

Summary of consultation on proposed coastal reserve classifications 2025

Introduction

Public consultation on proposed classifications under the Reserves Act 1977 of 21 land parcels (sites) in the Council's coastal reserves was held from 23rd June to 5th August 2025. The consultation ran in parallel with separate consultation on the closely related *Draft Tātou ki Uta – Coastal Reserves Management Plan* (Draft Management Plan).

This document summarises the results of the consultation on the revised proposal. Feedback was received from 40 respondents: 34 through a survey, 4 through written submissions and 2 comments from submissions on the Draft Management Plan were also considered.

The survey asked two questions, as follows.

Question 1. Approach to classifying our coastal reserves

“The consultation document explains our general approach to classifying the coastal reserves that reflects the key characteristics of the coastal landscape. On the shore platform (generally on the seaward side of the coastal road) we mainly recommend recreation reserve as these are highly used and highly modified areas. On the coastal escarpment (cliffs) and headlands we recommend mainly historic or scenic reserve to reflect the natural and cultural/historic values of those areas.”

Question 2: Classification or reclassification proposals

“We have proposed to classify or reclassify 21 coastal reserve sites as one of the following four classifications. Refer to the consultation document for the list of relevant reserves.

- **Recreation reserve:** where people can enjoy recreational and sporting activities, particularly outdoor activities, and the natural environment is protected.
- **Historic reserve:** where cultural and historic places and features are protected, and the natural environment is protected.
- **Scenic reserve:** where natural landscapes or other scenic areas are protected for public use and enjoyment.
- **Local purpose reserve:** set aside for a specified local purpose such as esplanade reserve or a community hall.”

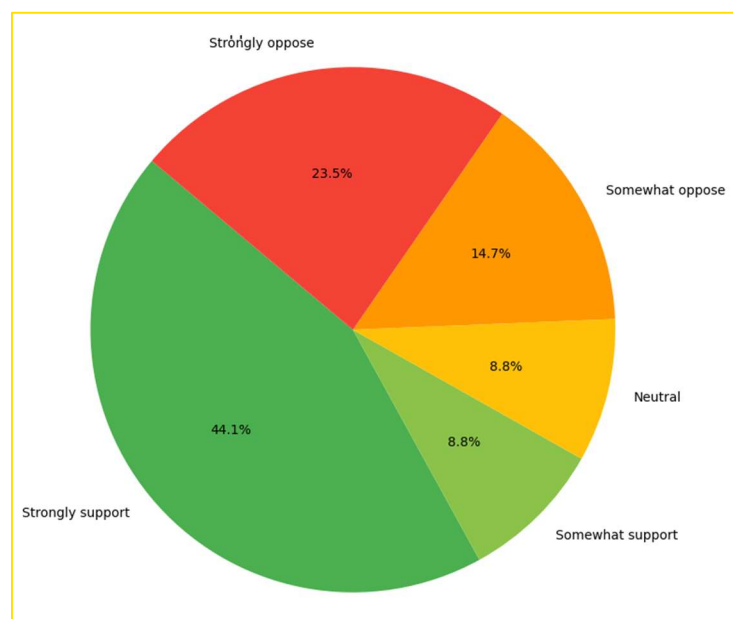
Please provide your feedback on any of the proposed classifications, taking care to identify the relevant reserve name with each comment.

Summary

Approach to classification

All of the 34 online survey respondents answered Question 1, with a majority of 21 in support or neutral and 13 somewhat or strongly opposed.

There was a correlation between those who were strongly or somewhat opposed and those whose comments indicated opposition to proposals in the Draft Plan to limit vehicle access on the Te Kopahou / Red Rocks coastal road or opposed government regulation in general.



All the written comments in answer to both questions are summarised below.

