the cemetery is

closed. District plan scheduling is subject to a separate decision-making process that would require further research, assessment against the heritage criteria and thresholds, and a district plan change. If the cemetery is listed by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga then the Council would also be required to have regard to any entry on the Heritage New Zealand List/Rārangi Kōrero when preparing or changing the Wellington District Plan.

More knowledge of the pre-colonial and subsequent Māori history associated with the land is needed. A research project with mana whenua is proposed (see 3.3.2.3 action (a)). Consultation with mana whenua is also required about the word ‘Karori’, which is a shortening of the original Māori name ‘Kaharore’, meaning ‘the ridge for snaring birds’. The question of renaming the suburb has been raised in the local community. The Burial and Cremation Act requires ministerial approval to change the name of a cemetery.

The need for an archaeological authority for work on gravesites will only be triggered where the grave originated before 1900, the last known activity was also pre-1900 and the proposed work involves intrusive activity such as removing features for repair, reconstructing features or carrying out earthworks for additional interments or disinterments. Many of the pre-1900 graves in Karori Cemetery may have had subsequent burials or altering activity since 1900 and would not, therefore, need an archaeological authority. Identifying the areas of the cemetery, including graves, that do and don’t need an authority would be useful for:

- Identifying the graves where Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga would need to be contacted if a further interment or disinterment was requested
- Grouping proposed work requiring an archaeological authority together under a single application.

If the heritage at Karori Cemetery is formally recognised in the ways proposed above, community expectations about its conservation are likely to

15 The rear part of Karori Cemetery is mapped as a pest animal buffer zone in *Key Native Ecosystem Operational Plan for Western Wellington Forests 2019-2024*, GWRC, p.25, map 5

16 RAMBO is run by the Otari-Wilton’s Bush Trust and KATCH22 by Mākara Peak Supporters.

rise. More will need to be done in the way of regular maintenance and heritage conservation work, with financial and resourcing implications (see section 6).

4.2.5 Graves and monuments

- 1. Carry out the prioritised maintenance and repairs as resources permit, including working with volunteer help when available for suitable tasks.
- 2. Where appropriate, issue single permits to approve maintenance and repair work on multiple graves and monuments in the prioritised list.

Actions

- a) In consultation with the Friends of Karori Cemetery, prepare and maintain a prioritised list of graves needing maintenance and repair, using the assessment approach outlined.
- b) Seek funding to enable enough gravesite restoration work to be carried out to see a substantial improvement in the general condition of the graves at Karori Cemetery over the next 10 years.

Explanation

Karori Cemetery contains a huge collection of some 86,400 graves that vary from the simple to the formal and elaborate. Many graves are not marked in any physical way. The types of grave and some other memorials are described in Appendix V.

Many gravesites are in deteriorated condition, partly due to natural weathering and the effects of time. For example, the unreinforced concrete slabs that cover many graves have cracked and/or collapsed because the burial remains have broken down and the underlying ground slumped. In many places graves have been damaged by tree growth, including the effects of invasive root systems, branch and tree fall. Erosion from run-off is another damaging force in places. Unfortunately, some graves have been damaged due to ill-advised maintenance activities.

The focus of the next 10 years is intended to be firstly on assessment and planning for improvements and then to begin a programme of work to halt the decline.

4.2.6 Buildings, infrastructure and facilities

- 1. Continue to use the office building at Karori Cemetery for cemetery administration and public enquiries.
- 2. If Karori Cemetery is closed under the Burial and Cremation Act in future, continue to use the two chapels for funeral services and operate the crematorium.
- 3. Use the Shelter as an information centre and base for cemetery tours and other activities run by the Friends of Karori Cemetery.

Actions

- a) Seek the district plan heritage scheduling of the Shelter to be updated with this name.
- b) Carry out required maintenance and proposed restoration of the Shelter, subject to preparing a conservation plan to guide the work and obtaining an archaeological authority.
- c) Investigate the feasibility of providing an additional public toilet accessible from the Small Chapel. If feasible, develop subject to heritage assessment to ensure heritage values are protected.
- d) Continue to refurbish the Main Chapel to improve its appeal, accessibility and range of facilities for funeral and other appropriate uses, including increased capacity if feasible.

Explanation

Each of the existing buildings has had a role in the history of the cemetery’s development, whether for funeral services, cremations, storage, staff facilities, office space or public enquiries. The chapels and crematorium are recognised historic buildings (see Appendix III) and the other buildings have been developed to provide for functional needs. Even after the cemetery eventually closes, it is likely that these buildings will continue to be used for similar functions. However, that is not to preclude the possibility that the buildings might be used differently in future. The principle of sustainable

re-use is supported provided that any new use is sensitive to the cemetery setting and involves minimal change to buildings with identified heritage values.

The Shelter (known formerly as Mortuary Chapel or Jewish Chapel) is ideally located for an information centre. It is a distinctive, easily recognised landmark feature down the main drive at a convenient central point, close to the older sections of the cemetery. Its location beyond the chapels and crematorium also separates it from the main focus of bereavement services. The building was originally a shelter for mourners. It was a gathering point in the cemetery and that will be reinstated with the new use. It was originally listed in the Heritage New Zealand/Rārangī Kōrero List as the ‘Mortuary Chapel’ but was renamed ‘Shelter’ in 2021 to better reflect its original purpose and new use. Its current listing in the district plan as ‘Jewish Chapel (former) 1902’ requires a corresponding update. The building is due for repainting, which will provide an opportunity to also restore some original features, including decorative roof detailing and copper guttering. The building was originally an open structure but it is not proposed to open it up again. Instead, reglazing is proposed with appropriately designed security shutters. As it is a listed heritage building all maintenance and restoration work must be done according to an up-to-date conservation plan and necessary approvals sought.

People attending funerals at the Small Chapel with limited mobility have difficulty in accessing the public toilets near the office or in the Main Chapel. Therefore, the feasibility of providing a new toilet within easy reach of the Small Chapel will be investigated, bearing in mind the potential impact on the heritage buildings and other heritage features in the vicinity.

The Crematorium, Small Chapel and Main Chapel have all been earthquake strengthened in recent years. While the Small Chapel is popular for its heritage character and intimate size, its small size is a limitation.

The Main Chapel is larger and has its own entrance on Rosehaugh Avenue with a sizeable parking area. The quiet setting and easy, flat access are advantageous but improvements would make it more appealing. The outdoor courtyard has been upgraded, recladding and repainting is nearly complete and further work is planned under the asset management programme to improve the indoor-outdoor connection, upgrade the toilet facilities and add a small kitchenette. These improvements will enable people to undertake simple self-catering – an option that would support those wishing to organise their own funerals. Other improvements that would potentially boost usage include additional seating, if feasible, to cater for larger funerals and reconfiguring the carparking layout to optimise its capacity. Refurbishment might also open up the potential to increase use and revenue by hiring out the building for other purposes such as weddings, talks or recitals at times that would not clash with funeral use. The building’s separate street entrance means that it can be accessed for such purposes independent of the cemetery. The building’s heritage value is noted in section 4.2.4.

4.2.7 Visitor experience

- 1. Encourage recreational use and enjoyment of the historic landscape and natural environment at Karori Cemetery, while managing potentially conflicting activities.
- 2. Encourage and support the provision of guided and self-guided cemetery tours aimed at guiding visitors and offering an interactive form of interpretation about the cemetery values, history and stories of interest. Guided tours are subject to approval by the cemeteries manager, who will take into account the potential impact on the cemetery environment and other visitors, including:
 - i. The number of people allowed in each tour group
 - ii. The frequency of the tours
 - iii. The steps that would be taken to avoid tours coinciding with sensitive cemetery activities such as funerals and interments.

Actions

- a) Research the historical naming of roadways, paths, areas and sites within the cemetery to inform the development of a wayfinding strategy.
- b) Install temporary name signs on the main routes and at the main junction points in the cemetery to improve basic wayfinding until action (c) is completed.
- c) With reference to the proposed Cemeteries Visitor Experience Strategy (see 3.4.2.3) develop:
 - i. As the first priority, a Karori Cemetery Wayfinding Signage Plan that:
 - reflects an assessment of circulation patterns, common destinations and loop routes
 - provides for clear direction signage on track connections to adjacent open spaces, including denoting walking-only or shared use
 - includes an audit of existing signage
 - reflects naming used historically at the cemetery
 - includes signage design specifications for functionality and appropriate heritage style.
 - ii. As the second priority, a Karori Cemetery Interpretation Plan.
- d) Gradually implement the wayfinding and interpretation strategies, as resources permit
- e) Develop a new walking-only track between the cemetery and Ian Galloway Park.
- f) Develop an entrance to the Outer Green Belt at the end of Standen Street with a map board to direct Outer Green Belt users.
- g) Develop a new shared track from the Standen Street entrance to the shared ‘Cemetery to Skyline Track’, to divert bike riders away from the cemetery.

Explanation

Karori Cemetery is increasingly popular for recreational activities – exercise-related such as walking, running, cycling and dog-walking and heritage-related such as finding graves for genealogical interest and simply exploring the older sections and reading headstone inscriptions. At the same time funeral services and cremations continue to occur at the chapels and crematorium, interments continue in the ash plot areas and occasionally in family graves, ashes continue to be scattered in approved areas and the bereaved still go to the office for help. Most of these cemetery-related activities will continue to varying degrees, even after the cemetery is closed – certainly for the duration of this management plan. Therefore, activities are managed under the Rules section to ensure they are appropriate to a cemetery and to encourage respectful behaviour.

It is likely that the cemetery’s proximity to the adjacent Outer Green Belt and the playing fields at Ian Galloway Park boosts recreational activity because of the opportunities for loop walking and bike riding routes that pass through the cemetery. For instance, visitors can incorporate the cemetery into a loop walk up Johnston Hill or through Otari-Wilton’s Bush. Overall, this is positive because more people discover the cemetery and with that comes appreciation of its heritage and unique character. A recent track audit recommended a new track be developed to improve loop walk opportunities between Otari-Wilton’s Bush, Ian Galloway Park and the cemetery. Its development would be an opportunity to improve the currently difficult access to graves above Kaiwharawhara Stream.

Most of the ‘through’ recreational use is compatible but there have been a few incidents of disrespectful mountain biking behaviour where bikers have used graves as jump-offs and there is potential for conflict between those on foot and those on bikes on the narrow paths in the cemetery. For these reasons

cycling and mountain biking is restricted to the wider paved routes maintained for vehicle use and to any tracks that are specifically signposted as being for shared use.

Mountain bikers will also be encouraged to access the Outer Green Belt via Standen Street where land currently held for cemetery purposes will be transferred to the Outer Green Belt (see 4.2.1). There is just one shared track accessible from the cemetery – the Cemetery to Skyline connector route. Currently, bikers access this shared track via the paved vehicle routes in the cemetery but it is proposed to extend the shared track to divert mountain bikers directly to Standen Street, where a minor Outer Green Belt entrance will be developed. All other tracks into the Outer Green Belt, including into Otari-Wilton’s Bush, are for walking-only use.

Overseas, cemetery tours focusing on the heritage and historical stories of interest have proved popular, as have guided tours at Karori Cemetery now run by the Friends of Karori Cemetery. Tours that emphasise particular themes, physical character and stories of the people interred there can build a vivid sense of place, local identity and appreciation of the heritage. They also offer an interactive shared experience whereby visitors explore together with a knowledgeable guide. The tours are an attraction and have the added benefit of promoting awareness and appreciation of the cemetery’s heritage. Guided tours need to be managed, however, to ensure they do not cause inappropriate noise and distraction near the bereaved and do not undermine the peaceful atmosphere valued by both family and recreational visitors. Self-guided cemetery tours will also be encouraged, linked in with the implementation of the Karori Cemetery wayfinding and interpretation plans.

The wayfinding and interpretation plans will address a significant current issue, which is the difficulty visitors have in finding their way around the cemetery and finding specific plot locations. The implementation will be by a combination of on-site signage and digital applications. On-site signage will

be planned and designed to give adequate directional guidance and information without cluttering the cemetery. Digital applications will enable people to locate their current position and find their desired route using interactive online mapping, which can also be linked to cemetery records and interpretation material. Improved wayfinding will be a time-saver for cemetery staff by reducing the need for visitors to ask for help.

4.2.8 Community and partnerships

- 1. Continue to encourage, support and work with the Friends of Karori Cemetery to achieve shared objectives in the management of Karori Cemetery through an agreed Memorandum of Understanding.
- 2. Continue to work with, and support, community groups which undertake special projects or educational events at Karori Cemetery.
- 3. Encourage regular visitors to become involved in volunteer activities at Karori Cemetery.

Action

- a) Seek annual funding to support the Friends of Karori Cemetery during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 financial years to build its community base and undertake approved heritage conservation work at Karori Cemetery.

