Queen’s Park Development

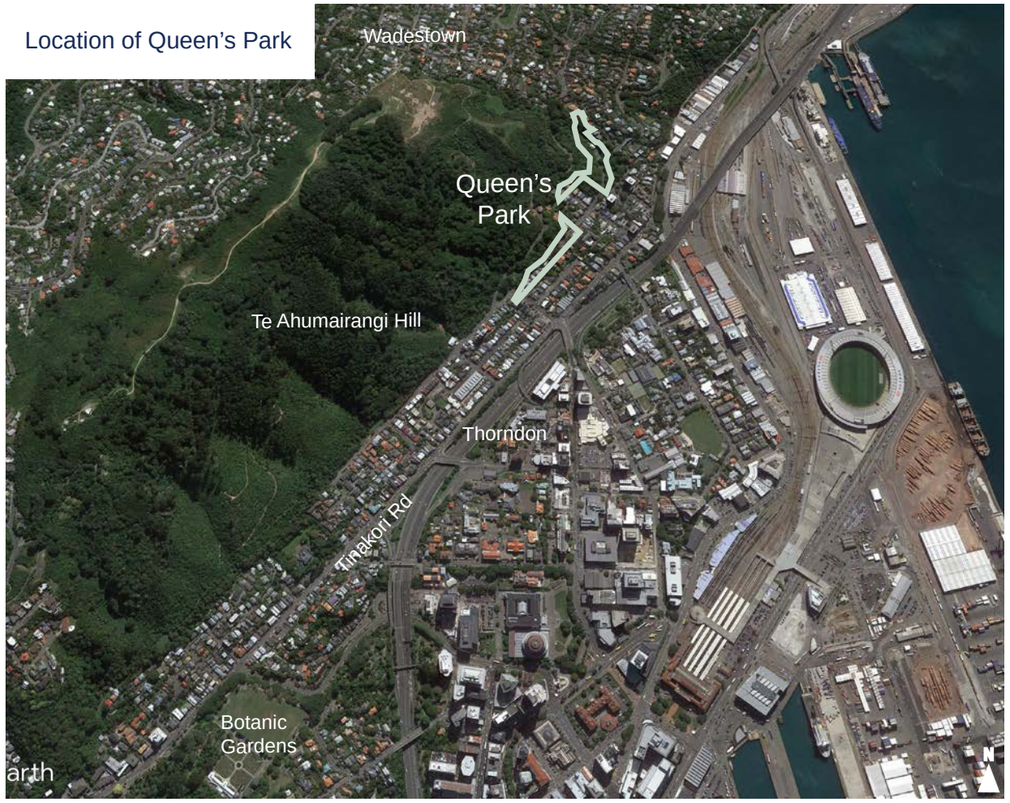
Concept Plan

Contents

This concept to guide the development of Queen’s Park was developed in partnership with the Friends of Queen’s Park

Location, history and design concept

Location of Queen's Park



Historical map of Queen's Park (1915)

History[1]

Queen's Park was developed in the 1890s to commemorate Queen Victoria's diamond Jubilee in 1897. The southern area of the park had formed paths, entry gates and plantings of exotic trees with shrubs and hedges. Pakuao Stream and the waterfall in the northern area of the park was a feature, reflecting the Victorian interest in 'wild' landscapes. The park was originally planted with conifers, pines and European deciduous trees, an example of the ornamental and plantation planting fashions of the time. In the 1940s, as some of the conifers matured, a number were removed and replaced with deciduous and native species. Many of these trees are maturing or are damaged.

The origins of the oak forest is unclear. A 1915 Evening Post article says that it was planted by Mr. G. E. Tolhurst, but an intriguing story is in the Evening Post in 1941 reported that the acorns came from the Great Park at Windsor Castle. It was reported that Princess Elizabeth had talked about acorns from the forest with visiting NZ airmen. The assistant secretary of the Wellington branch of the Royal Society of St. George, whose father came from Windsor, heard this story and wrote to the Queen asking that some of the acorns be sent to New Zealand. The reply said that Princess Elizabeth would send acorns for Miss Thompson to plant in Queen's Park.

