



2019 - 2024

Track Reopening Work Programme

Waitākere Ranges Regional Park

June 2019

Find out more: visit
aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/protectkauri

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Waitākere Ranges Regional Park.

Background

In April 2018, the Environment and Community Committee resolved to close the forested areas of the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park, with some exceptions, to respond to the on-going spread and impacts of kauri dieback (ENV/2018/44). The Environment and Community Committee decision anticipated the re-opening of tracks once they were brought to kauri safe standards.

Track and park closures were implemented from 1 May 2018, at the same time as a Controlled Area Notice was placed over the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park by the Ministry for Primary Industries.

In February 2019, a public consultation process was carried out to seek feedback on a draft plan for re-opening tracks in the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park from 2019/2020 onwards.

The purpose of the consultation process was to seek feedback on how the public would like to see listed tracks prioritised for opening and whether there were any additional tracks which should be included or removed.

This plan sets out the forward work programme developed following the consultation process. It includes the list of tracks that will be prioritised for track re-opening between 2019 – 2024 and the indicative timing of upgrades. A focus for the delivery of this plan will be to complete work as soon as possible, taking into account strong feedback from the public consultation process regarding the need for more recreational access. Where possible work on some tracks will be brought forward if others are completed earlier than planned. Timeframes are indicative for this reason and also because with any operational programme, there can be unforeseen factors that can influence delivery.

In making decisions to reopen tracks the following principles are being applied:

- Priority on recreating coastal connectivity, providing for multi-day walking opportunities and kauri-safe access to identified iconic destinations
- High-value, non-symptomatic kauri ecosystems will be avoided
- Tracks that provide a range of recreational opportunities and where possible are concentrated to the forest edge should be prioritised
- Tracks will be opened once they are of a standard to protect and support forest health

The above criteria were considered in conjunction with:

- Avoiding heavily diseased areas
- Public feedback received during recent consultation on the track reopening plan
- Input from Te Kawerau ā Maki
- Workshop discussions with the Waitākere Ranges Local Board
- Operational considerations
 - Resource consent and planning requirements – some tracks will have greater requirements than others
 - Current contractor / staff capacity
 - Organising work in an operationally efficient manner whilst also ensuring a geographic spread of work, recognising the local importance of many tracks

Heritage values

Many tracks in the Waitākere Ranges Regional Park have historical value. While only a small number of submitters expressed concern about losing history as a result of track closures, consideration has been given as to how we ensure heritage information and values are protected for both open and closed tracks. This will include:

- Keeping a record of location of all closed tracks and ensuring the full length of these have been mapped
- Preserving historical sites in accordance with Heritage New Zealand best practice
- Identifying opportunities to share heritage information through interpretative signs and other mediums.

2019-2024 Track Reopening Work Programme

Tracks listed below are included in the 2019-2024 work programme (Tables 1 and 2) and will be reopened once they are to required kauri safe standards.

Definitions for rationale in tables below:

- **Public feedback** – indicates tracks submitters said they would like to see included or prioritised in the work programme. See Appendix 1 and 2.
- **Coastal/forest edge** – indicates coastal tracks or tracks that are on the edge of the forest
- **Loops/links** – indicates tracks that create loop walks or provide links to other tracks or areas
- **Tikanga/rāhui** – indicates tracks that Te Kawerau ā Maki support opening
- **Iconic site or destination** – indicates tracks that provide access to an iconic site or destination
- **Avoids high value non-symptomatic kauri ecosystems** – indicates tracks that do not enter disease free kauri forest
- **Service road** – indicates tracks that are operational service roads

Table 1: 2019-2024 work programme.

The table below shows the list of 35 tracks that were planned to be re-opened in the draft work programme and are still included for reopening.