Explanation

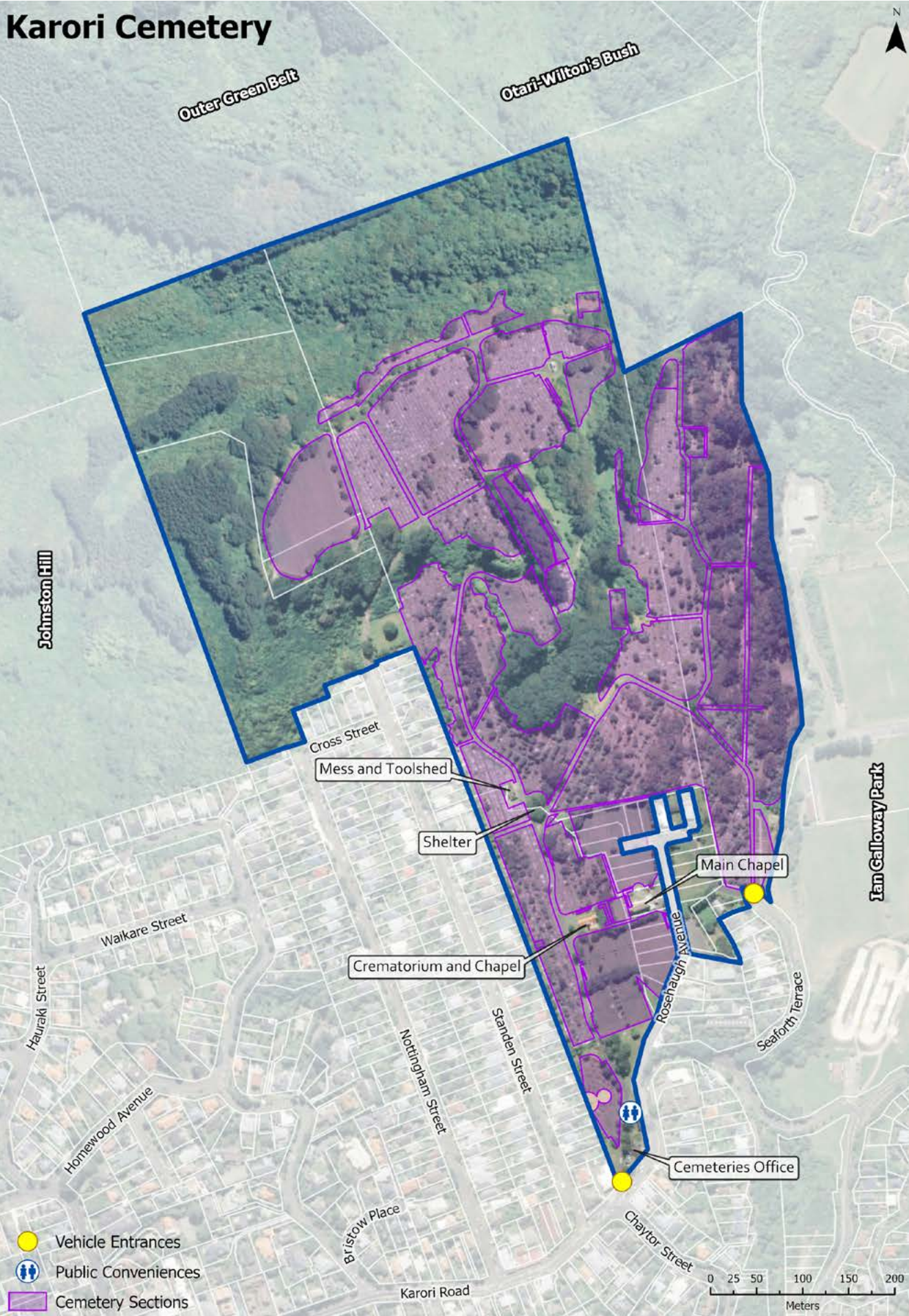
Karori Cemetery is increasingly valued by the community for a variety of reasons. Many people have a personal connection with it through past family burials and cremations. Interest in genealogy is seeing increasing numbers of people wanting to refer to the cemetery’s records and locate and visit gravesites. As noted in section 4.2.7, it is also popular for recreation. Heightened use appears to be generating more interest and appreciation of the cemetery’s heritage. In recent years cemetery tours and heritage awareness programmes, such marking the centenary of the 1918 flu epidemic, have boosted interest.

The establishment of the Friends of Karori Cemetery in January 2020 reflects this growing interest and appreciation of the cemetery. The Friends and the Council have shared objectives to support the preservation, protection and enhancement of the heritage, recreational and ecological aspects of the cemetery - and to promote public interest. The Friends' plans include running regular working bees, undertaking research and publication of findings, tree planting, and regular communication to engage the community and promote awareness.

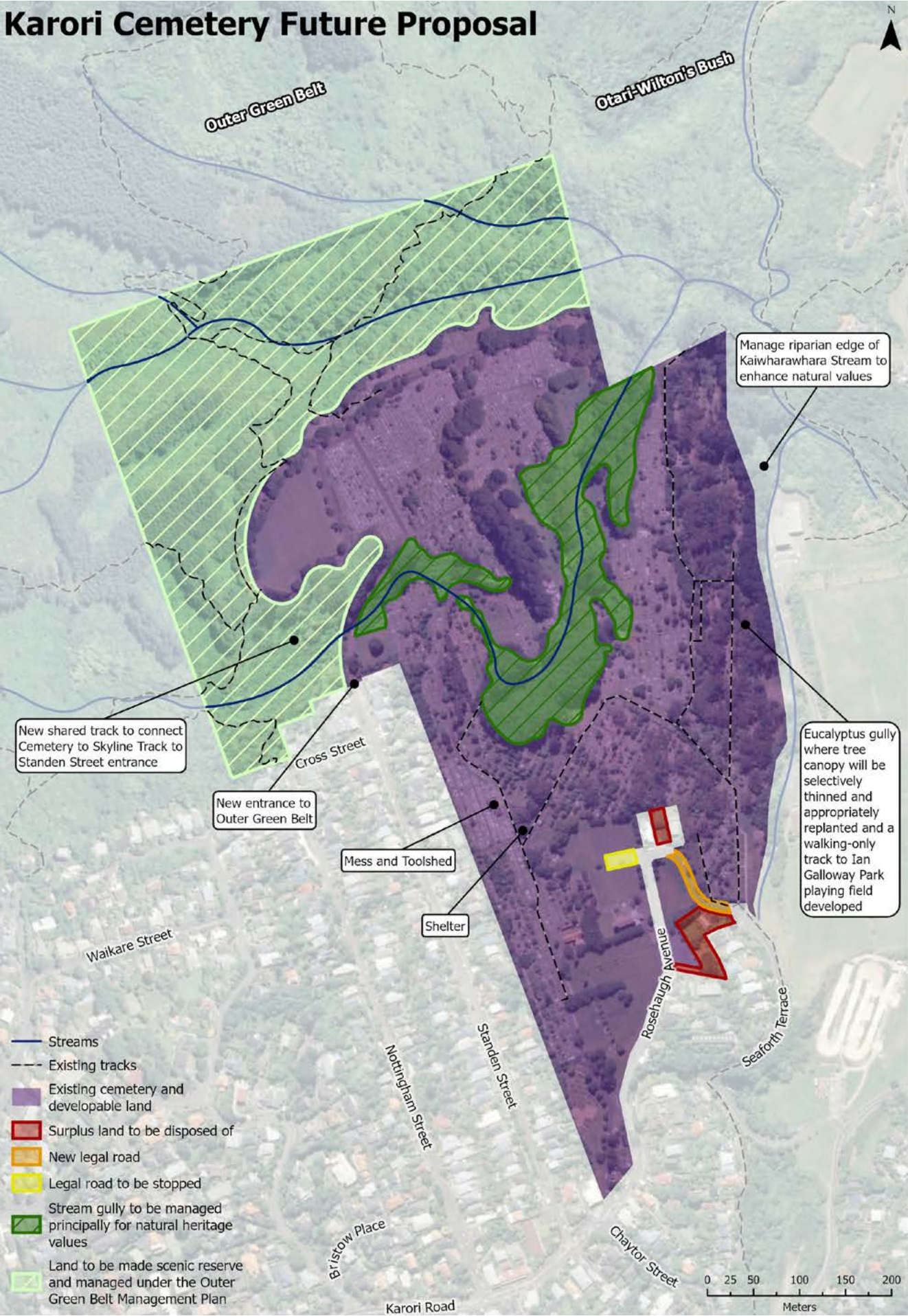
A Memorandum of Understanding between the Friends and the Council has been agreed, which sets out a series of operating principles of working in collaboration, including regular communication and acknowledgement that any grave cleaning and maintenance work carried out by the Friends will be subject to council approval by permit. The Council will enable the Friends to access The Shelter, help establish it as an information centre and use it as a base for its community activities, including tours. Their on-site presence is likely to help alleviate pressure on cemetery staff to answer enquiries and will no doubt encourage community engagement with the cemetery. The Council will also provide the Friends with a tool shed for storage of equipment and

heritage items awaiting restoration. Initial funding in the two 2022/23 and 2023/24 financial years is proposed to assist the group get established and begin work on agreed initiatives aligned with the policies in this management plan. Any further funding would be reviewed in the context of any funding recommendations for work at Karori Cemetery during the next 2024-2027 Long-term Plan period.

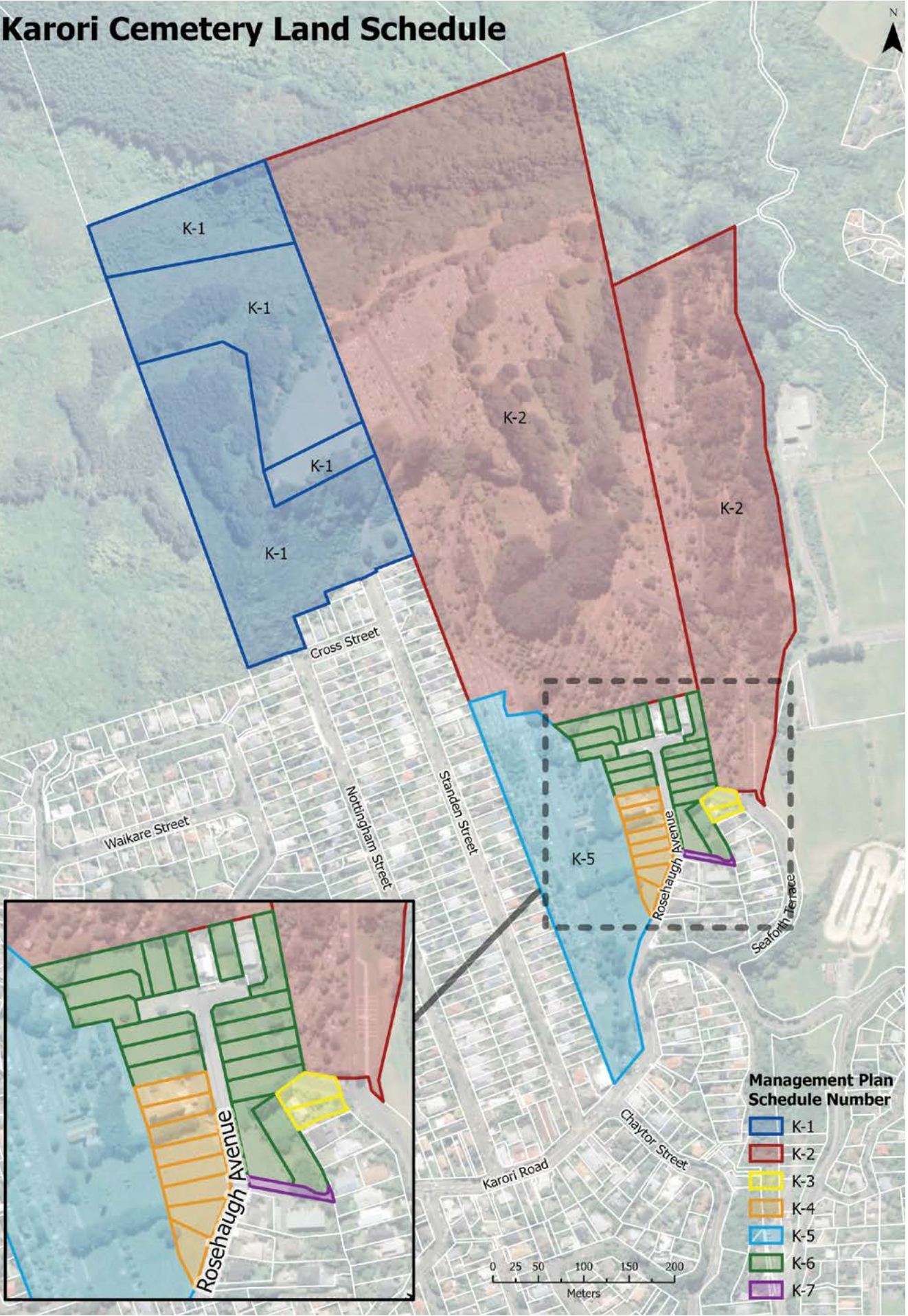
At various times, community groups such as local cadet and scout groups have visited the cemetery as part of their youth development programmes. As noted in 4.2.3, Wellington East Girls' College is involved in an ongoing stream restoration project and the RAMBO and KATCH22 groups are actively involved in pest animal control. There is also potential for city-wide programmes such as Predator-Free Wellington to generate volunteer activity in the cemetery. Such activities can facilitate understanding the cemetery's heritage values and encourage active involvement.



Karori Cemetery Future Proposal



Karori Cemetery Land Schedule



Karori Cemetery Land Schedule

Mgmt Plan schedule #	WCC site #	Legal description	CT ref.	Land area	Reserve description	Gazette ref.	District plan zoning	Notes / Actions needed
K-1	1141	Pt Sec 33 Karori District	626/83	10.1588 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	All the land in CT 626/83 is held freehold by the Council, however two parts of it are tagged for cemetery purposes by the 1938 and 1962 Local Legislation Acts. This legislation authorises WCC to use 3.7885 ha for cemetery purposes. Actions <i>Propose surveying the area managed as Outer Green Belt, classify as scenic reserve and continue to manage as Outer Green Belt.</i>
K-2	1141	Pt Sec 31 and Pt Sec 33 Karori District	34D/196	27.1783 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Land set apart for cemetery purposes, pursuant to the Public Works Act 1981, NZ 1989/2169(doc B.009893.1). Actions <i>Propose surveying the area managed as Outer Green Belt, classify as scenic reserve and continue to manage as Outer Green Belt.</i>
K-3	1141	Lot 30 Pt Lot 31 DP 9848	20D/724	0.1075 ha	Local Purpose Reserve (site for municipal buildings)	NZ Gazette 1980/ 2711	Open Space B	Land reserved for municipal purposes, NZ Gazette 1950/1864 (changed from Cemetery purposes to municipal purposes). Vested as a reserve for municipal purposes, NZ Gazette 1950/1865, pursuant to Public Reserves, Domains & National Parks Act 1928. In 1980 the land was classified under the Reserves Act 1977 as a Local Purpose Reserve (site for municipal buildings), NZ Gazette 1980/1147. Part of the reserve (being part lot 31, DP 9848) was revoked, NZ Gazette 1980/2711, looking at the aerial this would have been done to better align the boundaries. Order in Council 433545 authorising the laying off of an under-width street.
K-4	1141	Lots 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 on DP 9848	578/53	0.4944 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Held for cemetery purposes, acquired under the Public Works Act for cemetery purposes - not a reserve. Section 23 Local legislation Act 1938 - authorises WCC to use for cemetery purposes
K-5	1141	Lot 1 A 316. Pt Sec 33 of the Karori District	485/211	3.5941 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Council freehold, held for cemetery purposes. Heritage buildings 165, 164/1 and 164/2 listed in Wellington City District Plan.
K-6	1141	Lots 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 33, 34, 35 and 36 DP 9848 and Sec 78, and Pt Sec 79. Karori District	568/5	1.4321 ha	Local Purpose (Cemetery) Reserve	NZ Gazette 1989/ 4484	Open Space B	B.040425.1 Gazette Notice classifies the land to be Local Purpose (Cemetery) Reserve, subject to the Reserves Act 1977 (NZ Gazette 1989/4484). Order in Council 1504 exempting Rosehaugh Ave from Sec 128 PWA subject to a building line. Certificate K 8692 - relates to a common drain over land. Fencing covenant 252375 (Lot 11). Order in Council 433545 authorising the laying off of a proposed street. Docs. 570814,776668 & 797039 refer to changes in appellations/legal descriptions. Actions <i>Rationalise and dispose of surplus land areas as per section 4.2.1, Land Administration in this plan, Actions 1 (b) and (c).</i>
K-7	1141	Sec 87 Karori District	8A/560	0.0322 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Subject to section 59 of the Land Act at 1948, this section refers to mineral rights being reserve by the Crown.