The following quotes captures some of the former atmosphere of the park:

"Grant Road reserve, which was once a waste and an eyesore, is now planted with well-established shrubs, and is most agreeably green to the eye, seen either from Grant Road or the upper road to Wadestown."

"The famous spring in Grant-Road, which used to trickle through a gas pipe, is now much improved, and forms an artistic fountain in brick and plaster. It is much used by many people who believe the water to possess valuable medicinal properties."

"It is lovely around about here, with all the willow, poplar, and apple trees competing with each other to see who can be the most beautiful."

"I notice that in Queen's Park the leaves are beginning to turn yellow and red; and we found some chestnuts the other day. That means Autumn time at last."

"Aren't the trees pretty now. We have a little gully below our place in which grow tall willow-trees. They seem like the entrance to some enchanted palace—all gold, and orange, and green."

[1] Information from Peter Steel. Source – Wellington City Archives, Peter Young, Turnbull Library

Design Concept

1. Interpretation of the Victorian interest in naturalistic settings and plant collections.
2. Implementation of policy 8.1.3.5 in the Wellington Town Belt Management Plan August 2013: "Retain and enhance the deciduous woodland below Wadestown Road".
3. Upgraded paths where people can walk comfortably with improved access, drainage, path surface and seats.
4. Main commuter path drainage and surface improved.
5. Review of existing trees and identification of trees to be removed or pruned.
6. 'Signs of care' frame the 'wilderness'[2] (areas of mixed native and exotic vegetation):
   - A general tidy up and maintenance along main path routes with vegetation encroaching on paths removed, low branches above paths lifted, planting of ground covers to replace weed species and to define path edges
   - Native succession vegetation along paths managed for habitat and birds
   - Tree management.
7. The oak forest managed so that it dominates the northern area of the park.
8. Interpretation of the park's history at main entrances, track information at entrances and directional signage where paths intersect in the oak forest (northern) area of the park.
9. Community open space extended with seats, picnic tables and visual connections with the southern garden area where seats are refurbished.
10. Adventure/natural play opportunities along paths in Queen's park gardens utilising natural materials and features.

[2] Based on "Messy Ecosystems, Orderly Frames" by Joan Nassauer

Queen's Park Gardens
Development overview

The loop path and the commuter path between Wadestown and Grant Roads are improved to lead people around and though the park. The northern entrance from Grant Road is made safer.

New amenity planting using a variety of native and exotic plants enhances the southern and northern park entrances, and the Planting, park furniture, paths and signage bring a particular character to the park and acknowledge the park's origin. The grassy clearing in Queen's Park Gardens has a community space with seats and picnic tables and is a place to gather, picnic, rest and contemplate.

The tree framework is managed. Trees assessed to be in decline or pose an unacceptable level of risk are to be removed or pruned. Weeds along paths are managed to allow naturally occurring native plant species to spread, assisted with supplementary planting to achieve ground cover.

Outside of the southern and northern entrance garden areas and the grassy clearing, the sense of a native 'wilderness' is retained in keeping with the Victorian interest in wild landscapes. Deciduous trees are planted to replace declining or hazardous trees.[3]

Play opportunities utilising natural resources encourage children to explore and be physically active.

Park boundary

Track connections

Commuter route surface improved

Commuter connections

Visual connections

View shaft to harbour by opening the tree canopy
NB lower vegetation retained to block views into houses on Grant Rd

1.5 metre wide main loop path, damaged/diseased/crowded trees along the path removed or reshaped, weeds along path edges managed and replaced with native ground covers e.g. ferns

Grassy clearing and community space with park furniture and defined edges. Top of bank above Grant Road defined for safety. Selected trees removed and new native and exotic amenity planting

New native and exotic amenity planting to show seasonal change

Safe access from the footpath on Grant Road

Vegetation in the 'wilderness' areas is managed for habitat and birds - selected trees removed, pruned or reshaped, native succession vegetation managed and late native successional tall tree species planted

Indicative locations for play opportunities using natural features (stumps and logs from removed trees for balancing, climbing and sliding down and stepping stones up slopes (see page 9 for examples)

Trees along the Grant Rd boundary retained. Any trees assessed to pose an unacceptable level of risk are removed.

