

Waikura
Linwood-Central-Heathcote Community Board
MINUTES ATTACHMENTS

Date: Wednesday 4 May 2022
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: Audio/Visual Link

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Te Awa Kura/Barnett Park Regreening Group Newsletter, January 2022

The larger, upper part of Barnett Park above the dog exercise area has rested untended since the 2010/11, when earthquakes brought down parts of the bluffs on both sides of the valley and left other parts of them unstable.

Restrictions on access have not stopped walkers and joggers but have curtailed maintenance work. By the beginning of 2021 there was a heavy weed infestation preventing the slow regeneration of native species. A large possum population had established and regular visits by sheep had held back any modest natural regeneration.



Early in 2020 a group of us came together and started to give the valley some long overdue TLC. This little newsletter reports on some of that activity, outlines a programme for this year and invites your support for delivering on it.

What we have done?

A big achievement has been to bring the park and its management needs onto the agenda for the attention and active involvement of the Redcliffs community and the Council Ranger team.

We located a 1992 Management Plan for the Park formally prepared under the provisions of the Reserves Act which is relevant enough still to form the basis of ongoing work.

We met with the Ranger team and agreed some boundaries and guidelines for working near the bluffs. We were assigned a ranger contact Alison Evans based at Duvauchelle. She's a biodiversity specialist so a great match for our project.

The Redcliffs Residents Association has accepted the Te Awa Kura group as an 'operational arm' and Secretary Pat sorted all the formal paperwork with the Council to allow volunteers to work in the park safely and effectively in what is a difficult and locally, potentially hazardous, setting.

We ran Wednesday and Sunday working bees and community volunteer hours exceed 500 in weed control, predator control and ecological survey; read more below.

Council Rangers have become more active in rockfall risk mitigation and track reinstatement planning, ecological surveying, weed control, and planting.

Plans for this year include holding an afternoon or evening workshop to invite community input into planning and delivery of the greening project.

We started a weeding programme to remove boneseed, banana passionfruit and pigs ear in particular.

These three weeds are widespread across the valley, and each restrict the regrowth of particular ecological assemblage. The boneseed (saltbush) is well entrenched with nearly full size trees with thigh thick trunks.



Access to the centre of the valley was needed and was created with a narrow, cleared path through to below the main cave. Guidance on methods was sought from other community weeding groups and Rangers and a successful start was made following safety briefings, and guidance on plant identification and safe use of herbicides.

Slow progress and the enormity of the challenge led to a redesign of the programme to focus hard on boneseed during its 16 weeks of flowering and the majority of the community hours noted above were spent clearing about six hectares, a huge achievement for which **Sue Cooke**, in particular, needs acknowledgement.

In December Rangers arranged for ten Jobs For Nature workers to start on systematic banana passionfruit removal. Very hot weather, slow work and lots of passion fruit underscored the size of that job.

Plans for the year include another boneseed blitz in July through September 2020 and banana passionfruit work ongoing when the days get a bit cooler. And seeking specialist volunteers and/or funds to pay contractors for passionfruit removal.

Predator control programmes are underway

Commencing in the bush beside the playing fields a baseline was established to monitor predator species and numbers. We identified mostly possums and hedgehogs but a few rats as well. Traps were set and the initial haul was 8 rats, 3 mice, 6 hedgehogs and 2 possums caught and reported on the [Predator Free Port Hills website](#). Traplines have now been extended.



Following Redcliffs Residents Association (RRA) success with **fund raising a quantity of superior possum traps** have been purchased and have now been set in several locations depending on the type of trap, some on traplines within the park, some in private property on the boundaries of the Park.

A parallel programme on the near edges of the Park (Moncks Spur Road, Bay View Road) is being supported by the RRA along with the establishment of a trap library. A stock of traps has been purchased for buying or borrowing by locals when they have a pest problem and to encourage backyard trapping.

All traps used in the Park and available from the [RRA](#) via [Predator Free Redcliffs](#) dispatch pests humanely within CCC guidelines and no poison baits are used.

Assisted by volunteer spotters the Rangers have finally removed all the sheep from the valley but **any new escapees should be advised to the Council please.**

Plans for the year are to intensify trapping and include stoat traps as well.