Land for addition to Karori Cemetery

Legal description	Location	Notes / Actions needed
Legal road, Rosehaugh Avenue	Northwest arm of Rosehaugh Avenue	Actions <i>Propose legal road stopping of the area where graves are located, vest in the Council for cemetery purposes and zone as open space in the district plan.</i>



4.3 Mākara Cemetery

4.3.1 Land administration

1. Subject to the outcomes of the proposed master plan of the existing cemetery land and any new land the Council may acquire, rationalise the Council’s cemetery-related land at Mākara by:
 - i. Disposing of any land that is surplus to cemetery purposes and surplus to achieving the Council’s strategic open space management objectives, or
 - ii. Surveying off and classifying as recreation reserve or scenic reserve under the Reserves Act any land that is surplus to cemetery purposes and is to be retained as part of the Council’s open space network.
2. Continue the existing Wellington Pony Club grazing lease over land on the east side of Mākara Road until the lease expires. Consider use of the grazed land beyond the current lease in the context of new master plan (4.3.1(1)).

Explanation

The land currently held for cemetery purposes at Mākara was historically acquired as large rural blocks of variable topography. In 2018 it was found that very little of the remaining undeveloped land is suitable for cemetery development (see 3.1.2.2). It is now timely to review whether to retain or dispose of the remaining land in light of wider strategic policies and any potential acquisition of adjacent land for expansion (see 3.1.2.3). Most of it has open space values that warrants continued council ownership, including future potential recreational links to the Outer Green Belt, recreational opportunities in the local area, existing and potential carbon farming, and biodiversity and freshwater protection. Any land that is to be retained for open space values rather than cemetery purposes will eventually be classified as reserve land under the Reserves Act to clarify the Council’s management objectives and appropriately protect the open space values.

4.3.2 Landscape character and amenity planting

1. Maintain and enhance Mākara Cemetery as a countryside cemetery of sweeping lawns defined by specimen tree planting and areas of native bush that frame views out to the surrounding rural landscape.

Actions

- a) Assess the need for potential improvements by reviewing the functionality, visitor amenity and maintenance regime of the existing cemetery area (see maps at end of this section), including:
 - i. Adequacy of the tree framework and suitability of species
 - ii. Maintenance issues
 - iii. Accessibility, including provision of seating and footpaths
 - iv. Potential to enhance the children’s section
 - v. Potential to provide more ash circles/ash walls
 - vi. Adequacy of facilities such as water taps and bins
 - vii. Visibility of the Mākara Road entrance
 - viii. Adequacy of wayfinding signage, including roadside entrance signs
 - ix. Potential to develop wildflowers as a feature.If any adjacent land is acquired, carry out the review as part of master planning the cemetery extension (see 3.1.2.2 and 3.1.2.3).
- b) Plan a landscape management work plan, based on the results of the review, for gradual implementation.
- c) Develop a list of plant species to guide future planting of the tree framework, amenity specimen trees, shrub and herbaceous borders, that will be appropriate to the landscape character and suited to the site conditions. Take into account the potential for visitors to pick flowers or foliage as an environmentally friendly and, for some, culturally appropriate tribute option (see 3.2.2.3 (5) and 3.2.2.3 action (a)).
- d) Offer commemorative planting in groves along the Mākara Road edge, based on a landscape plan.

Explanation

Feedback during the engagement for this plan showed that, overall, visitors appreciate the countryside setting and lawn cemetery character of Mākara Cemetery, with its peaceful atmosphere and spacious layout. The cemetery’s tidy condition attracted positive comment though people noted the problem of windblown rubbish that collects in fences and vegetation (see 3.2.2.3, gravesite decorations). The cemetery has been developed along the top of a low spur above Mākara village. The site is exposed to wind that funnels up the valley and people comment about the wind. Over time, though, vegetation growth on the steeper ground has developed and provides some shelter as well as a pleasant green edge to the cemetery areas. Specimen tree planting along the main driveways has also now developed sufficiently to provide a formal tree framework along the main driveways and defines some of the burial sections. The planting is a mixture of species that reflect different phases in the cemetery’s development. The main species are cypress, conifer, Norfolk Island pine, ngaio, alder, pohutukawa and, more recently, totara. Community engagement included requests for more trees and there is potential for more specimen or group tree planting to improve the amenity of some areas. However, it needs to be well thought out, to avoid creating future maintenance problems.

It is timely to review the landscape management at the same time as the master planning of any suitable adjacent land is done, so that any further improvements or new features within the existing cemetery and the interface between the existing and any new cemetery areas are well integrated. It would also be helpful to understand the practical site challenges encountered in developing the existing cemetery, such as the prevailing wind and gravesite layout on sloping ground.

The review should also address the potential to develop more interment and commemorative options. The ash circles and ash walls have been popular and there is continuing demand. The existing children’s section is in a peripheral part of the cemetery and

feels somewhat isolated. This is an area where families often have other young children with them when they visit and the addition of a focal point for young siblings could help families to spend quiet time together. An example would be some seating near a subtly designed landscape feature, such as large rocks, which would be both a natural feature and something for children to touch and explore. Recent shelter planting along the nearby road edge will help provide a more intimate atmosphere.

The area along the Mākara Road edge is comparatively level and it was, until recently, to be developed for burials. Geotechnical investigations found it to be unsuitable. It is now proposed to use the area for commemorative tree planting graves (see 3.2.2.3). This use would visually enhance the approach to Mākara village and provide an opportunity to restore indigenous lowland forest species that are now rare, such as swamp maire. The landscape plan should provide guidance on layout, species and the development of access to the site.

Introducing more wildflowers and plants of significance to denominational and cultural groups in areas that are unsuited for graves is suggested for investigation for the following reasons:

- The seasonal interest would be an added attraction for visitors
- Patches of relatively informal wildflower meadow would be in keeping with the countryside setting
- It may be possible to reduce the frequency of mowing maintenance on areas between the developed lawn cemetery areas
- Visitors could be encouraged to pick flowers and foliage for placement on graves as an alternative to plastic flowers.



Some wildflowers have already naturalised, as in the natural burials area depicted. The feasibility of the idea would need to be investigated, including identifying suitable areas, seeking advice from council’s ecology and horticultural teams on suitable non-invasive species and how best to establish and maintain meadows, implications of the maintenance regime for staff and potential fire risk.

4.3.3 Natural environment

1. Protect and restore freshwater ecology in the streams by maintaining and enhancing native riparian buffer vegetation.
2. Manage weeds, pest animals and forest restoration efforts in accordance with *Our Natural Capital Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*.
3. Monitor the exotic tree planting in the natural areas of the cemetery and allow to age and fall naturally, subject to remedial work where necessary for safety.
4. Continue to manage the areas under Permanent Forest Sink Initiative covenants for carbon sequestration and investigate the potential to register additional areas.
5. Encourage and support community participation in weed and pest animal control, restoration planting and ecological monitoring on existing cemetery and new cemetery land.

Explanation

The maps at the end of this section show the areas of land that have been developed or are suitable for cemetery purposes and the substantial areas of other land that is unsuitable for cemetery use. The other land comprises several gullies and watercourses, including part of North Mākara Stream, steep hillsides and some low-lying areas on both sides of Mākara Road. Apart from the area leased for grazing on the east side of Mākara Road, most of this land is regenerating to native vegetation. The native regeneration is more advanced in the water courses and gullies and south-facing slopes. The more exposed steep hillsides have mainly reverted to gorse from former pasture and native regeneration is starting to come through. The gullies within the cemetery contain a mix of exotic conifer and eucalyptus planting, native regeneration and weedy growth, including pampas grass and wildling pines. Rabbits are a particular problem, noted by visitors, as they dig into the lawn areas above graves. Currently, 19.9 hectares of land is registered for carbon sequestration and there is potential for more areas to be registered, especially on the grazing land if the existing lease were to end.

The land that is not suitable for cemetery use, has existing and potential biodiversity value, particularly in the North Mākara Stream gully where forest regeneration is more advanced. The vegetation also provides ecosystem services by protecting water and soil values on riparian or steep land and storing carbon. Managing these areas also holds the potential to enhance ecological connectivity with the Outer Green Belt, especially up the North Mākara Stream Valley but also up to Mākara Peak where an ecological restoration programme is occurring within the mountain bike park. Ultimately, the inclusion of these areas in the Outer Green could be considered.

Currently the ecological management of these areas comes within the scope of the city-wide restoration planting, pest animal and weed management programmes. Little has been specifically planned in respect of the cemetery to date, pending decisions on the future of the extra land. About 500 to 1000 native

plants are supplied from the Council nursery, which are planted in the natural burials area and on other sites in the gullies and banks around the edge of the developed cemetery area. This latter planting serves a dual purpose of replacing gorse with a more attractive green edge as well as enhancing biodiversity. There is potential to further plan the weed control and native planting to specifically target problem areas and enhance existing areas of native regeneration with longer-lived tall species.

4.3.4 Heritage recognition and protection

- Actions
- a) Research the history of Mākara Cemetery to help identify its heritage values and clarify the terms of historic plot purchases.
 - b) Prepare a Mākara Cemetery heritage conservation plan to protect the identified heritage values, including a long-term maintenance plan linked to the landscape management plan (see 4.3.2 action (b)), with guidance as appropriate.

Explanation

Mākara Cemetery is the newest of the Council’s cemeteries but it is now more than 50 years old and already reflects the history of its era - the landscape-lawn style of cemetery design, for instance. It is likely that, as at other cemeteries, there are burials of historic interest. The ongoing burials will be the heritage of the future. The proposed research should cover the pre-colonial history of the land and any special significance it may hold for mana whenua. A research project with mana whenua is proposed (see 3.3.2.3 action (a)). Another important aspect of the research is to trace past policies and the deeds of interment that were used at Mākara Cemetery. The 2003 management plan suggested lawn cemeteries could be developed in future by ‘moving the plaques to a memorial setting and creating amenity areas (lawns, plantings and flower beds)’¹⁷. While there are no plans to do this in the immediate

future, the future management of the plaque lawn and plots sold for specified time periods has been identified for the next management plan review (see 3.2.2.2) and the relevant historical information would then be useful.

4.3.5 Visitor experience

- 1. Encourage recreational use and enjoyment of Mākara Cemetery as a peaceful open space in a rural, while managing potentially conflicting activities.
- 2. Consider the potential for developing:
 - i. A short loop walk at the cemetery, and
 - ii. Recreational track connections to the Outer Green Belt.
- 3. Inform cemetery customers of the facilities available for funeral services at Mākara village.

Action

- a) Investigate, in consultation with the funeral sector and Greater Wellington Regional Council, the adequacy of the existing transport service to and from Mākara Cemetery, awareness of the service and options for an increased service if required.

Explanation

Feedback about Mākara Cemetery from the small community survey carried out for this plan was generally positive. Respondents consistently commented on the peaceful surroundings, its well organised layout and tidy condition, though there were also comments about it being bare and windswept. Visitors generally found it easy to find plot locations and to drive around.

The main issues from the survey included difficulty in accessing some graves due to steep sloping ground, the need for more seats, windblown rubbish, the distance to get to the cemetery and difficulty in seeing the entrance on Mākara Road when approaching from the city side. As discussed in section 3.4.2.2, there are constraints on improving access to individual graves but the cemetery staff will provide help on request,

however any feasible improvements and provision of more seating will be considered under section 4.3.2. action (a), as will the potential for more tree planting. Most rubbish comes from grave decorations that have come loose. For this reason, it is not an easy issue to manage as families can be upset when decorations disappear, but staff regularly gather up windblown items to keep the cemetery tidy (see 3.2.2.3 for more about managing decorations). The Mākara Road entrance is well sign-posted further up the road but it is still easily missed. Keeping the roadside vegetation cut back further on the cemetery side and installing a sign or landmark feature like a prominent marker post on the more visible opposite side of the road could be options.

Many visitors to Mākara Cemetery are the more recently bereaved, as this is where most interments take place. It is also used for recreation. The local community uses it for walking, dog walking and horse riding. Horse riding is permitted provided it is confined to the roadway and riders pick up all horse manure (see Part 5, Rules). Visitors appear to appreciate the horses and sight of other farm animals on adjacent land as part of the countryside atmosphere. People from further afield also visit for recreational reasons, including those tracing family history and road cyclists on the popular Ohariu/Mākara round trip, who detour through the cemetery. There is potential for less compatible uses, such as mountain bikers venturing off the roadways. See the Rules section for how this is managed. The existing horse grazing leases are to continue in the meantime as a means of supporting horse riding as a recreational activity.

The possibility of developing an outdoor non-denominational area suitable for funeral has been suggested as, unlike Karori Cemetery, there is no non-denominational chapel at Mākara Cemetery. This will be considered as part of the master planning of the new cemetery (see 3.1.2.3). There are also facilities close by in Mākara village - St Matthias’ (Anglican) Church, St Patrick’s (non-denominational)

Church and the Mākara Hall. The latter two are managed for hire by the Mākara Community Centre Association. The hall is suitable for people to gather after an interment or memorial unveiling for refreshments.

Mākara Cemetery’s distance from the city is a barrier for those who don’t have their own transport or are not confident to drive over Mākara Hill. There is no public transport to the cemetery. Currently, funeral homes collaborate to provide a monthly service but a review of that service and whether it is reaching those who need it is required to ensure the cemetery is accessible for all.