Interpretation of the park's history, features and cultural connections

Track information

[3] Wellington Town Belt Management Plan August 2013, Policy 8.1.3.5.

Queen's Park Oak Forest
Development overview

This northern part of Queen's Park is retained as a 'wilderness' area but access and way finding through the park is improved.

The features that define the character of this part of the park are highlighted - the oak forest, the stream, waterfall and the main loop path with glimpses of the harbour through the trees.

An area of the oak forest within the main loop path and at the main two entrances from Wadestown Road is the oak forest restoration area. This area is is managed so that the oak forest becomes the dominant tree framework. Any trees assessed to pose an unacceptable level of risk are removed. Weeds and succession native vegetation are managed, and oak seedlings will eventually replace older trees. The assistance of local community groups to monitor, control weeds and plant pests, and to manage succession oak trees as well as native succession vegetation will be key in the successful restoration and dominanace of the oak forest in the oak forest restoration area.

The forest outside of the oak forest restoration area is managed as 'wilderness' with existing exotic trees and native forest trees. Trees that are assessed to pose an unacceptable level of risk are removed and weeds and pest plants controlled and managed. The planting of late native successional tall tree species will assist long term native forest succession in these areas[4].

Park boundary

Track connections

1.5 metre wide main loop path maintained so two people can walk comfortably side by side, trees identified as posing an unacceptable level of risk are pruned or removed, selective encroaching vegetation is removed where practical and a tidy up along the path. Trail markers where paths intersect. Seats at selected locations - the waterfall and viewpoints

Waterfall track improved, tradescantia along track to main loop path replaced with native ferns, damaged trees removed or reshaped

Path from Grant Road renovated to shed water

Interpretation of the oak forest at the carpark entrance on Wadestown Road

Track information at entrances

Oak forest restoration area where the oak forest is restored and managed - selected trees encroaching on oak trees removed or reshaped, weeds managed and native vegetation managed so that the oak forest dominates

Vegetation in the 'wilderness' areas managed for habitat and birds. Damaged and diseased trees removed/reshaped. Late succession native tall trees planted

[4] Wellington Town Belt Management Plan, August 2013 (Policy 5.5.3). The planting of tall native tree species in areas of younger native forest assists the natural successional process and means that the tall forest trees will establish earlier.

Queen's Park Gardens

South end - Grant/Wadestown Roads Cnr

Design Development

Scale: 1 : 250 @ A3

Existing brick and paver steps repaired and rock edge restored and rocks added in order to reduce soil washing onto steps

Existing fountain

Selected removal of self-sewn *Pittosporum Crassifolium* and *Melicytus Ramiflorus* to allow views through to Queen's Park grassy clearing and community area

Existing litter bin

X Remove

Existing large pine

X Remove

X Remove

X Remove

Existing turf

Low planting extended along top of rock retaining wall to cover a difficult to maintain bank (see page 13 for plant list)

Grant Road

Existing English beech tree

Existing plants removed and replanted with a range of exotic and native ornamental plants to reflect a Victorian interest in plant collections (see page 13 for plant list)

Existing seats repaired and refurbished

Broken and degraded path replaced

Existing fountain

Wadestown Road

I Interpretation of the park's history, features and cultural connections

Queen's Park Gardens
Grassy Clearing and Community Space
Design Development

Scale: 1 : 250 @ A3

Open up canopy of existing pohutukawa for harbour views

Landform cut back and retained (concrete with rock face) to form a seating alcove at path junction. Victorian style bench in fine gravel

Gravel path widened to 1.5 metres

Nature play opportunities using stumps , logs and large rocks

New seating in fine gravel area cut into the existng slope with fill to create a level area above the recontoured turf area

See Perspective A

Shrub underplanting to existing trees to give privacy for neighbours on other side of Grant Road, define the edge of the turf area and serve as a barrier at the top of the bank

