

HDC Submission - Keirunga Gardens

The Next 10 Years

Submission by the Keirunga Woodlands Community Care Group /
Steering Group

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Contents

1. Preservation of Self-Regenerating Oak Dominated Woodland
2. Arboricultural Oversight of Richie Hill
3. New Track - Arthur's Path Gully
4. New Track - Main Carpark to Top Grassy Area
5. Track Maintenance
6. Replanting of Wasteland Area
7. Endorsement of David Cranwell Submission - Planting Grassy Bank
8. Endorsement of David Cranwell Submission - Planting Forager's Orchard
9. Endorsement of David Cranwell Submission - Pergola & Irrigation
10. Resolve Drainage Issues
11. Active Management of Trees Neighbouring Kopanga Rd
12. Signage & Didactic Panels
13. Tanner St Entrance
14. Irrigation
15. Wetland Area. Ponding Areas
16. Cycling Issues
17. Implement a "20+ Year Plan"
18. Install Mounts For Sculpture Walk In Woodland
19. Maintain the Style of Arthur's Path Gully and Surrounds
20. Introduce More Biodiversity Into the Woodland (Biodiversity Trust). Belts of Native Planting. Notes on Other Planting Opportunities
21. Formalise A Care Group For Planting & Consultation

1. Preservation of Self-Regenerating Oak Dominated Woodland

The overwhelming will of the community group, and the broader community, is to maintain the oak dominated woodland and to take better care of it. Of the huge 230 submissions to the 2019 draft plan, 92.3% (194) people were of this opinion.

The woodland is unique nationally, and is a beloved treasure for the community. It's style is of an open woodland where you feel in nature but with plenty of space around you. The openness space gives families comfort that children are safe playing here, and should be maintained.

Keirunga was created by private landholders then handed to the community as a substantial donation in the late 1960s. The community group holds that the legacy George Nelson and others should be respected and carried on for current and future generations to enjoy.

There are opportunities throughout the woodland for planting small belts / areas of natives, using a care group, to enhance the biodiversity of the park and connect that biodiversity to Hasting District's other parks. The Biodiversity Trust will have excellent insight on this front. However the care group and community wishes are clearly that the open style of the park / woodland is not drastically changed in doing so.

2. Arboricultural Oversight of Richie Hill

In 2019, a process of draft plans, submissions, activism and reports culminated in the hearing of May 2019, in which the oak dominated woodland was preserved and protected.

Throughout that process we learned about previous tree felling actions taken by HDC, which were debated by some in the community. In the initial Draft Plan we were also given justifications that weren't backed by science, or expert opinion, as to why the trees were sick and dying and should be felled.