The extra land not required for cemetery use (described in section 4.3.3) has strategic recreational value for the future in the Council’s wider open space network - specifically to develop recreational routes that would link Mākara Village with the Outer Green Belt. The Open Space Access Plan identifies at a broad scale the opportunity to develop an East-West connection from Mākara Peak (in the Outer Green Belt) to the Mākara Coast via South Karori Stream and then back to Mākara Village. Links back from the village over the cemetery land could make the proposal into a complete loop route. There is potential to negotiate access over the private land between the cemetery and Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park or to develop a route on the east side of Mākara Road up the North Mākara Stream valley to the Skyline Track on the Outer Green Belt via the stream’s esplanade strip. Both options are noted as longer-term opportunities for the future. In the shorter term, a shorter loop walk could be developed on the steep land immediately above the cemetery, using and extending an existing 4WD access track and potentially extending across any new land the Council may acquire to expand the cemetery.

4.3.6 Community and partnerships

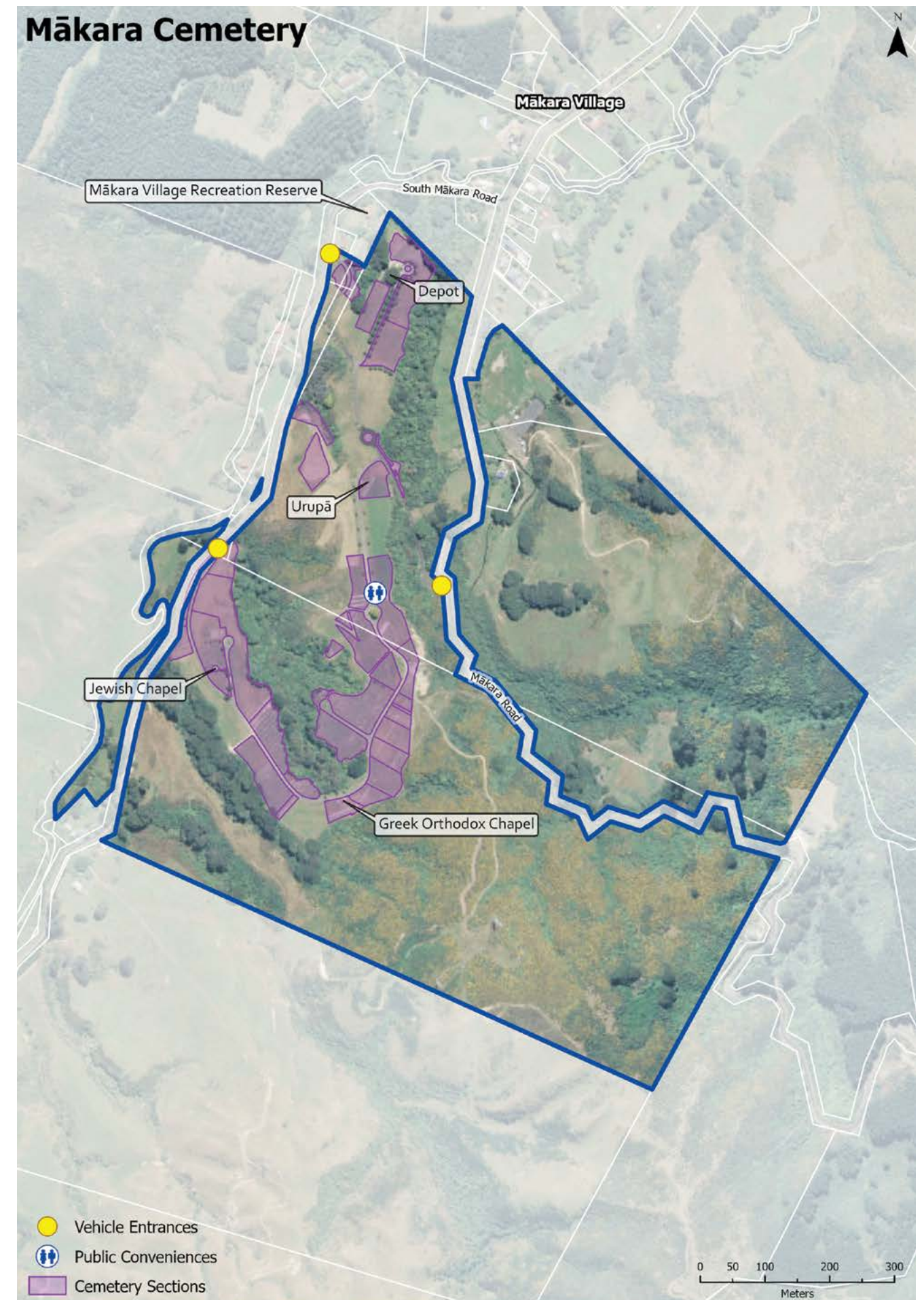
1. Continue to work with iwi on the ongoing management of the Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā.
2. Work with the Mākara Community Centre Association and the Anglican Diocese to ensure the availability of facilities that complement the Mākara Cemetery services are well-known.
3. Encourage members of the Mākara community to become involved in volunteer activities at Mākara Cemetery.

Action

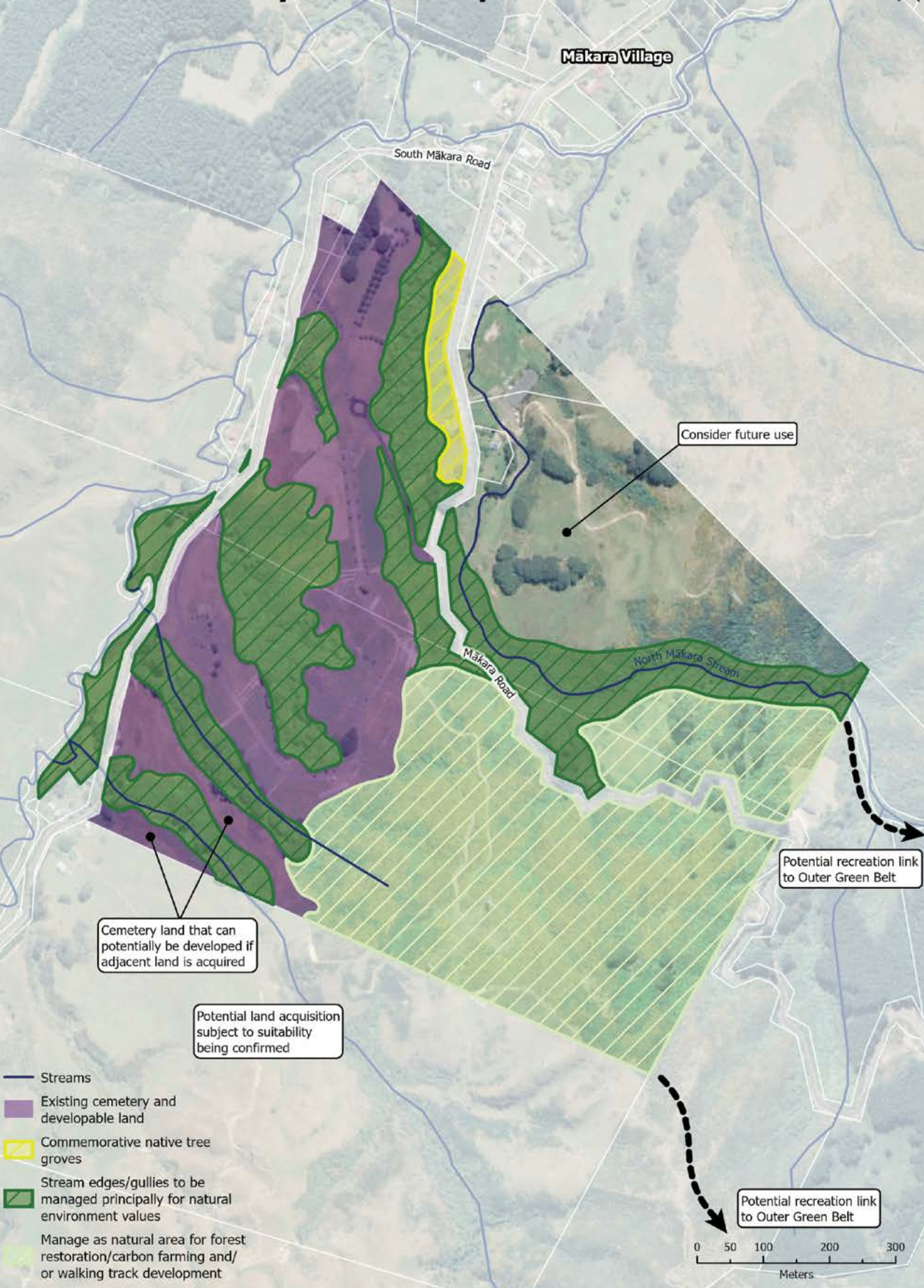
- a) Consult mana whenua and the wider Māori community about holding an annual karakia event at the Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā during Matariki.

Explanation

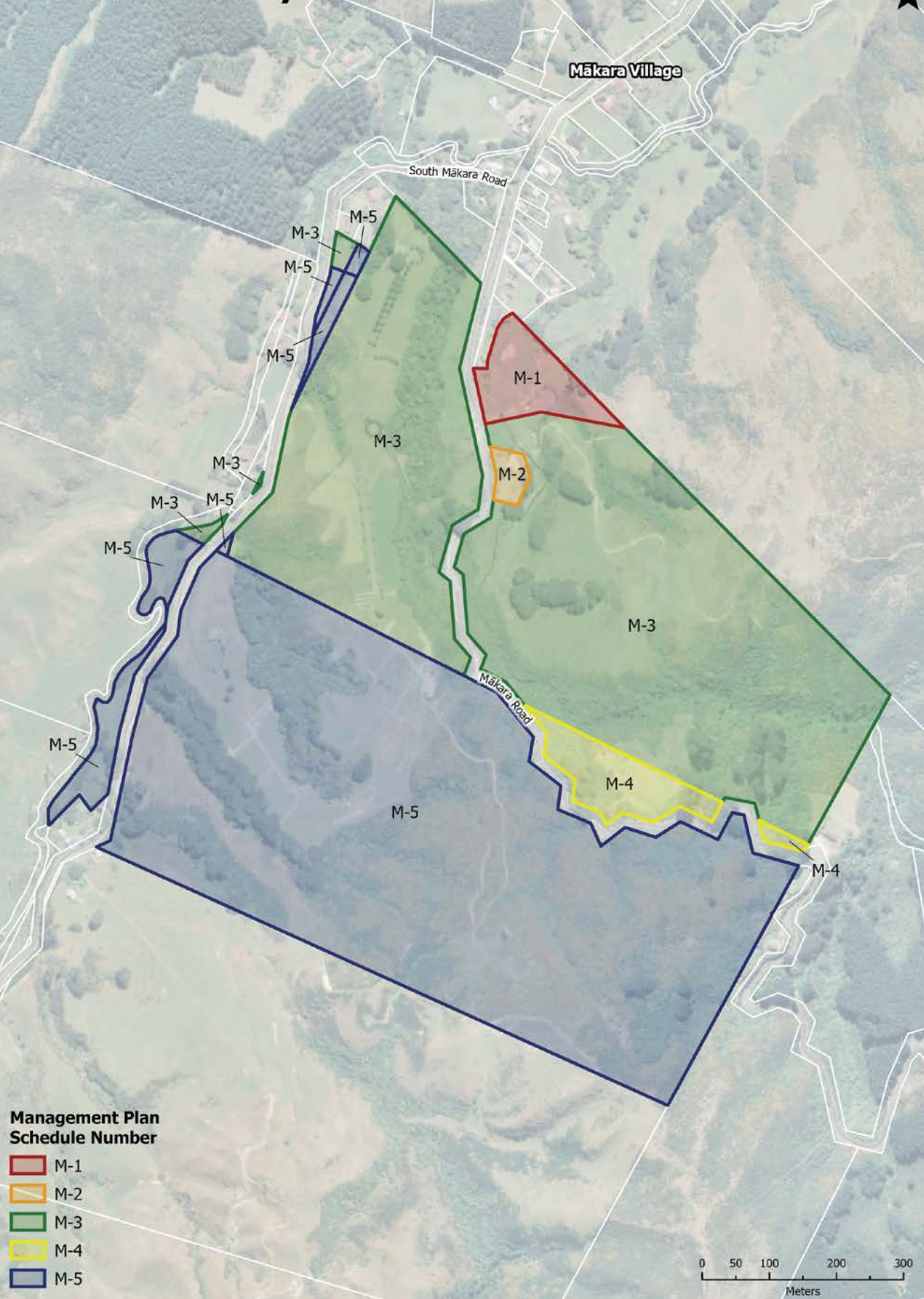
The Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā was opened in 2011. It was developed in consultation with local iwi, mana whenua, kaumātua and the Department of Corrections. The urupā was named by local iwi, Taranaki Whānui ki te Upoko o te Ika a Māui. The gateway carvings were designed by Taranaki carver Bryce Manu and carved by prisoners from the Māori Focus Unit at Rimutaka Prison. The concept of holding an annual karakia at the urupā was suggested during engagement for this plan and will be further investigated.



Mākara Cemetery Future Proposal



Mākara Cemetery Land Schedule



Mākara Cemetery Land Schedule

Mgmt Plan schedule #	WCC site #	Legal description	CT ref.	Land area	Reserve description	Gazette ref.	District plan zoning	Notes / Actions needed
M-1	0084	Pt Lot 1 DP 16265	776/40	1.7990 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Held as Wellington City Council freehold land. The district plan identifies a hazard (fault line) over this area of the cemetery. The Mākara branch of the Wellington Pony Club leases this land. Pony club to maintain all fences, posts, gates, ditches, drains and other structures, only allowed to keep horses, remove noxious weeds
M-2	0084	Lot 2 DP 16265	579/201	0.3957 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Held as council freehold land. About 2,000m2 within this land parcel is leased for grazing, subject to two months’ notice.
M-3	0084	Pt Sec 20, Mākara District	595/252	35.7050 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Held as Wellington City Council freehold land. Parts of this site are leased to the Mākara branch of the Wellington Pony Club.
M-4	0084	Pt Sec 18, Mākara District	341/261	2.1246 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Held as council freehold land. Part of this site is leased to the Mākara branch of the Wellington Pony Club.
M-5	0084	Pt Sec 18 and 21, Mākara District and Lots 2 and 5 and Pt Lot 1 DP 267	50D/128	42.8883 ha	Not a reserve		Open Space B	Wellington City Council freehold, held for cemetery purposes. Taken under the Public Works Act 1928, NZ Gazette 1952/1517. A Transpower transmission line crosses this site, including two power pylons. A Meteorological Service of New Zealand weather station is also located near the southeast corner of this site. Part of this land parcel, in the southwest corner, is leased for grazing, subject to two months’ notice.