Small deciduous trees in lawn transplanted to another site

Existing commuter track

Existing path

Commuter path upgraded with new asphalt surface

Ramp up (asphalt) with rock faced retaining and seat

Deciduous shade trees in compacted fine gravel

Turf area recontoured on earth fill

Pathway reformed and upgraded with asphalt surface to control erosion and loose material washing down steep slope

Existing path

Grant Road

Tables x 3 and seats cantilevered off retaining wall (concrete with rock facing similar to rock retaining wall on Grant Road)

Hedge and at top of retaining wall

Existing path (gravel)

B

Cross Section - see page 6

B

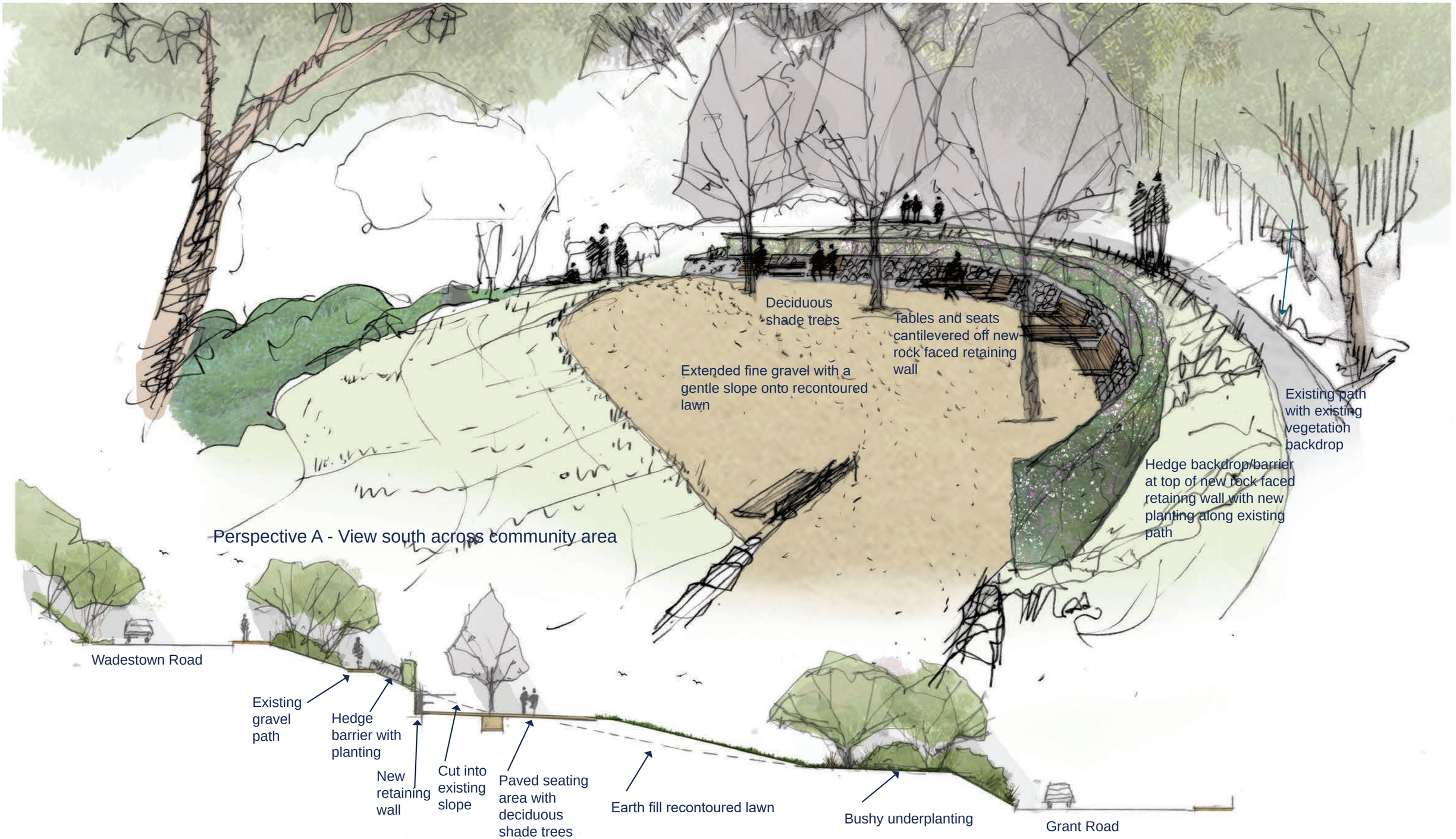
New concrete landing extension from existing steps