Ecological survey

Joint inspections by our ecologist and the Ranger ecologist have identified a wide variety of native plant species including the sweet-smelling native jasmine (*Parsonsia heterophylla*), kawakawa (*Piper excelsum*), broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*) and *Coprosma virescens* and a few that are rare in the Port Hills area such as bamboo grass (*Microleaena polynoda*). ***The importance of fighting back the weeds and nurturing seedling growth is strongly endorsed by these findings.***

Muehlenbeckia or Pohuehue is widespread doing a great job as nature's 'band aid' in Barnett Park. It stabilizes disturbed and scarred areas and protects bush edges from winds and drying heat. Pohuehue is also an important host for a variety of moths and insects which are a significant food source for many native species of birds and lizards that we hope to attract back.

Locations suitable for additional plantings to extend/consolidate existing small 'patches' of established vegetation have been identified and ground preparation for planting will be undertaken over autumn before the planting season, commencing May.

Gecko and skink lizards are present in the rocky areas and will be studied by Ranger specialists over the summer. This work is a necessary prelude to track remediation work that requires bringing down loose rocks from the bluffs some of which will inevitably land on or near lizard habitat.

Plans for the year are to complete a plant species list and support the planting of new eco-sourced native seedlings.

Plantings

Ranger Di sourced 800 eco-sourced seedlings (including kowhai, pittosporum and flax) and organised the site preparation and planting on the west side of the dog exercise area near the poplar tree margin to the sports ground. Local Redcliffs folks invited through various communication channels joined this effort.



The meticulous preparation, planting guidance and subsequent release weeding have resulted in a very high survival rate and good growth at the time of writing. Vigorous grass growth has shaded the seedlings through the heat of the summer and will be cleared on a working bee on February 19 - diary it now.

Three hundred seedlings have been secured for planting in the early winter in the locations identified by the ecologists. The planting experience from the earlier planting will be followed.

Plans for this year include working bees to clear planting sites using grubbers.

Track repair

The Rangers have budget available for expenditure this financial year to reinstate the track on the east side of the upper valley to the main cave but not beyond it. This requires specialist contractors to identify and make safe loose rocks in the bluffs and slopes above the track, careful and expensive work that is presently on hold awaiting Department of Conservation approval under the Wildlife Act to damage wildlife habitat.

When the area has been made safe the track itself will be cleared and improved as far as the main cave.

Plans for this year are to support the Ranger team in this work and in particular a review of the risk assessment used and lobby Councillors for additional budget to extend the work next financial year into the west side of the valley.

Community involvement

We started this work without publicity or announcements to build and test our own resources and help ensure we could deliver the organisation and leadership to make it work. Our biggest challenge to date and into the future is to find activity leaders, people who can organise a small group to make progress on initiatives within the framework of the overall plan following the guidance and controls needed for safe and effective working conditions.

Looking to partnerships and the future we have introduced a group of Year 7 learners at Redcliffs School to the project and under careful supervision and guidance a group have started weeding a section of the park that they can adopt and follow through the years. Planting and predator control is on their agenda for this year.

Plans for the year are to identify and support individuals who want to lead small groups to tackle weeding, planting and plant monitoring ???? other/more.

Fundraising and spending

We have been successful in winning \$8900 from the CCC Sustainability Fund for specified expenditure on health and safety training (chain saw use), pest control, weeding (strong herbicide, tools), planting (seedlings, net surrounds), with reporting against these activities, community involvement and carbon dioxide sequestration. This money is held and administered by the RRA and a small number of quality weeding tools and equipment for use of the Redcliffs School learners is at the top of the list.

Predator Free Redcliffs were also glad to receive \$3000 as a grant from the Sumner Ferrymead Foundation for predator control in Barnett Park.

Plans for this year are to raise money for contract workers to do further banana passionfruit weeding and ...????

Best wishes for 2022, Come and Join us

Cynthia, Sue, Pat, Josie, Alan, Rosemary, Ruth, Martin and Martin

Follow us on Facebook [#teawakurabarnettpark](https://www.facebook.com/teawakurabarnettpark)



Recovering Barnett Park

Redcliffs residents leading pest and weed
control, replanting and

Te Awa Kura – Regreening Barnett Park

- A provisional name awaiting mana whenua engagement
- Work under the wing of Redcliffs Residents Association pro tem
- A signed volunteer agreement with Council
- Assigned a CCC Ranger contact – Alison Evans
- Secured \$8000 from CCC Sustainability Fund
- Hundreds of volunteer hours invested in removing boneseed, banana passionfruit and elder
- Supported by Predator Free Redcliffs
- Preparing ground for autumn planting of eco-sourced seedlings