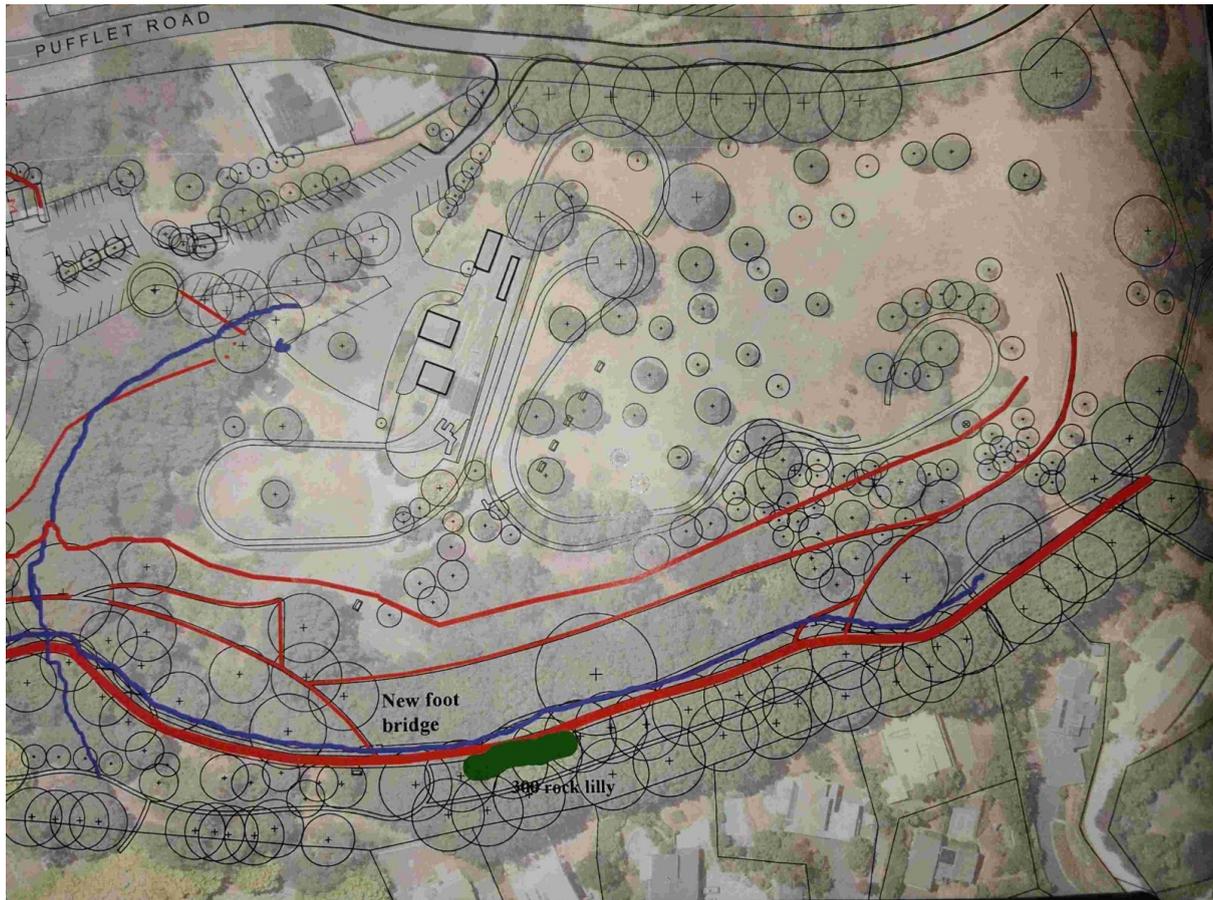
This whole process highlighted how important it is to have trained, qualified experts guiding the care of the trees in Keirunga. And that this expert input must be written up in a way that is accessible for anyone to read, which builds a picture through time of the development of the trees, and which is filed correctly so that it can be handed off to the next expert to take the mantle.

Richie Hill of Paper Street Tree Company has been brought on to fill this needed role for the foreseeable future, and the community care group / steering group believes that his involvement is critical and must be maintained through time.

3. New Track - Arthur's Path Gully

This new track was created by Joe Leete & David Cranwell, and marked with white pegs. Peter Egerton has since cut the track out of the hillside so it can be easily walked.

The red line at the top of the image gives an approximate outline of this track. The new area starts about midway on the page, continuing to the readers right.



4. New Track - Main Carpark to Top Grassy Area

The point is to give easier and more obvious access to the top grassy area, which is currently underutilised and is an excellent spot to “extend people’s living rooms” or provide them with an outdoor area that they can enjoy.

The grassy area is the subject of David Cranwell’s submission which this submission endorses. The map is only a loose guide.



5. Track Maintenance

Again when it comes to final decisions on exact maintenance, the best course will be to walk and discuss with Chris Freeman and others.

However, some starting points:

Some retaining work is needed under the *Macrocarpas* at the northern end of the woodland. There is also a gully to the immediate south of this point that may require some steps installed.

The cemetery path is eroding down the bank in parts, and new sections need to be cut out of the bank.