Interpretation of the park's history, features and cultural connections

Pohutukawa to have any significant deadwood or broken branches removed. Selective removal of understorey vegetation and pohutukawa underplanted with low growing rhododendrons and azaleas

Wadestown Road

Queen’s Park Gardens
Grassy Clearing and Community Space
Perspective A
Cross section BB



Cross Section BB - Wadestown / Grant Roads

Queen’s Park Gardens
North end - Grant Road entrance
Design Development

Scale: 1 : 250 @ A3

Track information

New park entrance is cut into existing street retaining wall and bank with entrance pillars, new steps, handrail and capped retaining walls. Victorian style bench at the junction of main pathways.

The new entrance is directly off the public footpath instead of the current one which is accessed off the carriageway.

Existing steps are removed and the path covered with soil and reinstated with woodland planting

Hedge backdrop to bench
Traditional style cast iron park bench

Mass planting of Rhododendron and native and exotic woodland vegetation as a Victorian style planting theme (see page 13 for plant list).

Italian Embassy

Secondary linking track

Discourage use of informal track by planting blocks of woodland vegetation to reflect a Victorian interest in plant collections (see page 13 for plant list)

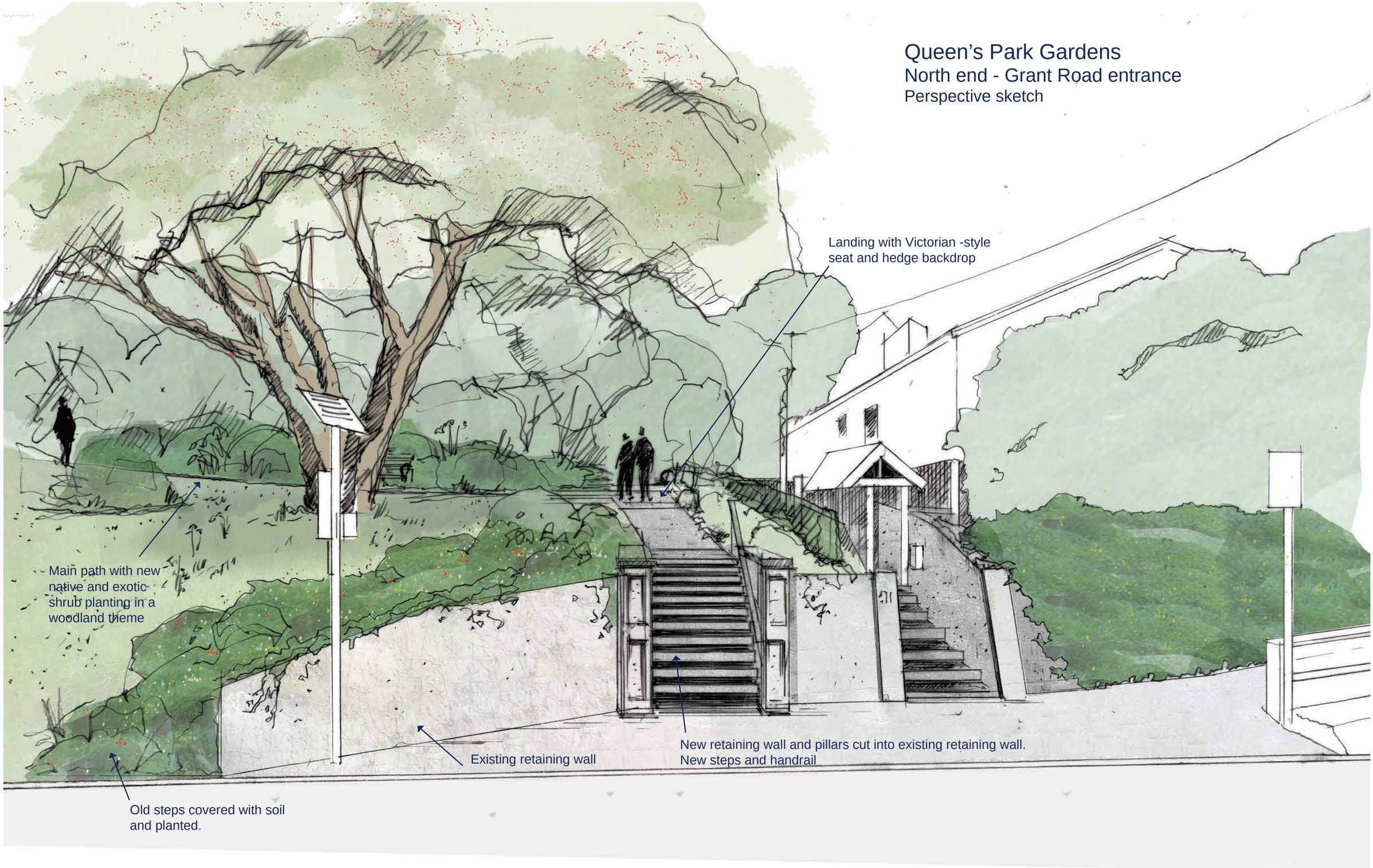
Grant Road

1.5 metre wide main paths upgraded with compacted gravel as wayfinders to new entrance.

Queen’s Park Gardens

North end - Grant Road entrance

Perspective sketch



Queen’s Park Gardens
Natural play
(Photos from Wellington’s Town Belt)

Indicative locations for the natural play elements illustrated on this page

4 Poles with toe notches to move from one pole to another without touching the ground

1 Large rocks for stepping, jumping, climbing, balancing, sitting

2 Stumps and branches from felled trees for climbing, balancing, jumping

3 Large tree trunk from felled trees fixed on the steep slope between the loop path for climbing and sliding

Queen’s Park Oak Forest
Development plan
Highlighting the Oak Forest

Scale: 1 : 250 @ A3

- Interpretation of the park’s history, features and cultural connections
- Track information
- Track direction sign

Forest outside of the main loop path is managed as a ‘wilderness’ with oak trees and native forest succession.