5. Ngā Ture mō te Whakamahinga Tūmatanui

Rules for public use

5.1 Rules overview

This part of the plan outlines rules applicable to public use activities within the cemeteries. Public use activities have been increasing with the growing popularity of the cemeteries for recreation and have the potential to impact other cemetery visitors and the environment. These activities are managed by identifying the types allowable and those that are prohibited. These rules should be read in conjunction with the Wellington Consolidated Bylaw 2008, particularly Section 15 ‘Conduct in Cemeteries’.

This section does not cover:

- Activities that relate to operating cemeteries for burial and cremation. Such activities are regulated under legislation, such as the Burial and Cremation Act and Health Act. The regulations are not repeated here but, for the sake of clarity, the types of customer services where a permit and/or booking is required to meet regulatory requirements and/or run the cemetery to high standards are listed.
- Activities that relate to land use, such as utilities or use of the land for private benefit other than purchase of plots for internments, including commercial gain. The Wellington City Council, as landowner, will make decisions on applications of this type with reference to the vision, key values and policies of this plan, including taking into account the cemetery operation and the community expectations of respect for these places, the Consolidated Bylaw and the Council’s powers under the Local Government Act.

5.2 Objective

1. To manage public use activities of the cemeteries in a manner that recognises the cemeteries’ vision and protects the key values (see Part 2).

5.3 Policies

5.3.1 Managed activities

1. The following activities require a permit or booking issued or confirmed by the Council:
 - a) Cremations
 - b) Interments, including burials of human remains, and cremated ashes
 - c) Scattering ashes and burial of placenta
 - d) Disinterments
 - e) Installation and removal of memorial headstones and plaques
 - f) Conducting funerals, memorial services or suitable gatherings such as a wedding in the cemetery chapels
 - g) Commemorative planting and installation of commemorative seats
 - h) Cleaning, maintenance and repair of gravesite structures, including headstones and plaques
 - i) Other activities related to cemetery operations where permits or bookings may be required for good management. For example, bookings are required for unveiling of memorials, even though cemetery staff are not usually involved, so that the unveilings do not clash with another service in the vicinity such as a burial.
2. Activities not listed under 5.3.1 (1) above that are not allowed under 5.3.2 and not prohibited under 5.3.3, require prior permission from the cemetery manager.

Explanation

All customer services in policy (1) are managed through permits or bookings for the following reasons:

- to meet legislative requirements, for example, to ensure that a death has been registered before a burial or cremation, and to keep records up to date
- to ensure the smooth management of customer services, such as ensuring there are no double-ups of chapel use
- to ensure proper management of the cemetery, for example to ensure memorials will be installed in the correct space.

Information about the requirements and application process for these activities is available in the cemeteries section of the Council’s website or through the cemeteries office. In future, online procedures will be streamlined when the new Cemeteries Management System is complete (see 3.2.2.5).

Policy (2) covers other activities that are neither allowed under 5.3.2 nor prohibited under 5.3.3. They include commercial activities such as filming or public events such as choral performances, which may be appropriate to the cemetery environment but have potential impacts on the cemetery environment and use.

5.3.2 Allowed activities

- The following activities by individuals or groups are generally permitted for non-commercial use in the cemeteries but may be subject to restrictions in order to provide for the health, safety and wellbeing of visitors and protect open space values.
 - Visiting burial and ash plots
 - Placing temporary tributes and decorations on
 - the headstone and associated concrete beam of a gravesite in any lawn cemetery area (see Appendix I, Glossary)
 - non-lawn gravesites at Karori and Tawa cemeteriesprovided they do not:
 - encroach on or obstruct access to any other plot or communal area
 - use electricity, whether from cemetery power supply system, battery or solar sources
 - disturb the tranquillity of the cemetery environs.
- Informal gatherings
- Quiet, sedentary, typically individual activities such as sitting, reading, meditation, painting or amateur, such as non-commercial photography

- or filming¹⁸ that do not potentially offend or obstruct other cemetery users
- Walking
 - Historic and genealogical research
 - Dog walking (on leash, refer also to the Council’s Dog Policy)
 - Running
 - Mobility scooters
 - Motorised vehicle access on the formed roadways and carparks at a maximum speed of 10 km/h
 - Cycling, e-biking and mountain biking at a maximum speed of 10 km/h on the formed roadways where motorised vehicle traffic is allowed
 - Cycling and mountain biking on any tracks clearly signposted for cycling or mountain biking use
 - Nature study and wildlife spotting, for recreation, education and research
 - Orienteering and geocaching on foot
 - Picnicking, provided no cooking is involved and food is not consumed within denominational areas where signage prohibits food consumption
 - Horse riding on the formed roadway at Mākara Cemetery, provided horses are at a walking pace and riders remove all horse manure
 - Volunteering, subject to prior approval (see below).

Explanation
Allowed activities are largely informal and unstructured. They include activities traditionally associated with visiting cemeteries for remembrance, but not formal gatherings such as funerals that are managed activities, and with casual recreational use of parks and reserves that are considered compatible with primary cemetery activities. The reasons for limitations on placing tributes and decorations are explained under policy 3.2.2.3 Remembrance. Allowed activities generally have a low impact on

¹⁸ Non-commercial filming that is anything other than a home video-type activity is a managed activity. The need to obtain land owner (i.e. Council) approval for commercial photography and filming will be assessed on a case-by-case basis, primarily considering the impact of the activity.

cemetery values and other users, are compatible with the contemplative atmosphere of the cemeteries, and need few restrictions. The public do not need to book these activities or seek approval for them, though if in doubt, contact the cemeteries office.

Commercial (business¹⁹) activity is not an ‘allowed’ activity. Commercial use refers to use by an individual, group or organisation that is carried out for profit or as a means of livelihood or gain. This includes, but is not limited to, funeral, monument, recreation, tourism and filming businesses.

Under the Open Space Access Plan 2016 (OSAP) tracks in the Council’s open space network are shared use wherever appropriate and tracks are open for biking unless otherwise stated. The tracks in the cemeteries are not specifically mentioned. The cemeteries differ in their primary use from the rest of the open space network and shared biking/pedestrian use by default is not considered appropriate. Therefore, cycling, mountain biking and horse riding will only be allowed on routes or areas identified through this plan and these rules will take precedence over the OSAP. Cycling and mountain biking within gravesite and ash interment areas is considered disrespectful, with the potential for conflict with visitors on foot, especially on narrower paths, and for heritage features to be damaged. Horse riding has been traditionally allowed at Mākara Cemetery and feedback indicates that visitors appreciate it as a part of the countryside setting, provided the riders are respectful.

The cemeteries are closed to cycling and mountain biking apart from:

- The formed roadways and parking areas at Mākara and Karori cemeteries
- Potential shared-use tracks on the slopes above Mākara Cemetery (see section 4.3.1 and 4.3.5)
- A potential shared-use track from the end of Standen Street to the bottom of the shared connector track in the Outer Green Belt, known as Cemetery to Skyline.

The cemeteries are closed to horse riding apart from the formed roadway at Mākara Cemetery.

¹⁹ Business activity” means an undertaking carried on for pecuniary gain or reward.

Dog walking is also governed by a separate and specific council policy (Bylaw and Dog Policy).

Note: Volunteering activities also need to be managed and approved but this is done through agreements between the Council and volunteer(s), often recorded in Memoranda of Understanding (see 3.5.2.3 Community partnership).

Restrictions on allowed activities

- In order to protect the cemeteries, the health, safety and wellbeing of other users and to facilitate management operations, restrictions may be placed on allowed activities. The following is a guide of potential issues that may result in restrictions:
 - Group size for informal activities
 - Compatibility with primary cemetery activities, such as funerals, interments and installation of memorials
 - Time of the day and duration of activity (assessed on impact)
 - Location (ensuring there is no user conflict between cemetery users)
 - Day of the week or time of year (restriction in regard to activities during public holidays and considering weekday and weekend activity)
 - The weather (restriction of activities and use of certain areas or facilities)
 - Environmental conditions (any impact on the land and surrounding environment)
 - Compatibility with maintenance or management of the cemeteries at certain times.
- Tributes and decorations that encroach on other interment plots or on communal space will be removed to maintain standards of mutual respect and tidiness in the cemetery environment (see Section 3.2.2.3 also).

The Council’s cemeteries staff and rangers will manage these types of restrictions under the bylaws. These restrictions are usually temporary and in response to situations already happening.

5.3.3 Prohibited activities

Activities specifically prohibited

- 1. Activities are prohibited that are not directly related to:
 - i. Cemetery, cremation and memorial activities
 - ii. The protection, research and interpretation of the cemeteries’ heritage and landscapes, or
 - iii. Public enjoyment of the cemeteries.
- 2. The following activities are specifically prohibited, unless carried out for the purposes of approved management activities or as otherwise noted below:
 - i. Scattering ashes or burying placenta (unless approved, see 5.3.1)
 - ii. Open fires other than for cultural reasons and in accordance with the Wellington Consolidated Bylaw
 - iii. Fireworks and/or amplified sound (not associated with an approved event)
 - iv. Off-road use of motorised vehicles, including trail bikes and scooters
 - v. Aircraft and helicopter landing except as required for emergency purposes
 - vi. Drones other than with prior permission for an event or for data gathering/management purposes by council staff
 - vii. Parachuting, parapenting, hang gliding, kite carts/boards, model airplanes, drone racing
 - viii. Using cycles, mountain bikes, scooters or skateboards on gravesites and other structures
 - ix. Construction of unauthorised tracks, including any related earthworks and/or clearance of vegetation

- x. Construction of private residential dwellings, structures or landscaping
- xi. Private or community gardens or orchards
- xii. Use of a chainsaw
- xiii. Firewood collection
- xiv. All mining activities
- xv. Markets and fairs
- xvi. Camping
- xvii. Firearms and weapons use
- xviii. Hunting
- xix. Golf
- xx. Keeping of pets and livestock unless approved under a lease or license agreement
- xxi. Fishing or killing and/or removal of freshwater species except where council has allowed it under written permit for scientific purposes.

These rules for use and development are not intended to preclude the Council’s day-to-day management. For example, use of a chainsaw is prohibited but council staff or its contractors will be permitted to use them as required for tree management.

Explanation
Prohibited activities are considered inappropriate because of the permanent adverse effects on the environment, incompatibility with the values, characteristics and/or management focus at the cemeteries or with other approved activities.

The Council will prohibit activities that would have a permanent adverse effect on cemeteries values or would significantly detract from the benefit and safety that other users derive from the cemeteries.

Prohibited activities include all those activities prohibited by Wellington City Council bylaws or prohibited by the Burial and Cremation Act or Reserves Act, if applicable²⁰. Enforcement of all activities will be through the Wellington City Council Consolidated Bylaw 2008 and the Burial and Cremation Act.

20 Some parts of Karori Cemetery are classified as local purpose reserve under the Reserves Act.

6. Te Whakatinanatanga Implementation

6.1 Funding and priorities

This section summarises the specific actions proposed in this plan. Some of these actions are already funded under existing budgets or may involve reprioritising existing budgets. Other proposed actions are new initiatives that are not funded. Decisions will be required on these new initiatives as to whether funding will be allocated and, if so, the amount and timing. The unfunded actions to be delivered in the short term will need to be considered through the 2021-2031 Long-Term Plan (LTP) process with review of funding requirements considered through future long-term plans.

It should be noted that the priority in implementing this plan is to acquire new land for cemetery purposes, do the master planning, obtain the consents needed for future cemetery expansion, and begin initial development. Several assessment and planning projects on all three cemeteries are also required before investing in work on the ground. Proper planning at the outset will mean that development and maintenance work will be based on well thought-out priorities and a logical sequence of work to optimise outcomes from expenditure and ensure each cemetery is appropriately serviced over time.

The proposed timing of the actions is aligned with the long-term plan three-year review schedule and is noted as follows:

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
3.1 Land administration and provision						
3.1.2.2 Cemetery capacity and planning	a) Investigate cemetery expansion options and acquire land suitable for cemetery use, to ensure adequate future capacity in Wellington City, invoking the Public Works Act for compulsory acquisition if necessary.	N			Subject to valuation & negotiation (capex growth)	
	b) Provide for ongoing investment in developing land held for cemetery purposes through the Council’s Long-Term Plan		N	N	Unknown - will know for 24-27 LTP (capex growth)	
3.1.2.3 New cemetery master planning and landscape development	a) Produce a master plan to guide the use and development of existing cemetery land at Mākara and the development of any newly acquired cemetery land	N			Included in 3.1.2.2 (a) (capex growth)	
3.2 Customer service						
3.2.2.2 Burial and cremation rights and options	a) Investigate the option of selling non-perpetual rights of interment to burial and ash plots and develop proposed terms and conditions. Report back to the Council for approval within three years of the date of this plan.	E				Will require legal advice
	b) Subject to council approval of the proposed terms and conditions, offer the option of selling non-perpetual rights of interment to burial and ash plots.		E	E		
3.2.2.3 Remembrance	a) Investigate sources and options of environmentally friendly and affordable tributes and decorations, and the feasibility of selling direct to the public or partnering with community groups or businesses interested in producing and/or selling suitable products. Implement if feasible.	E	E	E		

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
3.2.2.5 Quality records management and information systems	a) Complete the digitisation of historical paper-based cemetery records.	E				
	b) Complete the current Cemetery Management System (CMS) replacement project.	E				
	c) Develop a new user-friendly cemeteries website, integrated with the CMS project and compliant with the New Zealand Accessibility Charter.	E				
	d) Continue to add photographs of all plots to the online cemetery records.	E	E	E		
	e) Develop a ‘virtual tour’ of each cemetery.			N	Unknown (opex level of service)	
3.3 Heritage						
3.3.2.2 Natural environment	a) Investigate the potential for annual commemorative tree planting into new native tree groves or into existing areas of regenerating native vegetation in the cemeteries to enhance the biodiversity with long-lived ‘heritage’ species.		E			
3.3.2.3 Heritage recognition and protection	a) Research with mana whenua the pre-colonial history and any cultural values associated with land held for cemetery purposes and recognise according to mana whenua wishes.	E				
3.3.2.4 Graves and monuments	a) Develop new maintenance and repair guidelines for graves and monuments to be used in heritage management and conservation work in all the Council’s cemeteries.	E				
	b) Publish simple ‘how-to’ guidance in online and pamphlet formats to inform family members and volunteers about how to carry out simple, non-invasive cleaning and maintenance of graves, noting that permits are required.	E				
	c) Approach the Ministry for Culture and Heritage to investigate the potential for a partnership approach in managing the memorials of prominent people in the cemeteries.	E	E	E		

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
3.4 Visitor experience						
3.4.2.3 Wayfinding, signage and interpretation	a) Develop a high-level visitor experience strategy for council’s cemeteries, with guiding principles for developing individual cemetery interpretation plans. <i>Note. Landscape masterplan work will inform the scope and cost of this work and implementation timing and costs.</i>		N	N	Unknown costs to implement plan (opex level of service)	Will require heritage team input
3.5 Community and partnership						
3.5.2.1 Partnership with mana whenua	a) Develop a partnership that will enable both Taranaki Whānui and the Council to fulfil their mutual undertakings in the Memorandum of Understanding, including for Taranaki Whānui to realise its plans for the Opau Urupā.	E	N	N	Unknown costs to deliver on partnership agreement	
3.6 Resilience						
3.6.2.4 Sustainability and ecosystem services	a) Review and develop a sustainable system for managing green waste and surplus soil in the cemeteries.	E				
	b) Undertake a sustainability audit of the cemetery operations to inform future management.		E/N	E/N	Unknown costs to implement changes to achieve goals (opex/ capex level of service).	
	c) Investigate the potential for carbon zero cemetery operations.	N	E/N	E/N	Potential for costs to implement changes to achieve goals (opex/ capex level of service).	