Understanding the valley's potential

- Current activities are sports grounds, dog exercise, walking, rock climbing.
- Restrictions on track use due post-earthquake instability, but action at last
- A range of ecological niches, wet, dry, fertile, rocky
- Gecko and skink lizards present and regionally rare butterfly
- Potentially 'sea to summit' habitat and corridor - wetland in valley floor to tussock uplands

Ecological survey

Joint inspections by our ecologist and the Ranger ecologist have identified a wide variety of native plant species including:

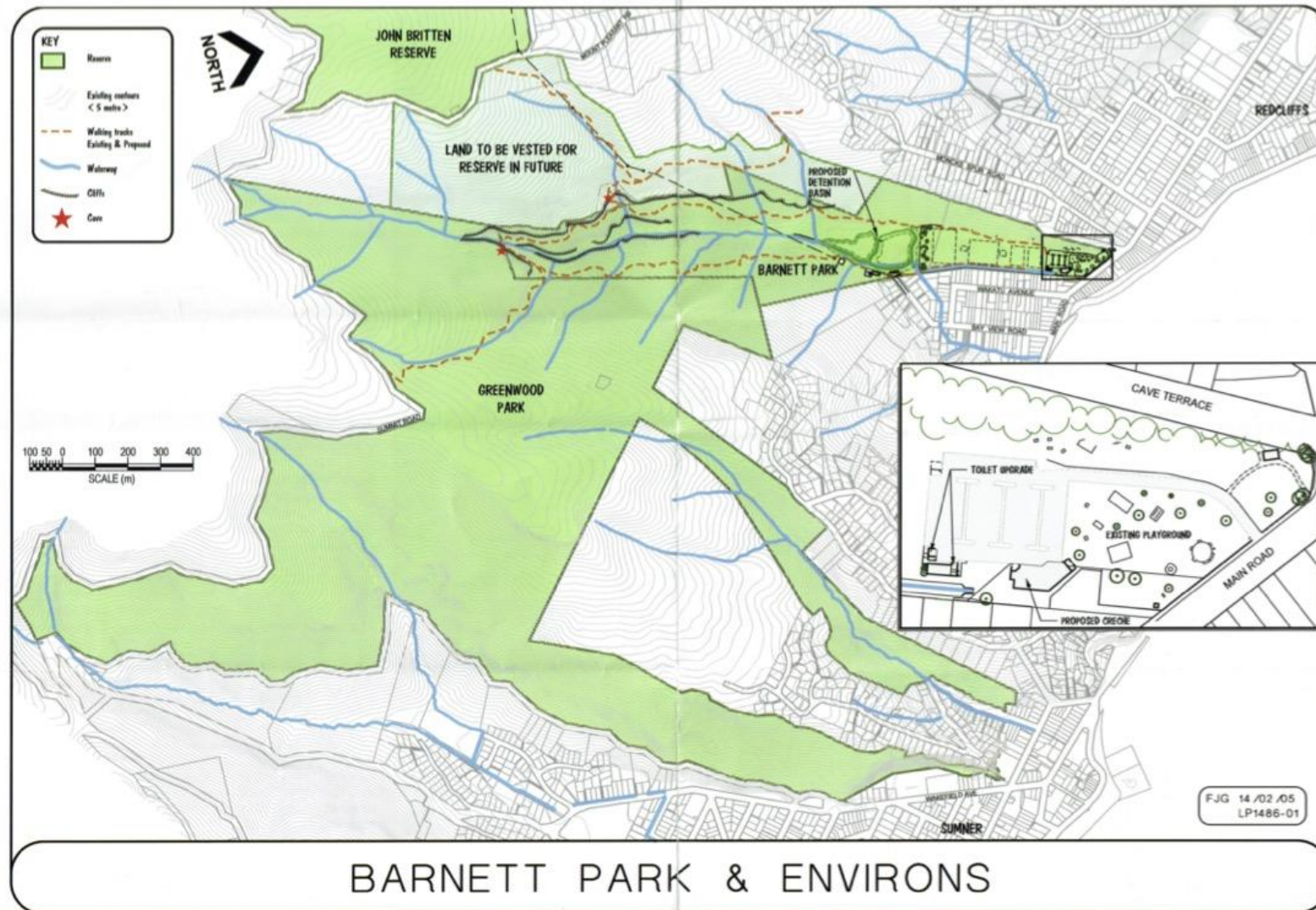
- the sweet-smelling native jasmine (*Parsonsia heterophylla*),
- kawakawa (*Piper excelsum*),
- broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*)
- *Coprosma virescens*
- mahoe
- bamboo grass (*Microleaena polynoda*) which is rare in the Port Hills area

Muehlenbeckia or Pohuehue is widespread doing a great job stabilizing disturbed and scarred areas and protects bush edges from winds and drying heat.