At the south of Arthur's Path, the large path that leads up the hill needs quite a bit of work. There are roots and a drainage pipe exposed near the bottom, and the top section is scouring.

6. Replanting of Wasteland Area

Half way up Arthur's Path Gully, opposite the American Oaks and Kopanga Rd properties, there is an area which until recently had established oaks, however they were felled by HDC.

The community group wishes that American oaks are transplanted into this area from across the Gully.

Also to be planted near the top of this bank are a few shrubby trees to block views into the Kopanga rd properties. As well as 2 or 3 large exotic species chosen by Richard Moorhead.

This replanting should also go further up the bank under the she oaks, so that these trees can later be felled (and left lying on the ground to decompose) and replaced by the American oaks.

This area is shown in the red circle on the map below



7. Endorsement of David Cranwell Submission - Planting Grassy Bank

At the top end of Arthur's Path Gully, there is a large grassy bank area below a large eucalyptus.

David Cranwell's submission calls for the planting of a Titoki forest here.

There are a range of ecological benefits to planting Titoki, and not only that they are endemic to the area.

Further details can be found in David's submission.

8. Endorsement of David Cranwell Submission - Planting Forager's Orchard

On the corner of Tanner St & Pufflet Rd there is a large grassy area with a pergola and beech trees.

David Cranwell's submission formalised Chris Freeman's call for the planting of a community orchard here.

The community group endorses Chris's idea, and David Cranwell's submission. We call for the planting of a community orchard.

9. Endorsement of David Cranwell Submission - Pergola & Irrigation

As previously stated, the top grassed area is a substantial community asset that is currently underutilised.

We endorse the installation of a pergola in this area. In support of this, David Cranwell has had discussions with Jacob Scott (designer), and his daughter Hana Scott (architect). These two have come up with a design and this submission fully endorses that design. We would suggest that the pergola has a community bbq facility.

We also endorse the fact that the trees on the grassy area are not at all performing, and would benefit from the installation of permanent, underground, trickle irrigation.

10. Resolve Drainage Issues

There are issues with water run off from the Kopanga rd properties. Council is currently undertaking to resolve these. The community group understands this is an issue that has been around for a long time, and wishes that this is finally resolved before we lose some of the mature oaks it is affecting.

11. Active Management of Trees Neighbouring Kopanga Rd

In Richie Hill's report for Keirunga Woodlands there is a call to give focus to the sector of American Oaks neighbouring the woodlands.

At the moment the two most northern Kopanga properties have branches overhanging their properties and encroaching their airspace.

The community group calls for Richie Hill to be brought up to consult on this sector of trees and get this initiative moving.

12. Signage & Didactic Panels

The history of Keirunga is rich, and as is the arboricultural information that could be passed on to the community. Mark von Dadelzsen has created an excellent historical write up, that HDC and also Michael Fowler now are in possession of. Here is a link to those files:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1zRRujcxZ3tMW_FJqfEe3jt4uK1_Fr94u?usp=sharing

We would like to see more signage at the top carpark, the Tanner St Entrance, and at a few locations throughout the woodland.

13. Tanner St Entrance

At the moment the entrance to the woodlands on Tanner st (where the white gate is) is a wasted opportunity. There are some brick columns there that are overgrown, etc.

With a tidy up and some signage this area could be enhanced for the community.

14. Irrigation

The care group requires an irrigation program to support it's planting, on an approximate two year rotating cycle as already has been discussed with Chris Freeman.

The majority of the infrastructure is already in place, and there are irrigators also. It all just needs connecting etc.

15. Wetland Area. Ponding Areas

At the bottom of Arthur's Path Gully (near Tanner St Entrance) there is an area Chris Freeman has pointed out to be a very obvious candidate for a wetland.

The benefits being to biodiversity and also to retaining silt on site and not letting it wash into waterways.

Similarly, creating ponding areas in the Arthur's Path Gully stream would also serve as silt traps, and are the future if we honestly wish to improve our waterways.