6.1.2 Tawa Cemetery actions

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
3.1 Land administration and provision						
4.1.1 Landscape character and amenity planting	a) Investigate the stability of the back (western) boundary bank and undertake remedial action if necessary.	E	E			
4.1.2 Heritage recognition and protection	a) Consider scheduling the Tawa Cemetery as a heritage area in the district plan.			E		
	b) Prepare a Tawa Cemetery heritage conservation plan, including an archaeological assessment and management plan, and a long-term maintenance plan with associated guidance on best practice maintenance of the graves and the vegetation.		N		Unknown (opex level of service)	
	c) Support the Tawa Historical Society in researching Tawa Cemetery records and add to the cemeteries' database whatever verified burial information about the cemetery is available.	E				
4.1.3 Graves and monuments	a) In consultation with the Tawa Historical Society, prepare a prioritised list of graves needing maintenance and repair using the assessment approach outlined.		E			
	b) Seek funding to enable gravesite restoration work to be progressively carried out over a number of years.			N	Unknown (opex level of service)	
	c) Carry out the prioritised maintenance and repairs as resources permit, including using volunteer help when available for suitable tasks.			N	Unknown (opex level of service)	
4.1.4 Visitor experience	a) Promote the cemetery as a destination of interest by incorporating it into information about local walking opportunities and through the proposed new council cemeteries website.	E				

6.1.3 Karori Cemetery actions

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
4.2.1 Land administration	a) Rationalise the land held for Karori Cemetery by: i. Classifying as scenic reserve the area at the north end to formalise its existing management as part of the Outer Green Belt, subdividing the land parcel(s) and amending the land titles as necessary to clarify that the land is no longer held for cemetery purposes. ii. Stopping the road where graves are located on Rosehaugh Avenue road reserve and vesting it in the Council for cemetery purposes. iii. Legalising the formed roadway between Rosehaugh Avenue and Seaforth Terrace and disposing of surplus land in the vicinity.	E				Will require property and legal input
	b) Investigate potential uses of the vacant land adjacent to the Standen Street entrance.	E				
	c) When all remaining ash plots have been purchased, close Karori Cemetery under the Burial and Cremation Act.			E		
4.2.2 Landscape character and amenity planting	a) Assess the impact that vegetation is having on the heritage in Karori Cemetery and identify the areas where work is required to reduce the risk of vegetation damage to graves, structures and infrastructure, such as retaining walls.	E				
	b) Prepare a landscape management master plan of Karori Cemetery to integrate the long-term management and maintenance of the land, vegetation and built features, including heritage conservation work, clearly identifying areas of unique character and whatever long-term management is required to protect the character and/or manage change over time.	E				
	c) Prioritise funding for an ongoing programme of proactive vegetation management at Karori Cemetery.		N	N	\$240,000 (opex 80k/3yr period)	
	d) Develop a list of plant species that will be appropriate to the landscape character of the different areas and site conditions in the cemetery to guide future planting. It would take account of the need to manage potential invasive weed and fire risk when implementing the overall landscape master plan.	E				
4.2.3 Natural environment	a) Prepare a Karori Cemetery weed list and weed management plan and apply for dedicated implementation resourcing.	E				Unknown (opex level of service)

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
	b) Work with the community and experts to investigate how to manage the riparian bank above the Kaiwharawhara Stream for stream health without damaging the graves on the lower slope.		E			
	c) Consider the potential ecological impacts, including fire risk, of some heritage plant species and how to manage those impacts when developing the amenity planting list and the new graves and monuments maintenance and repair guidelines.	E				
4.2.4 Heritage recognition and protection	a) Review the Karori Cemetery Conservation Plan 2003, update as necessary, including consideration of vegetation management as part of the cemetery’s heritage landscape. Include a long-term maintenance plan with guidance on best practice maintenance, integrated with the proposed landscape management master plan for the cemetery.	E				
	b) Seek to have the heritage at Karori Cemetery recognised and protected in the following ways, after the cemetery is closed: i. Nominate the cemetery as a Historic Place in the Heritage New Zealand List/Rārangi Kōrero ii. Classify as an historic reserve under the Reserves Act iii. Consider scheduling the cemetery as a heritage area and the Main Chapel, Servicemen’s Arch and two columbaria as heritage building or objects in the Wellington City Council District Plan			E		
	c) Consult mana whenua and the community about renaming Karori Cemetery to reflect the original Māori name for the area.		E			
	d) Carry out an archaeological assessment and prepare an archaeological management plan of Karori Cemetery to identify the areas (including graves) where an archaeological authority from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga would be required before work could be completed.	E				
4.2.5 Graves and monuments	a) In consultation with the Friends of Karori Cemetery, prepare and maintain a prioritised list of graves needing maintenance and repair using the assessment approach outlined.	E				
	b) Seek increased annual funding to enable enough gravesite restoration work to be carried out to see a substantial improvement in the general condition of the graves at Karori Cemetery over the next 10 years.		N	N	TBC in response to landscape master plan (opex: estimate \$40,000 pa)	

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
4.2.6 Buildings, infrastructure and facilities	a) Seek the district plan heritage scheduling of the Shelter to be updated with this name.	E				
	b) Carry out required maintenance and proposed restoration of the Shelter, subject to preparing a conservation plan to guide the work and obtaining an archaeological authority.	E				
	c) Investigate the feasibility of providing an additional public toilet accessible from the Small Chapel, and develop if feasible, subject to heritage assessment to ensure heritage values will be protected.		N		TBC informed by master plan (capex)	
	d) Continue to refurbish the Main Chapel to improve its appeal, accessibility and range of facilities for funeral and other appropriate uses, including increased capacity if feasible.	E	E	E		
4.2.7 Visitor experience	a) Research the historical naming of roadways, paths, areas and sites within the cemetery to inform the development of a wayfinding plan.	E				
	b) Install temporary name signs on the main routes and at the main junction points in the cemetery to improve basic wayfinding until action (c) is completed.	E				
	c) With reference to the proposed Cemeteries Visitor Experience plan develop: i. As the first priority, a Karori Cemetery WayFinding Signage Plan that: - reflects an assessment of circulation patterns, common destinations and loop routes - provides for clear directional signage on track connections to adjacent open spaces, including denoting walking-only or shared use - includes an audit of existing signage - reflects naming used historically at the cemetery - includes sign design specifications for functionality and appropriate heritage style. ii. As the second priority, a Karori Cemetery Interpretation Plan.		E			
	d) Gradually implement the wayfinding and interpretation strategies, as resources permit		E	Ongoing		
	e) Develop a new walking-only track between the cemetery and Ian Galloway Park.			E		

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
	f) Develop an entrance to the Outer Green Belt at the end of Standen Street with a map board to direct Outer Green Belt users.		E			
	g) Develop a new shared track from the Standen Street entrance to the shared Cemetery to Skyline Track, to divert bike riders away from the cemetery.		E			
4.2.8 Community and partnerships	a) Seek annual funding to support the Friends of Karori Cemetery during the 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 financial years to build its community base and undertake approved heritage conservation work at Karori Cemetery.	N			Unknown (opex level of service)	

6.1.4 Mākara Cemetery actions

E = Existing funding N = New initiative

Section	Action	LTP 2021-24	LTP 2024-27	LTP 2027-31	New costs	Notes
4.3.2 Landscape character and amenity planting	a)Assess the need for potential improvements by reviewing the functionality, visitor amenity and maintenance regime of the existing cemetery area, including: i. Adequacy of the tree framework and suitability of species ii. Maintenance issues iii. Accessibility, including provision of seating and footpaths iv. Potential to enhance the children’s section v. Potential to provide more ash circles/ash walls vi. Adequacy of facilities such as water taps and bins vii. Visibility of the Mākara Road entrance viii. Adequacy of wayfinding signage, including roadside entrance signs ix. Potential to develop wildflowers as a feature. If any adjacent land is acquired, carry out the review as part of master planning the cemetery extension.	N			Part of new land acquisition planning (opex level of service)	
	b) Plan a landscape management work plan, based on the results of the review, for gradual implementation.	E	Ongoing	Ongoing		
	c)Develop a list of plant species to guide future planting of the tree framework, amenity specimen trees, shrub and herbaceous borders, that will be appropriate to the landscape character, suited to the site conditions. Take into account the potential for visitors to pick flowers and foliage as an environmentally friendly and, for some, culturally appropriate tribute option.	E				
	d) Offer commemorative planting in groves along the Mākara Road edge, based on a landscape plan.	E				
4.3.4 Heritage recognition and protection	a)Research the history of Mākara Cemetery to help identify its heritage values and clarify the terms of historic plot purchases.	E				
	b) Prepare a Mākara Cemetery heritage conservation plan to protect the identified heritage values, including a long-term maintenance plan linked to the landscape management plan, with guidance as appropriate.	N			Part of new land acquisition planning (opex level of service).	
4.3.5 Visitor experience	a) Investigate, in consultation with the funeral sector, the adequacy of the existing transport service to and from Mākara Cemetery, awareness of the service and options for an increased service if required.	E				
4.3.6 Community and partnerships	a) Consult mana whenua and the wider Māori community about holding an annual karakia event at the Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā to celebrate Matariki	E				

6.1.5 Summary of new initiatives

LTP period 2021-2024

- New cemetery land acquisition at Mākara and master planning/consenting
- Investigate potential for carbon zero cemetery operations
- Tawa Cemetery: Heritage research/conservation/ archaeological assessments/plans
- Karori Cemetery: Heritage conservation/ archaeological assessments and plans, temporary signage, landscape management master plan
- Mākara Cemetery: Landscape management master plan, heritage conservation plan.

LTP period 2024-2027

- New cemetery development, ongoing
- Giving effect to partnership with mana whenua
- Sustainability audit
- High-level visitor experience plan for all three cemeteries
- Implementation of any new management and/or levels of services at Karori
- Karori: Wayfinding plan, interpretation plan, gravesite repairs, new toilet if feasible, ongoing vegetation management work.

LTP period 2027-2031

- New cemetery development
- Virtual tour of the three cemeteries
- Giving effect to partnership with mana whenua
- Tawa Cemetery: Gravesite repairs
- Karori Cemetery: Gravesite repairs and ongoing vegetation management
- Mākara Cemetery: Implementing landscape development plan.



Ngā Āpitihanga

Appendices

Appendix I. Glossary

Ash berm	A strip along the edge of a cemetery driveway or footpath where ashes are interred and marked with a flat plaque.
Ash circle	An area where ash interment plots are laid out in a circular formation with plaques marking each interment.
Beam cemetery	A type of lawn cemetery where burial sites are marked with headstones placed on long concrete beams. The space between the beams, where the graves lie, is maintained in mown lawn.
Columbarium	A structure with niches in the walls to hold urns of cremated ashes.
Interment	Burial of human remains, including cremated ashes, in a grave or specially designed structure such as a tomb or columbarium.
Lawn cemetery	A burial area, maintained primarily in lawn, where either each burial site is marked by a memorial plaque or tablet laid flat and slightly below the turf to allow unobstructed mowing (see plaque lawn below), or the grave is maintained in lawn between rows of upright headstones (see beam cemetery) above.
Memorial	Something to preserve or recognise the memory of a person or an event. Examples include headstones, plaques, monuments, commemorative seats or trees.
Monument	A structure created to commemorate a person or group of people or an important event.
Natural burial (at Mākara Cemetery)	A type of burial intended to have a low environmental impact. The body is not embalmed, is placed in an approved natural casket or shroud and buried one metre deep beneath a compost soil mix so that decomposition happens more quickly. Non-biodegradable accessories are not allowed. An eco-sourced native tree is planted on the grave, which is marked with a non-treated wooden marker that will eventually rot down. Body nutrients are recycled and the tree planted becomes part of native bush restored on the site. The location is recorded by map and GPS co-ordinates.
Niche wall	A wall containing niches to hold urns of cremated ashes (see columbarium above).
Ossuary	A place where the bones of the dead are placed.
Plaque lawn	A type of lawn cemetery where interment plots are maintained in lawn with commemorative plaques placed flat on the plots so that mowing is unimpeded.

Appendix II. Strategic and statutory context

Key guiding Council policies and strategies

Wellington Towards 2040: Smart Capital

The Council’s vision for Wellington focusses on the city’s future development over the next 20 years, building on Wellington’s current strengths while acknowledging the challenges the city faces now and over the medium to long-term, and the changing role of cities. The vision is supported by four community outcomes based on the city’s competitive advantage. These are eco-city, connected city, people-centred city and dynamic central city. The cemeteries help realise the vision providing essential services and infrastructure that will be needed as the city grows and providing places with heritage that strengthens the sense of place in Wellington and brings people in the community together.

Long-term Plan 2018-2028

The Long-Term Plan (LTP) sets out the projects and initiatives the Council intends to invest in over the 10-year period. The LTP is reviewed is reviewed every three years. The cemeteries are relevant most particularly to three of the five priority areas in the plan:

- Resilience and the environment: By providing essential infrastructure and services, including during emergencies and disasters
- Sustainable growth: By planning ahead to ensure adequate cemetery capacity for the growing population
- Arts and culture: By maintaining important city heritage.