Track name	Current status	Was a change made from consultation proposal?	Rationale							Consent/build start year. * indicates multiyear	Further information
			Public feedback	Coastal/forest edge	Loops/links	Tikanga/rāhui	Iconic site or destination	Avoids high value non-symptomatic kauri ecosystems	Service road		
Ahu Ahu Track	Closed	Yes (moved from being included in the current work programme to 19/20)	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		19/20	Works have been delayed due to the discovery of telephone cables sitting close to and on the surface of the track. Auckland Council is currently working through options to resolve.
Auckland City Walk	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		19/20	Design work is underway.
Buck Taylor Track	Closed	No	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		21/22	Partial opening only is proposed between Pararaha Track and Zion Hill Track. The remainder of the track between Zion Hill and Lone Kauri Rd will not be included. Works may be brought forward depending on resource and building consent requirements.
Con Bryan Track	Closed	No		✓	✓	✓		✓		21/22	Will form part of the Hillary Trail and creates coastal connectivity when a link between Kaitarakihi and Con Bryan is created.
Donald McLean Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		20/21	Forms part of the Hillary Trail and key connection between Huia and Whatipu.

Fairy Falls Track	Closed	No	✓			✓	✓			20/21*	Design work is already underway for this track. The track is in a separate catchment and below an area of high value non-symptomatic kauri. With quality infrastructure the risk of human vectoring is considered low.
Fence Line Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		21/22	Upgrade work is required to facilitate the reopening of Montana Heritage Trail, a popular loop in the Cascade/Kauri area.
Fletcher Track	Closed	No	✓			✓		✓		23/24*	Popular link to create a longer loop option from key entry point at Karamatura valley.
Gibbons Track	Closed	No	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		20/21	Forms part of the Hillary Trail and creates coastal connectivity. Enables a longer loop walk from Whatipu.
Houghton Track	Closed	No			✓	✓		✓		23/24*	Forms part of the Hillary Trail. Current alignment may change.
Jubilee Walk	Closed	No		✓		✓		✓		19/20	Popular short walk for visitors to Cornwallis Beach.
Karamatura Loop Walk	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		19/20	Popular loop walk.
Karamatura Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		20/21	Forms part of the Hillary Trail and key connection between Huia and Whatipu.
Kuataika Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		23/24*	Forms part of the Hillary Trail. Current alignment may change.
Long Road Track	Partially Open	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		22/23	Upgrade work is required between where the track is currently closed at the forest edge to where it meets Fenceline Track. Forms part of the Montana Heritage Trail, a popular loop in the Cascade/Kauri area it also provides a link to Pae O Te Rangi farm.
Lower Nihotupu Dam Road	Closed	No			✓	✓		✓	✓	21/22	A Watercare service road, public access will be granted pending future infrastructure development.

Maungaroa Lookout Track	Closed	No	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		22/23	Provides a link to create loop walks and coastal connections in the Piha area.
Mt Donald McLean Walk	Closed	No		✓		✓	✓	✓		18/19	Work is underway, and the track will open in 2019.
Muir Track	Closed	No	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		20/21	Forms part of the Hillary Trail and creates coastal connectivity. Enables a longer loop walk from Whatipu.
Omanawanui Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		19/20	Forms part of the Hillary Trail and key connection between Huia and Whatipu.
Opanuku Pipeline Track	Closed	No				✓		✓	✓	19/20	Watercare Service Road. Partial opening only is proposed between Mountain Road and the bridge.
Panto Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		21/22*	Will form part of the Hillary Trail. Realignment of the last section is planned to connect with the Kakamatua Beach Walk.
Pararaha Valley Track	Closed	Yes (moved from being included in the current work programme to 19/20)	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		19/20	Resource consent application has been submitted and work will begin once approved.
Parau Track	Closed	No			✓	✓		✓		21/22*	Will form part of the Hillary Trail. Partial opening only proposed between Lower Nihotupu Dam Road and the Panto Track junction.
Puriri Ridge Track	Closed	No	✓			✓		✓		20/21	Forms part of the Hillary Trail and key connection between Huia and Whatipu.
Signal House Track	Closed	No				✓	✓	✓		19/20	Short coastal track off Omanawanui Track which leads to a viewpoint.
Slip Track	Closed	No			✓	✓		✓		18/19	Work is underway, and the track will open in 2019.