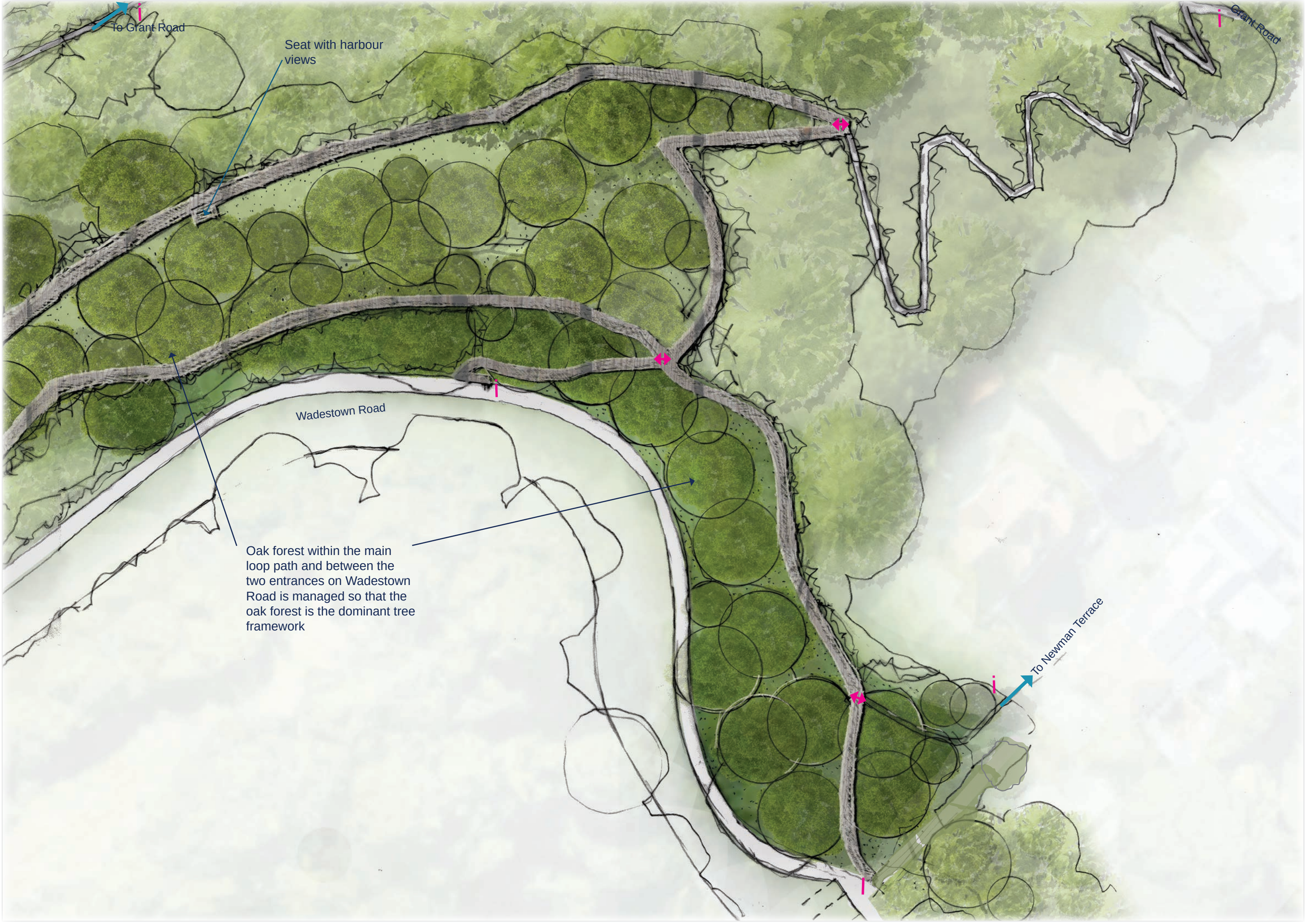
Trees identified as posing significant risk along paths will be removed/pruned and weeds and pest plants controlled and managed. Late native succession tall tree planting

Drainage improved on path along the stream to Grant Road

Track to waterfall from Wadestown Road restored with steps and handrail

Seat at the waterfall

Wadestown Road


To Grant Road
Seat with harbour views
Grant Road
Wadestown Road
Oak forest within the main loop path and between the two entrances on Wadestown Road is managed so that the oak forest is the dominant tree framework
To Newman Terrace

Queen’s Park Oak Forest

Perspective Sketch

Pakuao Stream waterfall track access

Existing
timber barrier

Simple timber handrail on outer slope of track.
Alternatively, a steel pipe construction

Steps cut into bank

Rock stepping stones across stream

Waterfall improvements:
Keep development simple and natural so as not to detract from the setting and ambiance, but improve access with a handrail for safety.

Clear tradescantia along track edge from main loop path, and