Pohuehue is also an important host for a variety of moths and insects which are a significant food source for many native species of birds and lizards

In 2005 the City Council invited public comment to develop and extend Barnett Park





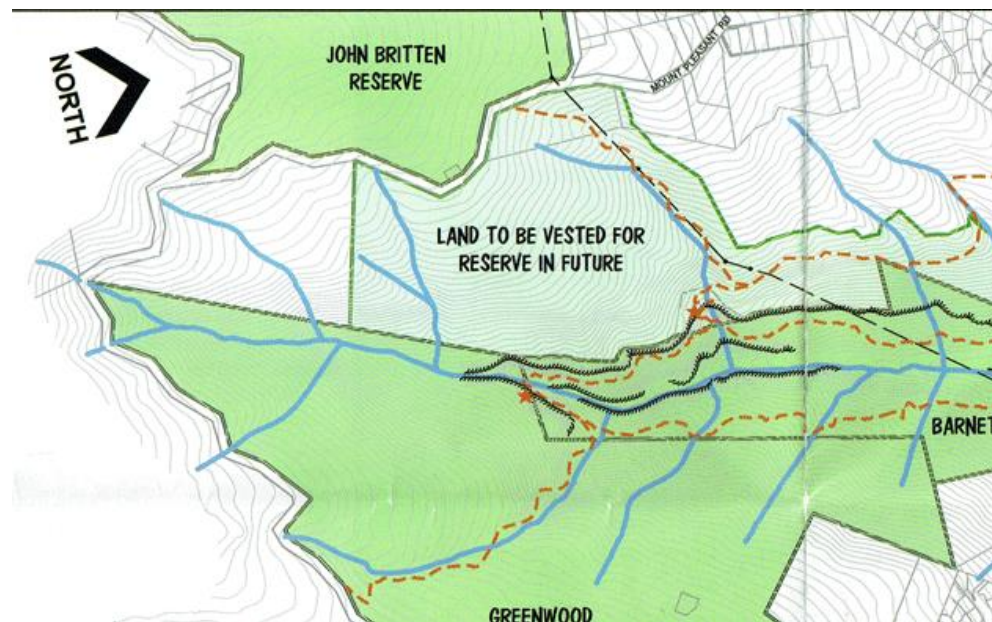
“New reserves are being acquired linking Barnett Park to the wider Port Hills network.”

New Reserves & Walkways

New reserves are being acquired linking Barnett Park to the wider Port Hills network. Greenwood Park is a new large regional park to the southeast of Barnett Park. Reserve land will also be acquired in the future between Barnett Park and John Britten Reserve. It is intended to graze stock where appropriate on these reserves to manage weeds and the fire risk. Ongoing weed and pest control is proposed along with revegetation of the gullies as funding allows. To encourage walkers two new tracks are proposed as shown overleaf providing access from Barnett Park to Mount Pleasant and Summit Roads.

Your views on the proposed track locations are now sought.

The extended park is shown



“Council has approved the construction of a flood detention basin in Barnett Park

Flood Detention Basin

Council has approved the construction of a flood detention basin in Barnett Park to both mitigate stormwater runoff and control flooding from new residential development and from the rural headwaters within the Barnett Park catchment.