The group endorses Chris Freemans ideas.

16. Cycling Issues

We need to introduce means by which to make the path less accessible to cyclists, who are causing a hazard to walkers, particularly down the main path, can be dissuaded from using it (without making it too difficult for elderly or infirm pedestrians to use it.

And to include input from Mark von Dadelszen, who HDC know very well as their ex legal counsel.

“ In respect of that issue [cyclists] we draw attention to the fact that the 8 October 1957 Deed of Trust recording the transfer of the Keirunga property by George Nelson to the Havelock North Borough Council (of which the Hastings District Council is the successor) recorded that the Council "... shall and will forever stand possessed of the said land as and for a public park and recreation ground to be called or known as "Keirunga Gardens" subject however to the conditions more particularly set forth in the Second Schedule hereto." The Second Schedule records that "the pathway already formed in the gully of the said land is to be called or known as "Arthurs Path" and is to be for the use of pedestrians only."

The trust deed can be downloaded at this link:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WUvSANDBH5CHh0cAuzz697c8xrY54-Ac?usp=sharing>

17. Implement a “20+ Year Plan”

In informal discussions recently with myself, David Cranwell, and some HDC staff, this idea was raised and it seems wise. This seems wise.

Right now there is huge community motivation, engagement and enthusiasm. There is also substantial expertise on the care group which has gone into our submission, and which we trust will help inform the process.

What our thinking, in conjunction with discussions with HDC staff, have come up with is really something best suited to be a long term plan of gradual planting and rehabilitation. Efforts that would be very affordable, even cheap in the long term, but expensive if done in a hurry.

Not only that, we need to respect what we have. To quote another member of the group, Peter Egerton. “Public response to date has been mostly in favour of retaining what we have and adding to it. The public like Arthur’s Path and seem to be mostly in favour of seeing the oak trees restored to health and augmented [more oaks added to fill the gaps]

I feel that a managed self-renewing woodland is the vision we should aim for. Almost the only thing I can remember from my Latin lessons is ‘festina lente’ hurry slowly. I do believe that applies to woodlands. Let’s work at nature’s pace.”

- Peter Egerton, community group member

Another point further to Peters, is a concern from Nigel Dawes that maintenance will drop off as staff members change, etc. While we understand that the RMP formalises the activities of each year, we would just make it explicit that we hope annual funds can be included for tree care, track care, some weed wacking etc.

18. Install Mounts For Sculpture Walk In Woodland

We suggest that mounts are provided so that *local* artists can mount sculptures. We suggest they are given the opportunity to place sculptures in the park that are for private sale, so that the sculptures are temporary and changing.

Rather than HDC paying artists for permanent pieces.

We suggest, say, at least 6 mounts installed. With this as a baseline number, it is not hard to imagine artists using the woodland for an exhibition, with the opening incorporating the facilities at Keirunga's wonderful buildings also.

19. Maintain The Style of Arthur's Path Gully and Surrounds

The community has overwhelmingly shown support for retaining what we already have at Keirunga, and adding to it.

So, what do we have at Keirunga?

We have Arthur's path which takes you through oak dominated woodlands, and opens up into a grassy area at the top with views to Te Mata Peak.

We have a very open woodlands, where the view is not obstructed by bush, which makes families feel safe. There is substantial opposition from the group and the community to making the space feel closed in by filling the spaces with too many bushes and shrubs.

A self-regenerating woodland with natural habitat for insects and birds. Not a manicured, sterile park.

20. Introduce More Biodiversity Into The Woodland (Biodiversity Trust). Belts of Native Planting. Notes on Other Planting Opportunities.

The above section serves as an important preface to this. It is important that we do not spoil what we already have - the open woodland which people love and which feels safe and gives the feeling of space - in a frenzy to plant native trees.

However with that being said, there are a range of areas where planting could be done which would enhance the community asset, give a community care group meaningful work to do long term, and substantially increase the biodiversity of the entire Keirunga Park.