Wellington Urban Growth Plan - urban development and transport strategy: 2014-2043

This strategy is used to plan for expected growth in Wellington’s population to about 250,000 by 2043. Its purpose is to guide council’s decisions relating to urban growth planning, transport, land use, housing and infrastructure. Key outcomes are to achieve a compact, liveable and resilient city set in nature.

Key objectives relevant to the cemeteries include planning for population growth that will mean a growing demand for cemetery services and the need to provide adequate land for cemeteries, and the need for leadership in planning and preparedness to deal with emergencies.

Planning for Growth

Planning for Growth is a spatial plan that is essentially a ‘blueprint’ for how the city should grow and develop over the next 30 years. It covers a range of topics relating to the city’s growth including land use, transport, three waters infrastructure, natural hazards, heritage, and natural environment values. It will influence the current review of the district plan and decisions about investment in things like infrastructure. Within that context, cemetery services are relevant in that provision must be adequate to meet the needs of a growing population and planned to be as sustainable as possible in terms of land use and environmental impact. Cemetery management is also relevant to other aspirations considered in the spatial plan for the city to be resilient and to have accessible public spaces that support diverse community and cultural values.

Te Atakura First to Zero, Wellington’s Blueprint for a Zero Carbon Capital, 2019

The blueprint confirms the Council’s commitment to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions in Wellington by 2050, with significant reduction by 2030. It outlines seven ‘big moves’, or action areas, for a zero carbon capital and includes the Council’s own operations in proposed initiatives to achieve zero carbon. Two of these moves are of particular relevance to the cemeteries:

- Becoming a leader in high-performing buildings. With benefits of lower infrastructure costs, cheaper operating costs, healthier environments and lower carbon impacts. There are a number of buildings in the cemeteries, notably the crematorium in terms of energy consumption and emissions, and further buildings will be planned as part of future cemetery expansion.
- The need to protect and enhance the domain of Tāne (the forests) that support recreational activity and biodiversity and provide ecosystem services. The cemeteries include streams and areas of regenerating or potential native forest including carbon storage forest areas.

Wellington Heritage Strategy 2010

The strategy is based upon ideas that Wellington’s historic features, sites and places are a finite resource and are important in shaping what makes Wellington unique. It outlines objectives and actions based on the following goals:

- Recognition - Wellington’s heritage is recognised as contributing to our understanding of our cultural diversity and awareness of sense of place
- Protection, conservation and use - Wellington’s unique character is enhanced by the protection, conservation and use of its heritage
- Sustainable economic use - Wellington’s heritage is acknowledged as contributing to a vibrant economy.

Wellington Resilience Strategy 2017

The strategy is a blueprint to help Wellingtonians prepare for, respond to and recover from major disruptions such as earthquakes and the effects of climate change. The stated vision is ‘As Wellington moves and changes, everyone here will survive and thrive’. Three goals support this vision - that people are connected, empowered and feel part of a community, that decision-making is integrated and well-informed and that homes, the natural and the built environment are healthy and robust.

The cemeteries have a role to play in being well-prepared for burying the dead during disasters and emergencies and maintaining places where people feel connected with their history, nature and community.

Our Capital Spaces - an open space and recreation framework for Wellington: 2013-2023

Part of the Our Living City programme, initiatives come under four outcomes - (i) getting everyone active and healthy; (ii) protecting our birds, nature, streams and landscapes; (iii) contributing to Wellington’s outstanding quality of life; and (iv) doing it together. The cemeteries contribute to all four initiatives by providing places where people like to exercise, where nature is present, where important heritage is a visitor attraction and where community partnership is developing in caring for that heritage.

Our Natural Capital - Wellington’s indigenous biodiversity strategy and action plan 2015

This plan is about Wellington’s indigenous biodiversity - the species that occur or occurred naturally in Wellington. The main aim is to protect and restore indigenous biodiversity so it is thriving once more. Additional outcomes focus on connecting people to nature and fostering their sense of kaitiakitanga and enthusiasm for nature. Our Natural Capital is very much about urban ecology - how to weave nature through the city environment. The cemeteries are a good example of this context, where there is a close relationship between the built/ developed areas and the areas managed as natural environments.

Commemorative Policy 2006

The Commemorative Policy provides the Council with a framework to guide the location and management of commemorative memorials such as trees and site furniture in parks and reserves. It also includes a framework for dealing with requests for scattering and interring ashes and other human remains on public land in a culturally sensitive manner. While the policy is mainly focused on the Council’s parks and reserves, it refers to tree planting options and commemorative seat designs at Karori and Mākara cemeteries.

Open Space Access Plan 2016

The Council’s strategic vision to strengthen and improve the access network in Wellington’s open spaces is by providing opportunities for recreation and tourism, ensuring tracks provide for a range of user interests, skills, abilities and fitness levels within each geographic area of the city, achieving a primary network between major destination points in Wellington and adjoining districts, linked with an equitable distribution of secondary and local track networks and recreational facilities. It is also about providing a network that enables more residents to safely enjoy the open spaces while enhancing the natural environment. Within this context, Karori and Mākara cemeteries are increasingly popular for walking, with either well-developed or potential connections with the wider track network.

Regulatory and Governance framework

Burial and Cremation Act (1964)

The Burial and Cremation Act (1964) Section 4(1) states:

“It shall be the duty of every local authority, where sufficient provision is not otherwise made for the burial of the bodies of persons dying while within its district, to establish and maintain a suitable cemetery.”

The Act applies to both public cemeteries and private burial grounds but not to Māori burial grounds. It covers the establishment, maintenance and regulation of cemeteries, financial functions, cremation, cemetery closure, offences and general provisions.

In 2015 the Law Commission released a report, Death, burial and cremation - a new law for contemporary New Zealand (Report 135), which recommended replacing the Act with a new statute to modernise the law around death, burials and cremations. Consultation on modernising the legislation was sought and a summary of submissions published by the Ministry of Health in June 2021. The timing of the new legislation is as yet unknown.

Local Government Act 2002

Under the Local Government Act, territorial authorities are required from time-to-time, to assess the provision of sanitary services, including cemeteries and crematoria. The purpose is to assess the services from a public health perspective, including the health risks to communities resulting from an absence or deficiency in the services, the quality of the services currently available and the current and estimated demands for the services.

Wellington Consolidated Bylaw 2008

The bylaw seeks to protect the public from nuisance, minimise the potential for offensive behaviour, maintain public health and safety and manage land under the control of the Council to enhance public wellbeing and enjoyment of public places. Part 5: Public Spaces contains rules about responsibilities for items and structures on cemetery plots and permissions required to do work in a cemetery.

Wellington City District Plan

The district plan is the Council’s principal regulatory document setting out objectives and policies, methods and rules for managing the city environment, land uses and associated activities. The Wellington City District Plan is prepared in accordance with the Resource Management Act 1991. The rules allow the Council to exercise control over the type of building and activity that occurs, and this control is exercised by way of the resource consent process. Cemetery activities require resource consent for minor earthworks associated with the storage and disposal of soil from burial plots.

Tawa, Karori and Mākara cemeteries are zoned Open Space B. There are no designations in place for cemetery land use. The Chapel, Shelter and Lychgate, (all located at Karori Cemetery) are listed as heritage buildings in the district plan.

Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014

As the Karori and Mākara cemeteries contain burials that predate 1900 they are archaeological sites as defined by the Pouhere Taonga Act and are therefore subject to the provisions of that Act. The Act defines an archaeological site as:

Any place in New Zealand that:

- a. Was associated with human activity in or after 1900 or is the site of the wreck of any vessel where that wreck occurred in or after 1900
- b. Provides, or may be able to provide through investigation by archaeological methods, significant evidence relating to the historical and cultural heritage of New Zealand.

The Pouhere Taonga Act also contains a consent process for anyone wishing to do work that may affect an archaeological site. Advice should be sought from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga about the legal requirements for any work that involves ground disturbance (except that associated with the normal use of the cemetery and regular maintenance).

The Karori Crematorium and Chapel are registered on the Heritage New Zealand/Rārangī Kōrero List. Being on the list doesn’t enact any specific powers of protection but is an important means of identifying significant heritage places and recording information about them.

Reserves Act 1977

As explained earlier (see 1.2.1) this management plan is not prepared under the Reserves Act. However, Tawa Cemetery is an historic reserve and it is proposed Karori Cemetery will be classified as an historic reserve once it is closed. Other areas of cemetery land that are not required for cemetery use but are to be managed for open space values may also be classified as reserve in the future. The Reserves Act requires that a management plan be prepared under the Act for reserves (other than local purpose reserves) within five years of classification. It is likely the timing will coincide with the next review of this management plan and the appropriate statutory basis for cemetery future management plans adjusted as required at that time.

Other plans and programmes

Our Living City, 2013

A project designed to improve Wellington’s quality of life by strengthening urban-nature connections and building economic opportunities from a healthy environment. The programme’s three goals are aimed at ensuring Wellington’s ‘natural capital’ is protected and enjoyed in the ways that land is used, managed and developed, transforming towards a green economy, thereby reducing environmental impacts and opening up new opportunities and leading communities and partners to participate in the green economy. Cemeteries management can contribute to these goals through carbon storage and integrating the natural environment with the developed cemetery areas.

Dog Policy (2016)

The Dog Control Act 1996 requires the Council to develop a policy on dog control. The Council’s Dog Policy is to make sure dog owners meet their obligations under the Act, make sure dogs are well cared for and Wellingtonians can enjoy owning dogs, prevent dogs causing any danger to the public, wildlife and natural habitats, actively promote responsible dog ownership and provide for the reasonable exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners. The Dog Policy is relevant as the cemeteries are popular for dog walking. Requirements for keeping dogs under control are particularly relevant given the need for a respectful atmosphere when funerals and burials are taking place.

Appendix III.
Historical context

The first burial sites in the Wellington City Council area would have been Māori urupā, associated with pā, kainga and possibly battle sites. Some are listed as significant sites to Māori. Some former urupā, such as that associated with Kumutoto Pā were destroyed when the land was developed for Pakeha settlement. Such losses are deeply felt by mana whenua. There are likely to be other urupā or individual Māori burial sites within the Wellington city boundaries but these are outside the scope of this plan. The Opau Urupā, towards the coast on Mākara Road, was opened in 2017 as part of The Treaty Settlement with Taranaki Whānui ki Te Upoko o Te Ika. The urupā is vested in the Trustees of Port Nicholson Block Settlement Trust (PNBST) as a Māori Reservation.

A number of cemeteries were established after the arrival of European settlers and there may also be isolated burials dating from the early days of colonial settlement. As well as the Council’s cemeteries there are others in the city area owned and managed by churches, such as the historic Mount Street Cemetery managed by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Wellington.

Chronology of Tawa, Karori and Mākara cemeteries

The following chronology sets out the main events in the history of the three cemeteries. More detailed information is available in:

Murray, B. and Herbert, R. (2009). *The Tawa Flat Cemetery 1861-1978*. Tawa Historical Series No 2, Tawa Historical Society Wellington.

Greig, K, Kelly, M, Cochran, C, and Aitken, A (2003). *Karori Conservation Plan, Four Decades of Conservation*, prepared for the Wellington City Council.

Code: T - Tawa Cemetery, K - Karori Cemetery, M - Mākara Cemetery

Date	Event	Code
1842	Bolton Street and Mount Street cemeteries established	
1861	Edward Gibbon Wakefield gifts a quarter acre of his land at Tawa Flat to the Church of England	T
1866	The small wooden church of St Peter’s is built at Tawa Cemetery	T
1867	Eunice Fitzherbert, an infant, is the first burial at Tawa Cemetery	T
1882	Cemeteries Act passed	
1890	Karori wins a ballot for the site of a much-needed new cemetery for Wellington. McKenzie brothers agree in principle to accept the Council’s offer for their land. The Council raises loan of £7500 for new cemetery	K
1891	McKenzie brothers and council sign sale agreement. Work completed on new road from Polhill Gully to Karori. An elegant sexton’s cottage, with unusual, pointed arch windows, is built. A public shelter is built, later named Mortuary Chapel and now named ‘Shelter’	K
August 1891	Frederick William Fish, an infant, is first burial at Karori Cemetery	K
February 1892	First regular burials at Karori. Church burials consecrated. Sexton E.A. Nash appointed	K
1892	Shelter converted into chapel	K
1902	St Peter’s Church building is moved to a site in Porirua and renamed St Anne’s	T
1903	Second public burial section opened. The first significant structure built at the cemetery was the sexton’s cottage, an elegant villa with unusual, pointed arch windows, built in 1891. It was replaced by the present cemetery office in the 1950s	K

Date	Event	Code
1909	Crematorium built to a design by John Sydney Swan. The cremator was coke-fired	K
1913	Second Church of England (Anglican) burial section opened	K
1918	World War I ends. First organised burials of soldiers in cemetery. Influenza epidemic claims hundreds of Wellingtonians and cemetery has busiest period of its history, with 63 burials on one day in November alone	K
1921	Lychgate built in Services Cemetery	K
1931	Memorial Arch built in Services Cemetery	K
1932	Sealing of main road begins. Other roads and paths progressively sealed over following decades	K
1934	A large group of unemployed workers is put to work in the cemetery. Walking track from Wilton to Karori built through cemetery land. Third public burial section opened	K
1937	Council land near the Standen Street gates set aside for cemetery purposes. Later used for Wellington’s first lawn cemetery. First columbarium constructed behind crematorium. Construction of new crematorium mooted. First Greek Orthodox burial section opened	K
1944	Mayor of Wellington, Will Appleton, announces the establishment of a lawn cemetery	K
1945	Second Catholic burial section opened	K
1947	Gray Young, Morton and Young draw up plans for new crematorium chapel, to be built above Services Cemetery	K
1948-49	Second columbarium constructed alongside old crematorium chapel	K
1950s	The present cemetery office replaces the 1891 sexton’s cottage	K
1951	Lawn cemetery at Standen Street opened	K
1953	76 victims of the Tangiwai Disaster are buried in cemetery	K
1955	Third columbarium built between road and Services Cemetery. Second Greek Orthodox burial section opened	K
1957	Tangiwai Memorial opened in cemetery	K
1959	New chapel finished but not opened until 1960	K
1960	Rose garden established near main entrance.	K
1962	Fourth columbarium built alongside main drive near Shelter	K

Date	Event	Code
March 1965	Mākara Cemetery opens for burials	M
1965	Crematorium cremators upgraded to gas-fired (and also upgraded in 1971)	K
1966	Garden of Remembrance opened alongside new crematorium	K
1972	Decision made to plant trees on cemetery slopes facing Wilton and Northland, after complaints from local residents’ association	K
1973	A peak of crematorium use is reached, with up to 14 disposals a day	K
1974	Main denominational and Roman Catholic areas closed to new plot purchasers	K
1977	Tawa Cemetery is vested in the Tawa Borough Council	T
1978	Tawa Flat Cemetery is formally closed. No further burials	T
1978	Tawa Flat Cemetery is formally closed. No further burials	T.
1984	Internationally significant stained glass windows in old crematorium chapel restored	K
1991	Cemetery centenary. Rose Garden redesigned and rebuilt. New gates installed at main entrance and Seaforth and Standen Street entrances. Open day held and Frederick William Fish’s grave, the first in the cemetery, located and restored	K
1990s	Fifth and last columbarium built alongside Rosehaugh Avenue crematorium chapel	K
1994	Permission given for ash disposal and bronze plaque mounting in rose garden	K
2001	Certification to ISO 9001 Quality Management System for the cemeteries and crematorium	K & M
2003	<i>SS Penguin</i> walk opened	K
December 2003	<i>Cemetery Management Plan, Karori and Mākara Cemeteries</i>	K & M
2008	Natural burials offered at Mākara Cemetery	M
2009	Tawa Historical Society publishes a booklet about Tawa Cemetery and works with the Council to have an on-site information board installed	T
2011	Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā area opened at Mākara	M
2020	Friends of Karori Cemetery established and a Memorandum of Understanding agreed with the Council	K

Brief history of Tawa Cemetery

Tawa Cemetery was established in 1861 when Edward Gibbon Wakefield gifted a quarter acre block of land to the Anglican Bishop of Wellington “for religious, educational and charitable purposes”.

