



BATTLE HILL FARM FOREST PARK NEWSLETTER 3

NOVEMBER 2008

Battle Hill Management Plan Review

Draft plan out for comment

A revised draft of the Battle Hill Management Plan is now available for your comment. Greater Wellington Regional Council has proposed some significant changes from the previous consultation draft and would like to hear your views. We will consider all the submissions and make any required changes prior to approving and adopting a final version of the plan.

Key changes include:

Construction of wind turbines within Battle Hill Farm Forest Park are prohibited under the plan.

However, the plan reflects Greater Wellington's decision to make Battle Hill available for uses associated with the wind farm on adjoining land by providing for the following:

Temporary construction works and activities

- Road access from Paekakariki Hill Road to the Battle Hill / Akatarawa Forest ridge, and along this ridge to connect with wind farm roads
- Underground power and communications cables
- A possible overhead power line to Transmission Gully
- Use of air-space for wind turbine blade fly-over

All the activities above are "restricted" in the plan.

Other significant changes include:

- The park's bush remnant will be gazetted as Scenic Reserve (p13)
- Inclusion of ecologically significant sites identified in the Porirua City Council District Plan and a feature section on the Horokiri Stream (p18)

- Adoption of the Historic Places Trust explanation of cultural heritage (p21-22)
- New policy on using indigenous species for erosion control (p17)
- Occasional 4WD club access through to Puketiro Forest (i.e. the plantation forest area within Akatarawa Forest) will be treated as a restricted activity and be subject to the concessions process (p30, 33)
- Hang and paragliding are permissible in the park but may be restricted at the ranger's discretion, eg during lambing (p30)

Where you can find the draft plan

The draft Battle Hill Management Plan and Submission Form are available to download from the Greater Wellington website www.gw.govt.nz. Search under the key words "Battle Hill Management Plan". Changes to the previous draft are highlighted.

Or you can phone Nerisa Fa'aumu for a copy (contact details overleaf).

Copies of the draft are also available at Greater Wellington head office, Upper Hutt depot and at Battle Hill Farm Forest Park.

Send us your comments

Please complete the Submission Form and email or post it to us by 5pm Monday 2 March 2009 (address overleaf).

What happens then?

Comments on the draft will be collated and presented to Council in the second quarter of 2009. There will be an opportunity for submitters to speak to their submission on a date to be confirmed. Council will then consider all the submissions and make any required changes to the plan for final approval.

What's happening with the Puketiro Wind Farm?

On 29 September 2008 Greater Wellington confirmed earlier decisions to make some Greater Wellington-owned land available for a wind farm development. Most of this land is held as a future water collection area.

Assuming the proposed Puketiro Wind Farm proceeds, it is most likely:

- To be sited on ridges in Akatarawa Forest.
- Have an installed generating capacity of 80 to 120 MW from turbines on Greater Wellington land, depending on the size and number of turbines. A wind farm may also include turbines and infrastructure on adjacent private land.
- To be developed by RES New Zealand Limited. RES has already undertaken some work in preparation for making a resource consent application.

Wind Farm access

Greater Wellington prefers that access to any wind farm be via private property. If ultimately required for a wind farm, access via Battle Hill would largely follow the route previously identified for a forestry road. This road across the park is planned to be used for the logging of plantation forest on Battle Hill's eastern slopes and adjacent areas of Puketiro Forest.

If Battle Hill becomes used for access to a wind farm:

- The route through the park would avoid areas around existing buildings and be designed to minimise its impact on the park.
- During the construction of a wind farm, wind turbine parts, machinery, equipment and construction plant and materials would need to be transported in. Whilst the number of vehicle movements would vary during any construction period, up to 50 heavy vehicle return movements would be likely on days of intensive construction activity. It is possible that public access to any wind farm site and along any access route would be restricted at such a time.
- Following construction, the access requirements of a wind farm are usually limited to light vehicles for operational and maintenance purposes.

Power and communications

Power cables and communications cables between turbines and the switchyard associated with any wind farm will generally be buried beneath roadways (which would include any vehicle access through the park). There are two possibilities for power transmission from a wind farm within Akatarawa Forest. One option is through Puketiro Forest and would be preferred by Greater Wellington. The alternate route would require an overhead power line to be constructed to Transpower's transmission line at the boundary between the farmland and forested slopes within Battle Hill. A decision on which transmission route to adopt would be determined by the requirements of Transpower.

Turbines

No turbines are allowed to be installed on Battle Hill land. However, the management plan allows turbine flyover. This would occur in certain wind directions if part of the blades on any turbine installed on land relatively close to the Battle Hill boundary passed over Battle Hill land during their rotation.

More information on the proposed wind farm development is available on Greater Wellington's website www.gw.govt.nz or through emailing us at windenergy@gw.govt.nz.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

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