On the last page of this submission is a map showing these locations. Below is a written description of the areas with notes when applicable.

Here is a link to a folder of images which also show the areas:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/19sWS4qv7ODIZwipeUI_9-Fi6ZTKNgKrL?usp=sharing

NOTE In some cases this map is showing areas for non-native planting also, as suggested by the care group.

NOTE that these areas are proposed as potential future areas for the Care Group to work on over the next 20+ years.

% 7 Uf'DUF_'

Probably not an area for native biodiversity.

&" 6 Ub_'VYck 'WUf'dUF_ž`YUX]b['Xck b'hc'gk Ua d'

Has been worked on recently by parks and reserves. Currently covered in weed ground cover. Perhaps could have something low growing to not impede view of the potential new wetland. Note the marked oak saplings there to be let grow.

' " BYk 'gk Ua d'UFYU'

Already discussed with biodiversity. Perhaps some carex, along with the swamp cypress and native trees already suggested by the care group and Chris Freeman.

(" 8 Uj]X'7 fUbK Y`đ'ž'fU[Yfg'cfW UfX'

No input required.

) " 9 bIfUbW'hc 'YUghYfb'dUH 'Uvcj Y5 fH i fđ'DUH '; i ``mi

Lots of potential here for shrubby natives

*** " AUWcWUfdUdfi bYi d'**

The idea of removing these Mac's has been floated but HDC parks staff and others in disagreement. Perhaps a prune up.

+ " ÷ mVUb_'UFYU'hc'gk 'cZA AUWcWUfdUg

On the eastern side of the path some bushes could be installed. Best to not impede the beautiful view down to the woodland though.

, " ; i ``mcZ]j nžVYfk Yyb'a UWđ'UbX'[i a 'IfYY

Regardless of the ivy this area is exceptionally beautiful because it is so open. SOme replanting but don't close in the space.

- " DUA "YUX]b['i d'Zca 'hf]!fi b_'9i WUmdlh g

At present Acacias growing here. A prime area for planting thick set bush natives

%"Hk c '[fUgg'VUb_g'bYUf'fU]k UmVf]X[Y'D@ G'UfYU]b'VYfk YYb'fU]k UmVf]X[Yg

These areas would probably best be served by planting large exotics which tower up and provide an "oak avenue" through which the railway bridge drives. Note that there are already marked oak seedlings attempting this, however we need to formalise this with warratah's etc to stop them being mown.

%%'5 Vcj Y'bYk 'dUA žVYck 'first'fU]k UmVf]X[Y"

A small area that if planted with natives or something would block walking traffic coming down from top area to track, across the railway bridge.

%"5 Vcj Y'bYk 'dUA žVYck 'second'fU]k UmVf]X[Y"

The same story. A small area that if planted with natives or something would block walking traffic coming down from top area to track, across the railway bridge.

% "BUHj Yg'6 Ub_'!8 Uj]X'7 fUbK Y`Bj'H]hc_]g'

Hopefully David's idea is satisfactory, which some embellishment as to what the understory will be. There are some oak seedlings along the bottom of the hill which might be maintained to continue the arc of oaks up from the woodland.

%"6 Ub_'YUX]b['Xck b'hc'Di ZYhFX'

Planting potential here but so so important not to impede the stunning views through to Te Mata Peak.

Also was some discussion of a track going down here to the rd but an alternate has instead been suggested - a track that goes down to the car park.

%) "Hcd'[fUggmidUXXcW_

No change wanted here except its such a hard piece of ground, some drip irrigation to help the trees that aren't do-ing.

%"6 Ub_'k\ YfY'DYhYf'9[Yf]cb'\ Ug'WYUhYX'UfUW_"

The track was created by Peter Egerton and could be enhanced. This could easily contain a continuance of the native bank of Titoki, and provide access to that area.