Taitomo Track	New track	Yes (moved from being included in the current work programme to 19/20)			✓	✓		✓		19/20	Design work is underway for this new track which will connect Log Race Road with South Piha and form part of the Hillary Trail.
Upper Kauri Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		21/22	Upgrade work is required to facilitate the reopening of Montana Heritage Trail, a popular loop in the Cascade/Kauri area.
Ussher Track	Closed	No				✓		✓		19/20	Provides an alternate entry/exit for the Piha Road end of Winstone Track to avoid an area of kauri forest.
Whatitiri Track	Closed	No			✓	✓		✓	✓	19/20	Forms a link between Long Road and Falls Rd via Pae O Te Rangi farm.
White Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		19/20	Provides a link to create loop walks at North Piha.
Winstone Track	Closed	No	✓		✓	✓		✓		19/20	Provides a link to create loop walks by connecting Kitekite Track to coastal tracks via a short section of Piha, Te Ahuahu and Log Race Roads.
Zion Hill Track	Closed	No	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		21/22*	The track links with the lower end of Buck Taylor and the beach to create a loop from Karekare.

Table 2: Tracks that have been added to the 2019 – 2024 work programme.

The table below shows 8 tracks have been added to the work programme due to public feedback or they are proposed new tracks which will provide additional walking opportunities.

Track name	Current status	Was a change made from consultation proposal?	Rationale								Further information
			Public feedback	Coastal/forest edge	Loops/links	Tikanga/rāhui	Iconic site or destination	Avoids high value non-symptomatic kauri ecosystems	Service road	Consent/build start year. * indicates multiyear	
Anawhata Farm Loop	Open	Yes (proposed new track)		✓	✓	✓		✓		19/20	The Anawhata farm is currently open however a defined walking route around the farm will be marked.
Cornwallis access track (from Cornwallis Wharf Road to Beach)	Closed	Yes (was not included in consultation)		✓	✓	✓		✓		19/20	Residents would like to see this beach access track reopen. It was not included in the consultation as it is not marked on Recreation Track Map as an 'official track'.
Cutty Grass Track	Closed	Yes (moved from not included to 20/21)	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	20/21	Identified as important through consultation process to residents given limited walking opportunities in their local area. A service road used for lines maintenance. Upgrades are required to make sure that maintenance activity is kauri safe which will also allow pedestrian access. Provides walking opportunities for Anawhata residents.
Fisherman's Rock Track	Proposed new track	Yes (proposed new track)		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		23/24*	A new track north from Whites Beach along the cliff top to Anawhata. This will open multiple coastal loop options outside of kauri areas.

Link from Kaitarakihi Beach to Con Bryan Track	Proposed new link	Yes (proposed new track)		✓	✓	✓		✓		22/23	Low tide connection along the coast (not a formed track). Will become part of the Hillary Trail, eliminating road walking and creating coastal connections.
Link from Kakamatua Beach to Spragg Monument	Proposed new track	Yes (proposed new track)		✓	✓	✓		✓		22/23*	Short track from Kakamatua inlet to Spragg Monument. Will become part of the Hillary Trail, eliminating road walking and creating coastal connections.
McElwain Lookout Track	Closed	Yes (moved from not included to 19/20)	✓			✓	✓	✓		19/20	Upgrade work is required to allow access to an iconic viewpoint. Partial opening only is proposed on the section with no kauri.
Spragg Bush Walk	Closed	Yes (moved from not included to 19/20)	✓	✓		✓				19/20	Identified as important through consultation process to residents given limited walking opportunities in their local area. Gives access to historic Waitākere Cemetery. Potential opportunity to link to Fairy Falls will be investigated.

Options to be investigated

Through the public consultation process, a number of submitters sought the inclusion of additional tracks. Auckland Council, in partnership with Te Kawerau ā Maki, will investigate the option of re-routing or opening low risk sections of the following 7 tracks for future inclusion in the work programme (Table 3).