Comments not specific to any proposed classification site	
Comments	Officer response
General Support for Proposed Classifications Support for the Council's approach, clarity of rationale, emphasis on cultural values and urban scenic reserves, integrating historical context into planning. <i>Submission no's: 1, 2, 3, 5, 20, 21, 24, 39, 40</i>	No change recommended.
Environmental Protection General concern about ensuring habitat protection in modified areas. Concern about the effects of unsupervised dogs on wildlife, with calls for better education, regulation and limiting dog access in sensitive areas. If areas along the coastal strip are to be classified recreation reserve, as proposed, then the proposed Coastal Reserves Management Plan must outline how the natural values in the proposed recreation reserves can be managed alongside recreational activities. <i>Submission no's: 1, 7, 8, 16, 20, 24, 31, 39</i>	All the proposed types of classification provide for the protection of natural and landscape values as either primary or secondary purposes, or both. This includes Recreation Reserves, which submitters expressed particular concern about: - the primary purpose defined in the Reserves Act includes "... the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside". The Draft Management Plan recognises the importance of natural values and emphasises the need to protect and enhance those values when managing the coastal reserves. This includes the following pathways: - enduring connection to the landscape, protection and restoration of coastal ecosystems, and a nature-first approach to resilience. No change recommended.
Significant Natural Areas and Reserves Act The consultation document was unclear about how the reserve classification related to the Significant Natural Area (SNA) sites in the draft district plan. The consultation document suggests the seaward side of the road is highly modified yet there are many SNAs in that area – how can that be? <i>Submission no: 20</i>	The district plan identifies SNAs for protection under the RMA. Classification under the Reserves Act provides for the preservation, enhancement and management of natural values within reserve land. The two statutes are complementary. The SNAs are remnants of former habitats and ecosystems, often depleted and fragmented but significant because they are rare vestiges, containing in some cases threatened species. The depletion and degradation of the SNA's has occurred as a result of the high degree of modification that has occurred to the environment on the seaward side of the road. Agree this could have been explained more clearly but no change recommended.
Marine conservation Advocates for protecting the marine environment, concern about depleted marine life, and recommendation to support kelp research. Call for more marine reservations. <i>Submission no: 7</i>	Council does not have jurisdiction over the marine area and the Marine Reserves Act 1871 is administered by the Department of Conservation. The Draft Management Plan provides for the coastal reserves to be managed to minimise impacts on the marine area. No change recommended.
Vehicle access: Red Rocks Pariwhero, Wahine Park Strong opposition to closing vehicle access and impact it would have on recreational and cultural activities, including food gathering. Suggestion about using stronger penalties instead to reduce poaching activities. <i>Submission no's: 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 32</i>	It appears that these submissions relate to an action in the Draft Management Plan (1.4 (3)) to investigate changing the status of the coastal road beyond the Te Kopahou visitors' centre to reserve under the Reserves Act and to better manage vehicle access at Wahine Reserve (near Moa Point). These submissions are unrelated to the classifications actually proposed but will be considered separately with submissions on the Draft Management Plan. No change recommended.
Call for new classes of reserve The classification system should include specific categories for Māori cultural values and environmental	The classification options available to the Council are limited by the Reserves Act 1977, which provides for just seven types of reserve: recreation, historic, scenic, nature, scientific,

value, as their importance is diminished under the existing categories. Disagrees with the emphasis in the Reserves Act on scenic reserve being for public use and enjoyment as natural values shouldn't be superseded by recreation. <i>Submission no's: 8, 12, 20</i>	government purpose and local purpose. A law change would be required to introduce other types of reserve. (Note: the nature and scientific reserve classifications are very specific and not suited to the urban context in Wellington.) However, the Act provides for recognition and protection of cultural and environmental values within the existing classifications, and the Council aims to do that through the policies in the related management plan. • No change recommended.
Local purpose reserve Asks if local purpose reserve could be merged into scenic reserve and what significance local purpose has for it to be independent. <i>Submission no: 24</i>	Local purpose reserves provide for situations where the other classifications are not appropriate to the primary purpose intended for the land and/or where it is useful for future management to be focused on the very specific use named in the classification. e.g. scenic reserve classification was considered too broad for the proposed local purpose Greta Point Kororā Reserve where very targeted management for a specialised use on a very small site is required. • No change called for or recommended.
Public Works Act Some of the reserves were taken under the Public Works Act and are no longer required for the purpose for which they were taken. They should be offered to their original owners before being turned into reserves. If the original owners do not want to purchase them, they should be made available for treaty settlement. <i>Submission no: 25</i>	Further work is needed to clarify the situation in regard to the Public Works Act and land parcels at three of the proposed classification sites, which are: Site 1, the Sirens Rocks; Site 16 Buckley Road reserves, Site 12 Moa Point addition to Rangitatau Reserve; and Site 17 Hermit's Cave. • Recommend delaying the classification process while additional due diligence is done and then come back to Council with recommendations.
Opposition to Government Regulation General opposition to increased regulation and perceived government overreach. <i>Submission no's: 28, 30</i>	The Council is bound by its statutory obligations to classify the land it holds as public reserve land under the Reserves Act and to manage that land for the benefit of the public. • No change recommended.
Commercial services Concerned that the classifications, particularly scenic and local purpose, may unintentionally restrict commercial services like mobile saunas and requests Council to make sure the classifications will allow for such use. We request that the classification of land in these areas explicitly or implicitly support low-impact, mobile wellness offerings where community value is demonstrated, environmental risk is minimal, and tikanga is respected. We strongly support a classification process that is future-facing, not just protecting today's uses but allowing for innovation, climate-conscious services, and inclusive, small-scale public wellness options. <i>Submission no: 36</i>	All four of the proposed types of reserve classification allow for leases or licences to be issued for commercial uses. Mobile sauna use has already been allowed via permit at Cog Park and Worser Bay. • No change recommended.