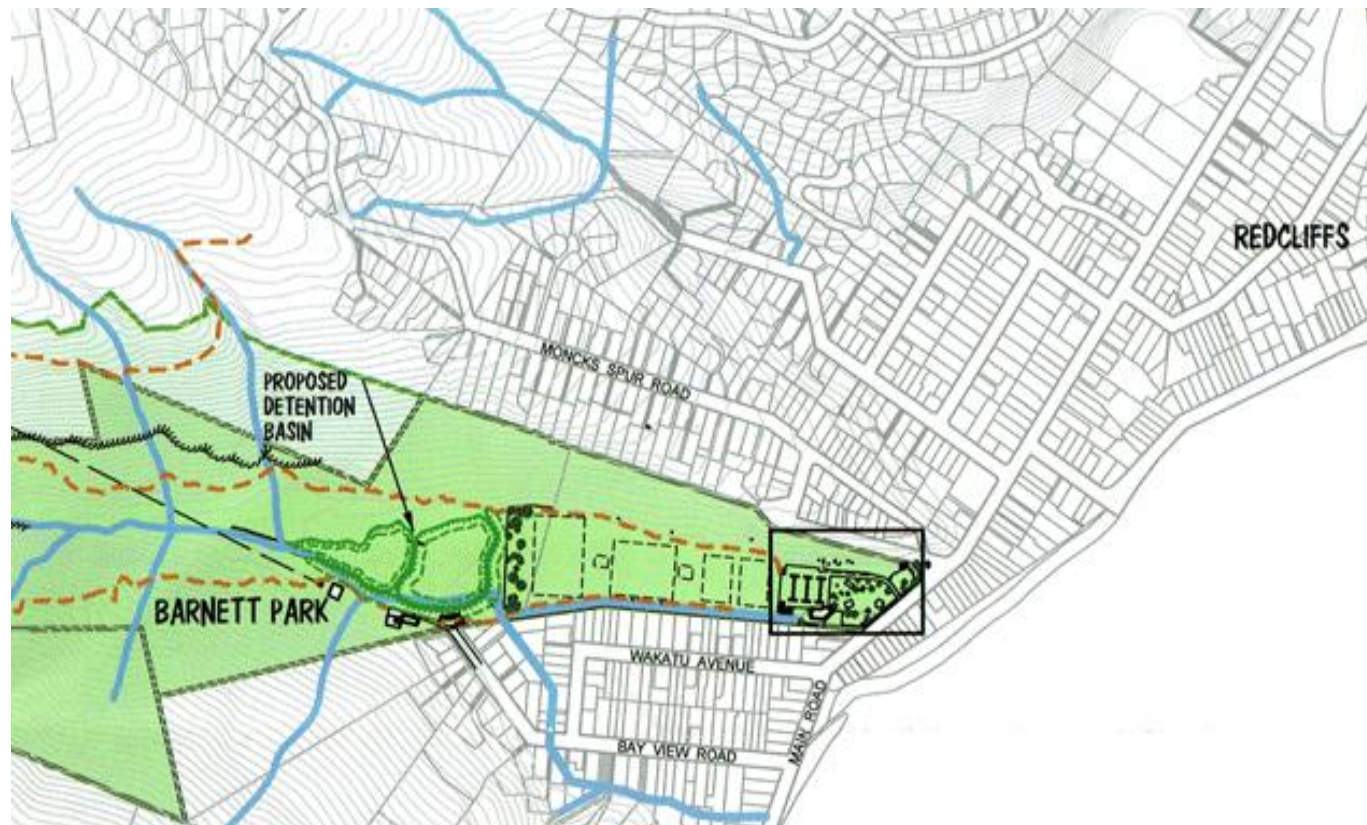
There is a history of drain overflows and associated flooding during storm events and/or very high tides. In the October 2000 storm flood water was reported in 8 homes and 24 garages. Many improvements have been made to the stormwater system since then. Following the Environment Court's approval of up to 100 new residential properties on hill land within the Barnett Park catchment, it is necessary to further improve the stormwater system.

Council has consulted with the local community and potential developers of land within the Barnett Park catchment area and agree that the best way to do this, is by creating a flood detention basin in Barnett Park. Features of the basin could include:

- A twin compartment water quality/flood detention basin system
- A small permanent pond for water birds
- Planting of native or exotic grasses, shrubs and trees along the Rifle Range stream and around the pond
- A flat recreation area within a normally dry compartment of the basin

Your views on the design features of the flood detention basin are now sought.