Table 3: Tracks to be investigated for future inclusion

Track name	Current status	Was a change made from what was proposed in the consultation?	Rationale							Further information
			Public feedback	Coastal/forest edge	Loops/links	Tikanga/rāhui	Iconic sites or destination	Avoids high value non-symptomatic kauri ecosystems	Is a service road	
Cave Rock Track	Closed	Yes (moved from closed to investigate)		✓		✓		✓		This area is of cultural significance to Te Kawerau ā Maki. The track requires significant resurfacing.
Kura Track	Closed	Yes (moved from closed to investigate)	✓		✓	✓		✓		Current alignment is not supported from a tikanga and rāhui perspective. Options will be investigated into the feasibility of creating a replacement loop incorporating sections of Omanawanui Track.
Old Coach Road Track	Closed	Yes (moved from closed to investigate)	✓		✓	✓		✓		Partial opening only is proposed as a link between Spraggs Bush and Fairy Falls. The remainder would remain closed as the track crosses above an identified significant area of non-symptomatic kauri ecology.
Piha Valley Track	Closed	Yes (moved from closed to investigate)	✓			✓	✓	✓		Partial opening may be possible as far as the McKenzie Track junction. Beyond this point there are extensive areas of kauri ecology.
Smyth Ridge Track	Closed	Yes (moved from closed to investigate)	✓			✓		✓		Auckland Council is investigating options for section 6 of the Hillary Trail which may alter the alignment of Smythe Ridge Track.

Tramline (from Slip Track to Jacobson's Depot)	Proposed new track	Yes (proposed new track for investigation)			✓	✓		✓		Auckland Council is working with Watercare to investigate options to allow public access along the tramline offering additional loop options from Arataki.
Waitākere Tramline Walk	Closed	Yes (moved from closed to investigate)	✓			✓	✓	✓		Partial opening may be possible as far the tunnel. Beyond this point there are areas of high value non-symptomatic kauri.

Tracks not included in the 2019-2024 work programme.

The following table shows 10 tracks that submitters said they would like to see included in the future work programme but have not been included for reasons listed below. Most of these tracks have not been considered for re-opening because they run through areas of high value kauri and staff consider that re-opening them at this time would create a high risk of disease spread. No decisions have been made on whether tracks not in the upcoming work programme will be permanently closed. This will be considered as part of the Regional Parks Management Plan review in 2020 (Table 4).

Table 4: Tracks not included in the 2019-2024 work programme

Track name	Current status	Was a change made from what was proposed in the consultation?	Rationale							Further information
			Public feedback	Coastal/forest edge	Loops/links	Tikanga/rāhui	Iconic sites or destination	Avoids high value non-symptomatic kauri ecosystems	Is a service road	
Cascade Track	Closed	No	✓		✓					Similar recreation opportunities will be provided in the Cascade area. This track crosses a gully containing high value non-symptomatic kauri.
Centennial Track	Closed	No	✓		✓					Passes through stands of mature kauri and a large volume of rickers.
Farley Track	Closed	No	✓		✓					This track was closed in 2012 to prevent spreading disease from symptomatic areas at the start of the track to non-symptomatic areas further along the track.

Hamilton Track	Closed	No	✓		✓					Hamilton Track passes directly through areas of high value non-symptomatic kauri. An alternative route for the Hillary Trail between Arataki and Huia will be provided via Lower Nihotupu Dam Road, Parau and Panto Tracks.
Home Track	Closed	No	✓							Home Track contains high numbers of symptomatic kauri. For this to form a loop other tracks in the Piha Valley area would need to open.
Huia Ridge Track	Closed	No	✓					✓		Huia Ridge Track passes above a catchment which contains high value non-symptomatic kauri.
Odlin Timber Track	Closed	No	✓							Public feedback largely supported this track reopening to give access to off track activities in the streams. Off track activity is actively discouraged in the Regional Parks Management Plan, 2010.
Ridge Road Track	Closed	No	✓		✓			✓		This track is in the forest interior. Reopening is not supported from a rāhui/tikanga perspective.
Walker Ridge Track	Closed	No	✓		✓			✓		This track is in the forest interior. Reopening is not supported from a rāhui/tikanga perspective.
Zion Ridge Track	Closed	No	✓							Has high numbers of symptomatic trees. For this to form a loop other tracks would need to open.