Site-specific comments about classification	
Sites 1 & 2: The Sirens Rocks, and Te Raekaihau Point, Princess Bay, and Dorrie Leslie Park (South).	Parts of these sites are identified in the Wellington City 2024 District Plan as being of high coastal natural character, based in part on geological values associated with the shore platform,

Disagrees with the proposed recreation reserve classification and proposes they be instead classified scenic reserve (b) because of their significant landscape and geological value. Submitter <i>no</i>: 39	including a feature of regional significance, and high human experiential values. Both sites also include areas of carparking and, at Site 1, a boat ramp not included in the natural character overlay. Scenic Reserve (b) classification can be suitable for modified areas, as it provides for development and planting of areas that will become of scenic interest or beauty, however, both sites are very popular and will continue to come under pressure for recreational use. On balance, the primary purpose will be on managing that pressure, which fits better with S.17 (Recreation Reserves). S.17 provides for “the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public” and also for “the protection of the natural environment and beauty.” The draft coastal reserves management plan emphasises protection of the coast’s natural and landscape values. The geological and landscape values will be further protected through the 2024 district plan’s natural open space zoning and high coastal natural character overlay. • No change recommended.
Sites 12, 13, 14 & 15: Proposed Historic Reserves Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga supports reclassification of several reserves as historic reserves, including, Rangitatau Historic Reserve, which is included twice on the New Zealand Heritage List – Rārangī Kōrero. 6158 Rangitatau Historic Place and 9648 Rangitatau Wahi Tapu Area. There are many recorded archaeological sites and is significant in having rich historical and cultural values to mana whenua. Supports the additions to Rangitatau Historic Reserve too. Submitter <i>no</i>: 35	This submission relates to the proposed reclassification of Sites 13 (Rangitatau Historic Reserve, Bowe Street addition), 14 (Rangitatau Historic Reserve, Sidlaw Street addition) and 15 (Overton Park), and the classification of Site 12 (Rangitatau Historic Reserve, Moa Point addition) . – all as historic reserve. • In support so no change recommended.
Site 5, Lyall Bay Beach Supports the Lyall Bay recreation reserve classification but concerned that protection of the sand dune restoration project should continue. Submission <i>no</i>’s: 37, 38	The Draft Management Plan includes proposals to continue protecting and restoring the sand dunes. • In support of the proposed classification so no change recommended.
Site 8, Worser Bay Beach Reserve Support for the recreation reserve classification. Submission <i>no</i>: 38	• No change recommended.
Request Evans Bay Marina to be classified Calls for the Evans Bay precinct to be classified as Recreation Reserve in recognition of the yachting activities based there and not left unclassified. Also suggests that the 100-year-old Evans Bay Yacht Club clubhouse be classified historic reserve. Submission <i>no</i>: 9	The Evans Bay Marina area was not included in the notified classification proposals as the Draft Management Plan proposes to manage the area as a water sports hub, develop a master plan and investigate alternative operating models for the marina. Reserve classification could have implications for possible outcomes so the land will continue to be held as reserve under the Local Government Act for now. • No change recommended.