Plant List

Queen's Park Gardens

Specimen trees

Small, deciduous trees to give summer shade near seats/tables in community clearing area and sun access in winter, autumn leaf colour and spring flowering

A*cer palmatum* (Japanese maple)
Prunus 'Awanui' (flowering cherry)
Pyrus 'Aristocrat' (ornamental pear)

Hedges

Regularly trim to form a tight hedge up to 1.5metres

Lonicera nitida (box honeysuckle)

Herbaceous / Woodland groundcovers

Ajuga reptans
Anenome hupehensis
Arthropodium cirratum (rengarenga)
Astelia nervosa
Clivia miniata
Campanula lactifolia (milky bellflower)
Elatostema rugosum (parataniha) In semi-damp shady locations
Euphorbia characis subsp Wulfenii
Euphorbia glauca
Francoa sonchifolia (Bridal wreath)
Hemerocallis (day lilliy)
Hosta varieties
Kniphophia (red hot poker)
Lastreopsis glabella (smooth shield fern) - in southern and northern areas
Ligularia 'Britt-Marie'
Lysimachia nummularia 'Aurea'
Microsorum pustulatum (hound's tongue) - in southern and northern areas
Penstemon varieties
Pulmonaria longifolia (lungwort)
Salvia 'Black Knight' and cultivars