The following tracks are not included in the 2019-2024 work programme:

The following currently closed tracks were either not mentioned by submitters or were mentioned by fewer than 15 submitters, as ones they would like included in the future work programme. These tracks are not included in the 2019-2024 work programme, however no decisions have been made on whether these tracks will be permanently closed. This will be considered as part of the Regional Parks Management Plan review in 2020.

- Anderson Track
- Arthur Mead Track
- Browne Track
- Chateau Mosquito Track
- Christies Track
- Clark Bush Track
- Cowan Track
- Crusher Pipe Track
- Destruction Gully Track
- Dreamlands Track
- East Tunnel Mouth Track
- Ferndown Track
- Filter Track
- Forbes Track
- Goat Hill Track
- Goodfellow Track
- Hettig Track
- Horoeke Track
- Incline Track
- Kakamatua Inlet Track
- Kakamatua Ridge Track
- Kauri Grove Track
- Lower Kauri Track
- Manukau Bar View Walk
- Marguerite Track
- Maungaroa Ridge Track
- McKenzie Track
- Peripatus Track
- Pipeline Track
- Pole Line Track
- Pukematekeo Track
- Quarry Track
- Rangemore Track
- RGB Track
- Sharp Bush Track
- Simla Track
- Sisam Track
- Summit Track (between Nihotupu Ridge Track and Christies Track)
- Swanson Pipeline Track
- Tom Thumb By-Pass Track
- Tom Thumb Track
- Twin Peaks Track
- Upper Huia Dam Track
- Wainamu Bush Track
- Waitoru Reserve Track
- West Tunnel Mouth Track

The following tracks will remain open/partially open:

- Anawhata Beach Track
- Arataki Nature Trail (Upper Loop and most of Lower Loop)
- Beveridge Track
- Byers Walk
- Comans Track
- Connect Track (from Kitekite Track to top of falls)
- Exhibition Drive
- Huia Dam Road (Watercare)
- Ian Wells Track (from Piha Road to Dam)
- Kakamatua Beach Walk
- Kitekite Track
- Knutzen Track
- Laird Thomson Track
- Lake Wainamu Track
- Large Kauri Walk
- Lion Rock Track
- Long Road Track (from road end to where paddock meets the forest)
- Lookout Track Arataki Visitor Centre

- Manukau Timber Company Heritage Trail
- Marawhara Walk
- Mercer Bay Loop Walk
- Monument Track (Mc Lachlan)
- Orpheus Graves Walk
- Pae O Te Rangi Farm Tracks
- Parker Track
- Pipeline Road
- Pohutukawa Glade Walk
- Rose Track
- Spragg Monument Track
- Taraire Track (from road to waterfall)
- Tasman Lookout Track
- Te Henga Walkway (DOC)
- Upper Nihotupu Dam Road (Watercare) and Upper Nihotupu Walk
- Waitākere Dam Walk
- Whatipu Caves Track
- Zigzag Track