A small wooden church, St Peter’s, was built on the site in 1866. The church became a focus in the small rural community of Tawa Flat. It was used for weddings and funerals and the first burials in the churchyard took place in 1867. The population at Tawa Flat declined in the early 1900s while the village at Porirua developed at pace. The Anglican Diocese decided to move the St Peter’s Church building. It was moved to Porirua in 1902 and renamed St Anne’s. The churchyard remained and burials continued until 1952. The cemetery was vested in the Tawa Borough Council in 1977 and closed in 1978. The cemetery now occupies 0.1 hectares and contains about 50 interments. It was made an historic reserve in 2013 under the Reserves Act 1977.

The Tawa Historical Society has devoted much time into researching the history of the cemetery, trying to trace burial records and find out about the people buried there. The society published its findings in a booklet, *The Tawa Flat Cemetery 1861-1978*. The society’s research continues and it is an advocate for the cemetery’s recognition and protection.

Brief history of Karori Cemetery

Karori Cemetery was established in 1891. A new cemetery was needed as the first of the city’s cemeteries at Bolton Street and Mount Street (Catholic) were overcrowded. The Cemeteries Act 1882 required that an old cemetery could not close without a new site opening. Karori was the most suitable of the sites considered and interments began after a new link road to the then outlying suburb was completed.

The first burial (Fred Fish) occurred in 1891, though the new cemetery was not regularly used until 1892.

The grave was unmarked for 100 years. Burials, cremations and ash interments have continued to the present day, bringing the cemetery close to full capacity.

See the chronology earlier in this appendix for important events over the cemetery’s 130-year history. A more detailed history is contained in the *Karori Conservation Plan, Four Decades of Conservation*, which is available on the Council’s website.

The 130 years of burial and cremations at Karori Cemetery has left an intricate collection of graves, memorials, mausolea, columbaria, buildings, paths and roads, trees, shrubs, gardens, fences, walls and gates spread over much of the 35.5-hectare site. This legacy is a fascinating historical record of notable and ordinary people’s lives, historical events and a changing society. In 2003, the cemetery was assessed for inclusion in the Non-Residential Heritage Buildings Inventory of the Wellington City District Plan, which required evidence of significant historic, social, aesthetic and scientific value. The cemetery met all 13 criteria, though it is not listed in the inventory. The assessment can be found in the 2003 conservation plan mentioned above.

A number of buildings and structures at the cemetery have been recognised for their heritage value in both the Heritage New Zealand/Rārangī Kōrero List and the heritage schedule of the Wellington City Council’s District Plan. The Shelter is listed as a Category 2 historic place.²¹ It was originally built in 1891 as an open shelter for mourners and was later closed in. It has been known variously as the Shelter, the Mortuary Chapel and, for a period, as the Jewish Chapel when the Jewish community used and maintained it. The Crematorium and Chapel building is a Category 1 Historic Place.²² Built in 1909, it was designed by noted Wellington architect John Sydney Swan. It was the first of the major city crematorium facilities in New Zealand and one of the earliest in the southern hemisphere. Six chapel windows are particularly valued. They were replaced between 1914

and 1939 with stained glass designed and made in the An Tur Gloine (Tower of Glass) factory in Dublin. The Lychgate is a Category 2 Historic Place.²³ It was built in 1921 as a memorial to World War I soldiers and was intended to be a shelter and an entrance to the armed services’ section of the cemetery.

Within Karori Cemetery there are many historically significant memorials and gravesites including people involved in Shackleton’s expedition, the *SS Penguin* sinking, victims of the 1918 influenza epidemic and victims of the Tangiwai disaster. Four previous prime ministers and many of Wellington’s past mayors are buried within the cemetery. The cemetery is also a valuable record of Wellington’s citizens, the people who collectively contributed to the city’s history through their everyday lives.

In a brief survey carried out in mid-2020 for this plan, 70 percent of respondents who had visited Karori Cemetery reported a positive experience even though there was also concern about the deteriorating state of the graves and difficulty with wayfinding. Respondents noted the sense of a unique experience:

“It feels like you enter into another world”
“You can feel the history.”²⁴

Brief history of Mākara Cemetery

In 1940 the Board of Health, under the Health Act 1920, required the provision of a cemetery for Wellington due to the diminishing number of plots available at Karori Cemetery for pre-purchase. The Cemeteries Act 1908 prohibited the establishment of a cemetery within any borough or town district. The Council of the time selected Mākara as the new site. The selection was finalised in 1946 and the land was purchased under the Public Works Act in two blocks, in 1951 and 1955. The first burial occurred in 1965. At the time 1000 unpurchased plots still remained at Karori Cemetery.

After the cemetery opened there was concern that Mākara’s perceived inaccessibility was a factor in demand for cremation at Karori Cemetery. When commenting on the state of Mākara Road, the Evening Post (4 February 1965) stated: “A likely result is an increase in the number of cremations”. Already, 75 percent of people who could possibly be cremated (some faiths do not believe in cremation) were being cremated at this time.

Mākara Cemetery was developed as a lawn cemetery from the start. Headstones or plaques would mark the head of the graves and the remaining part of each grave would be maintained in communal lawn. It was a very different aesthetic from the traditional full-length concrete or enclosed graves typical of Wellington’s older cemeteries. The Council had already established a lawn cemetery area in a corner of Karori Cemetery in 1951, apparently modelled on the Arlington Cemetery in the United States.²⁵ The style of cemetery had originated in 1855, in the design of the Springvale Cemetery in Cincinnati.²⁶ What became known as the ‘landscape-lawn cemetery movement’ was driven by a conscious desire for a less cluttered cemetery landscape. It also addressed the inevitable maintenance problems associated with inconsistent construction and maintenance standards of family-owned plots. Another feature of this style adopted at Mākara was to highly control and standardise the design of monuments. The relative uniformity of headstones and plaques at the cemetery is a notable feature.

By 2003, when the last management plan was written, the cemetery was well established and estimated one third full, with 79,300 interments. The overall layout, roading and vegetation pattern seen today was largely in place. Yet the cemetery was perceived somewhat negatively. The management plan stated that “the land is considered to be bleak and windswept and not a pleasant setting for interments” and that “the Mākara road still presents an obstacle to use of this cemetery.”

21 Heritage New Zealand/Rārangī Kōrero List No. 1362
22 Heritage New Zealand/Rārangī Kōrero List No. 1399
23 Heritage New Zealand/Rārangī Kōrero List List No. 1400
24 Comments from Wellington City Council Let’s Talk Survey conducted in July/August 2020 for the Cemeteries Management Plan review
25 Karori Cemetery Conservation Plan 2003
26 The original model of this type of design at the Bellefontaine Cemetery. The lawn cemetery concept originated in 1855 at Spring Grove so was not new when adopted at Mākara

The 2003 plan noted that beautification would need to be an ongoing activity. It proposed development that would maintain the cemetery’s “formal and manicured nature” with the exception of the bush areas which would provide a natural bush contrast to the lawn areas. A landscape concept plan proposed planting” fingers of native revegetation” to create a series of more sheltered “rooms”, sculptures at focal points and walking tracks. It would create a “heart” with a range of facilities including a new office and car parking, a formal and plaque garden, public toilets, a pergola and more sculptures. The concepts were only partly implemented as aspects were later found to be impractical.

However, other developments did occur. In 2008, after a long period of negotiation with the Natural Burials organisation, an area was set aside for natural burials - the first in New Zealand. In the last decade, new solar-powered public toilets have been built, the Greek Orthodox community built a chapel and in 2017, the Ngā Iwi o Te Motu Urupā was opened for Māori burials.

In a brief survey carried out in mid-2020 for this plan, 58 percent of those who had visited Mākara Cemetery reported a positive experience even though some felt it was still windswept and needed more trees. A respondent noted the following:

“Peaceful, beautiful surroundings, interesting cultural diversity”²⁷

27 Comment from Wellington City Council Let’s Talk Survey conducted in July/August 2020 for the Cemeteries Management Plan review
28 Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand, Best Practice Guidelines page on www.cemeteries.org.nz/best.php

Appendix IV. Maintenance and repair philosophy for graves and monuments

The new maintenance and repair guidelines for graves and monuments will be based on the over-riding principle of doing the minimum required. This is the best guarantee of retaining the authenticity of each grave. In the words of the Historic Cemeteries Conservation Trust of New Zealand, “Do as much as necessary, and as little as possible”.²⁸

The new guidelines will draw on the following approach taken at Bolton Street Cemetery to date but that approach will be reviewed and updated as required. For example, more guidance on conserving timber gravesite structures is needed.

- Philosophy
- In increasing levels of intervention, conservation work may involve:
- Doing nothing
 - Cleaning, weeding, general maintenance etc
 - Stabilising
 - Repairing
 - Restoring
 - Reconstructing.

Generally, while most graves will require, at one time or another, cleaning and general maintenance, work of a higher level of intervention should be carefully rationed.

Doing nothing

This is appropriate for graves in a stable but weathered condition and in some cases for graves that have decayed to such an extent that repair is no longer feasible. This fits the ethos of a closed cemetery, where graves will slowly weather and age. The patina of age, weathered surfaces and the evidence of slow change over time are aesthetic qualities that contribute significantly to the importance of the cemetery. This should remain an option given the financial constraints of cleaning and maintaining graves as identified in the next option.

Cleaning, weeding, general maintenance

If graves are to have a long life, some basic and regular maintenance is essential. A well-maintained grave will survive the detrimental effects of weathering and time better than one that is not maintained. Maintenance should be carried out on a planned basis. Methods should be as benign as possible, minimise any change to heritage fabric, and in particular should aim to preserve the patina of age.

Stabilising

Graves should be stabilised where they are at risk of collapse. Such work involves preventing things from getting worse by propping, building a new foundation or tying elements together.

- Repairing
- Repair involves putting things back as they were; not to as new, but to a secure, tidy state where all elements are in good condition and stable for their age. Where it is decided that repair should be carried out, several principles apply:
- Repair rather than replace
 - Repair in compatible materials
 - Use traditional techniques as guidelines
 - Ensure new work is identifiable and can be reversed
 - Identify cause of failure.

Restoring

Restoration of lost features should be carried out only if there is clear evidence of the original form and detail. Restoration would be carried out only in special circumstances, such as the grave of an important person, or a grave that has (or had before being damaged) particular aesthetic significance.

Reconstructing

Reconstruction implies the more-or-less complete rebuilding of a grave, using some extant parts but incorporating a significant amount of new material. As for restoration, it should only be attempted if there is clear evidence of the original form and detail, and only in very special circumstances where, for example, a grave of historic or aesthetic value was badly damaged by a falling tree, landslide or vandalism.

Appendix V.
Categories of graves
at Karori Cemetery

- **Standard graves**
A remarkable feature of Karori Cemetery is the consistent form of the standard grave over time: a plain rectangular masonry structure finished with a fine-grained plaster. For instance, graves dating from the 1890s and graves of the 1930s are remarkably similar. In contrast, the headstones vary enormously in shape, detailing and, in some cases, materials. Overall, the style of graves demonstrates the passage of time, taste and funerary fashion. Late Victorian and Edwardian structures were more elaborate. In latter times the trend was towards the more austere and unadorned.
- **Vaults**
There are 24 of these distinctive structures in the cemetery, built as small, often ornate plastered concrete buildings to contain coffins or ashes.
- **Services graves**
The Services Cemetery is quite distinct in character from the rest of the cemetery. Identical headstones are arranged in concentric circles (World War I) or in serried rows (World War II) on concrete beams in a lawn setting.
- **Columbaria**
There are five columbaria, or walls with niches containing ashes. They are located variously in the Services Cemetery, on the main drive and near the crematorium and chapel.
- **Lawn cemetery graves**
This area is located in the northwest corner of the cemetery. Within the lawn, parallel concrete beams are laid, with regularly placed bronze plaques set flush with the concrete. It was opened in 1951 and has a very different character to the rest of cemetery.

- **Special graves**
These don’t fit the other categories and are individually distinctive. Examples include the memorial grave of Prime Minister Peter Fraser and the special memorial that marks the mass grave of those who perished in the Tangiwai rail disaster in 1953.
- **Unmarked and pauper’s graves**
A large number of graves have never been marked. These include those of children buried between plots or of paupers. Some can be located and those buried identified from cemetery records. Other graves are so badly decayed that only fragments remain.
- **Wooden features**
Some wooden grave markers and other wooden features, such as gravesite fences, have been recently found.
- **Memorial garden ash plots**
Ash plots in the Seaforth Memorial Garden and the rose garden on the main drive are placed in gardens maintained by cemetery staff and identified with plaques.
- **Memorials**
Though not graves, there are two memorials that deserve mention. The Servicemen’s Arch in the Services Cemetery (Arch is owned by MCH) commemorates those soldiers from the Wellington province who died in both world wars. Another memorial in the far north of the cemetery commemorates stillborn children.

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