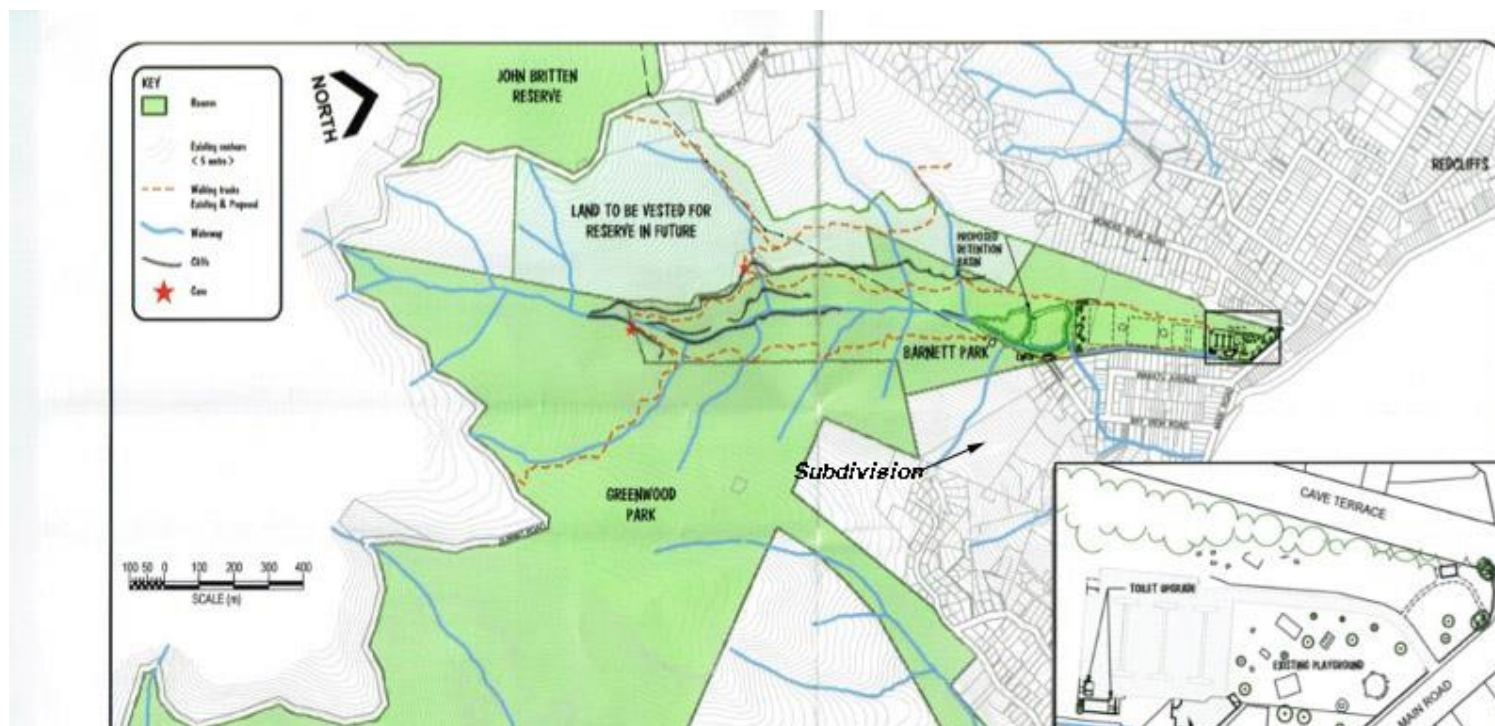
Location of the 'proposed' detention basins



The 'proposed' detention basins can be better located

- The area proposed in this brochure is the now the very well used dog exercise area and is also likely site of World War 1 activities that could/should be registered with Heritage New Zealand.
- If progressed the detention basin or more usefully, a constructed wetland would be able to be placed in the next fenced section further up the valley.
- Some of this area is wet to damp under foot most of the year – a very suitable location.

A new subdivision was required to contribute to the cost of the detention basin that was never built.



Extract from Resource Consent

Stormwater

This subdivision is within the Barnett Park stormwater cost sharing area. The contribution is \$2,726.60 + GST for each new lot at June 2004, adjusted by CPI until paid.

Total = \$42,943.95 (including GST)

This project has legs and we will report to you regularly – on our agenda is:

- Lock in relationship with Mana whenua
- Take the project to the public in a workshop
- Build relationship with NGO partners/sponsors
- Secure more funding for contractors to complete boneseed and passionfruit eradication
- Extend planting up the valley
- Intensify predator control and investigate state of art perimeter management of predators
- Hold Council to its commitment to extend the reserve and build some form of detention arrangement, ideally a wetland.

We need your help to do this