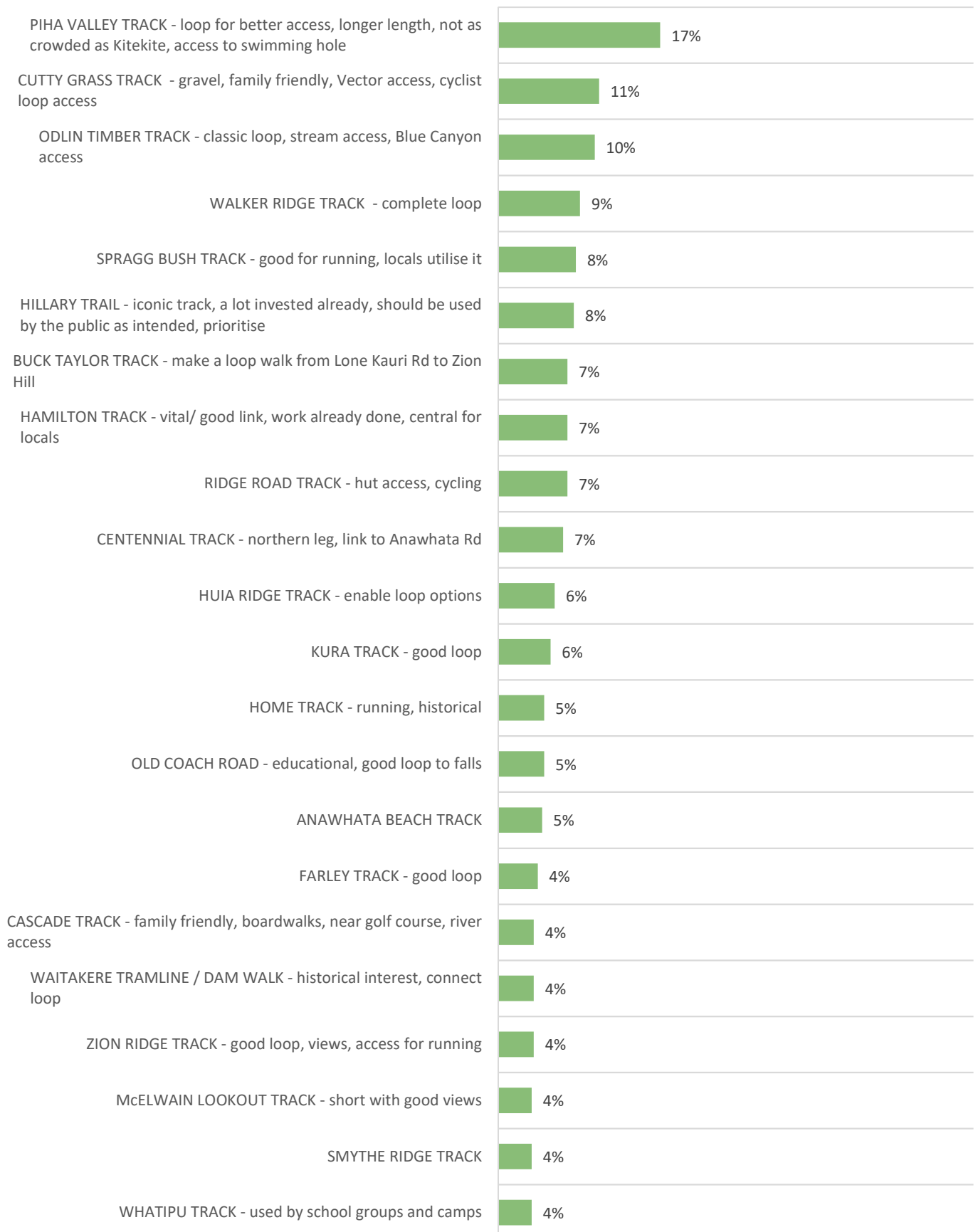
The following tracks have been permanently closed:

These tracks were closed by resolution of Auckland Council's Environment and Community Committee, December 2017 (ENV/2017/183)

- Bob Gordon Track
- La Trobe Track
- Lucy Cranwell Track
- Nihotupu Ridge Track
- Nugget Track
- Robinson Ridge Track
- Summit Track (between Nihotupu Ridge Track and Hamilton Track)
- Taumata Track
- Walker Kauri Track

Tracks submitters would like to see included in the future work programme

Base: n=422 (yes, I think a track should be included) PLUS 28 email/letter submissions.



Tracks to be prioritised

Tracks in the future work programme submitters would like to see prioritised

Base: n=681 PLUS 20 email/letter submissions.