Deciduous trees to replace removed declining, hazadous and pest trees

Acer davidii (Pere David's maple)
Acer palmatum (Japanese maple + varieities)
Acer platanoides Crimson King (Purple Norway Maple)
*Acer rubrum 'Brandywine' (*Red maple)
*Acer rubrum 'Columnare' (*Upright red maple)
Acer Saccharum (Sugar maple)
*Aesculus x carnea 'Briottii' (*Red horse chestnut)
Aesculus Hippocastanum (Horse chestnut)
Amelanchier canadensis (Shad bush)
Betula utilis var. jacquemontii (West Himalayan Birch + varieties)
Camellia reticulata + C.japonica vars (Camellia hybrids)
Castanea sativa (Sweet chestnut)
Cercis siliquastrum (Judas tree)
Cotonus coggyria 'Royal Purple' (Smoke tree)
Fagus sylvatica 'Riversii' (River's purple european beech)
Fraxinus excelsior 'Aurea' (Golden european ash)
Fraxinus oxycarpa 'Raywoodii' (Claret ash)
Ginkgo biloba 'Autumn Gold' (Maidenhair tree)
Liquidamber styraciflua + vars. (American sweetgum)
Liriodendron tulipifera (Tulip tree)
Magnolia campbellii 'Charles Raffill' (Magnolia hybrid)
Magnolia 'Athene' + Jury hybrids (Magnolia Jury hybrid)
Magnolia 'Genie' + Vance Hooper hybrids (Magnolia Vance Hopper hybrid)
Magnolia x soulangeana 'Lennei Alba' (Magnolia hybrid)
Michelia doltsopa (Sweet magnolia)
Platanus orientalis 'Alford Flame' (Oriental plane)
Prunus 'Shimidsu Sakura (Moonlight cherry)
Prunus 'Tai Haku' (Great white cherry)
Prunus yedoensis 'Awanui' (Hybrid Yoshino cherry)
Pyrus calleryana 'Aristocrat' (Ornamental pear)
Quercus coccinea (Scarlet oak
Quercus palustris (Pin oak)
Ulmus carpinifolia (Variegata' Spotted elm)
*Ulmus 'Frontier' (*Hybrid Chinese Elm)

Shrubs and woody groundcovers

Vegetation bulk for backdrop with lower growing at the front of borders. Shade loving species in the woodland zones.

Aucuba japonica (Japanese laurel) Male plants only
Azalea (Ghent hybrid varieties)
Azalea mollis
Azalea indica (evergreen varieties)
Forsythia 'Lynwood Gold'
Hydrangea quercifolia (oak leaved hydrangea)
Magnolia stellata and varieties
Michelia yunnanensis
Osmanthus fragrans (sweet olive)
Philadelphus coronius (sweet mock orange)
Pieris japonica
Rhododendron (small growing cultivars)
Spirea nipponica 'Snowmound' (bridalwreath spirea)
Viburnum x burkwoodii and varieties

Bulbs

Groups of bulbs as tree underplanting or naturalised in lawns

Hyacinthoides non-scripta (bluebell)
Galianthus nivalis (snowdrop)
Narcissus (daffodil and sol de or varities)

Oak Forest 'wilderness' areas

Late native successional tall tree tree species

Alectryon excelsus (titoki)
Beilschmiedia tawa (tawa)
Dacrydium cupressinum (rimu)
Dysoxylem spectabile (kohekohe)
*Elaeocarpus dentatus (*hinau)
Fuchsia excorticata (kotukutuku / tree fuchsia)
Laurelia novae-zelandiae (pukatea)
Metrosideros robusta (northern rata)
Prumnopitys ferruginea (miro)
Prumnopitys taxifolia (matai)
Podocarpus totara (totara)
Rhopalostylis sapida (nikau) - along Pakuao Stream in the northern oak forest