%"5 i fi a '@mi; i ``miUbX'VUb_g'Ufci bX]h

A prime spot for native planting. Bushy and thick and water-loving plants.

%, "F cV]b]U'UbX'ZcfUfYd'UWYa Ybh

Not a place for native large specimen native trees - oaks are suggested to replace these weed trees.

But what to do with the understory to replace the ivy etc?? - this is now going to be a repeated theme! Can low growing ground cover natives fit the bill?

% " @b['ghfYHW 'cZVUb_ 'VYck '5a Yf]VUb'cU_g'fK YghicZ5 fi h i fDj'DUA Ł
Self-regenerating woodland is at play here.. Right now Karamu is self seeding through here. No complaints at present, however if it gets too thick some thinning required. Oak seedlings are coming through here and should be left to their own devices.

&\$"H Y'cH Yf'g]XY'cZH Y'VUb_ 'UbX'k UghY'UbX'fYd'Ub]b['UbX'g\ Y'cU_ 'fYa cj U'
Already discussed above. Self-regenerating woodland is at play here.

There is a large area of bank under the American oaks here which could have some biodiversity enhancement. Again, so important not to close the space in, but be great to see some options from Biodiversity Trust.

&% '7 cfbYf'cZVUb_ '! '7 cb]bi U]cb'cZk UghY'UbX'VUb_ '
Oaks are naturally coming through here. We propose these are nurtured and let come up.

&&"7 UVU] Y'fYY'UFYU
Interesting area. Probably can be left to its own devices, or maybe enhanced by biodiversity trust planting?

&' "Cddcg]hY'WUVU] Y'fYY'UFYU
Some potential for native bushes here.

&("6 Ub_g'VYck 'cU_g'k]h 'dfYdcbXYfUbW'cZgYYX']b[g
A prime example of the self-regenerating natural woodland. Leave this be.

&) " @b['ghfYHW 'cZVUb_ ``YUX]b['hc'k \]hY'UbbYf'gh[UHY'fk YghicZ5 fi h i fDj'DUA Ł
We need a ivy replacement. Perhaps some ferns? This is a continuation of the same problem found many other places in the park - to remove the invasive ground cover and enhance the asset. Self-regenerating woodland is at play here.

&* "6 Ub_ 'X]fYWmVYck 'A UW'cWU'dUg'k]h 'F\ cXcXYbXfcbg'
Difficult stretch of bank for the Rhododendrons to perform well in but these plants carry historical significance.

&+"7 Ya YhYmidUA 'fYd'Ub]b["
This could be an excellent stretch of native bushy planting.

& "Gci h Yfb'h]d'cZH Y'dUf_ '!W ffYbhm i bi gYX'
This area is not on the map. It is found to the south of the grassy knoll. Currently no tracks or anything go there, and it's pretty wild.

This was discussed with myself, David Cranwell and 2 HDC staff and the decision was come to that this would be an ideal area for thick native planting at some point.

&- "5 fYUYUghih Y? Y]fi b[UVi]X]b[g

This area is really the jurisdiction of the volunteers involved with the keirunga buildings. In the lack of any suggestions by them, a prime spot for native planting.

21. Formalise A Care Group For Planting & Consultation

Planting comprises a huge part of the cost, which could be saved by doing all the planting with volunteers. Above are many years of meaningful areas a care group could work on developing and maintaining.

At present there is a split care group. We have the "Steering Group" (coined by Mayor Hazelhurst) and then the "Care Group" of volunteers for planting etc. We suggest that we keep this structure moving forward.

For the Steering Group the the RMP should set in place most things, however the community and the council may benefit from keeping the Steering Group in place for the fundraising and future consultation.

Thank You - Time For Action At Keirunga

Thank you for taking the time to read our submission.

It is the product of 25+ meetings at the woodlands by the author from June 2019 - July 2020, as well as many meetings of the full group and subcommittees thereof.

We look forward to the next phase of developments at Keirunga.

