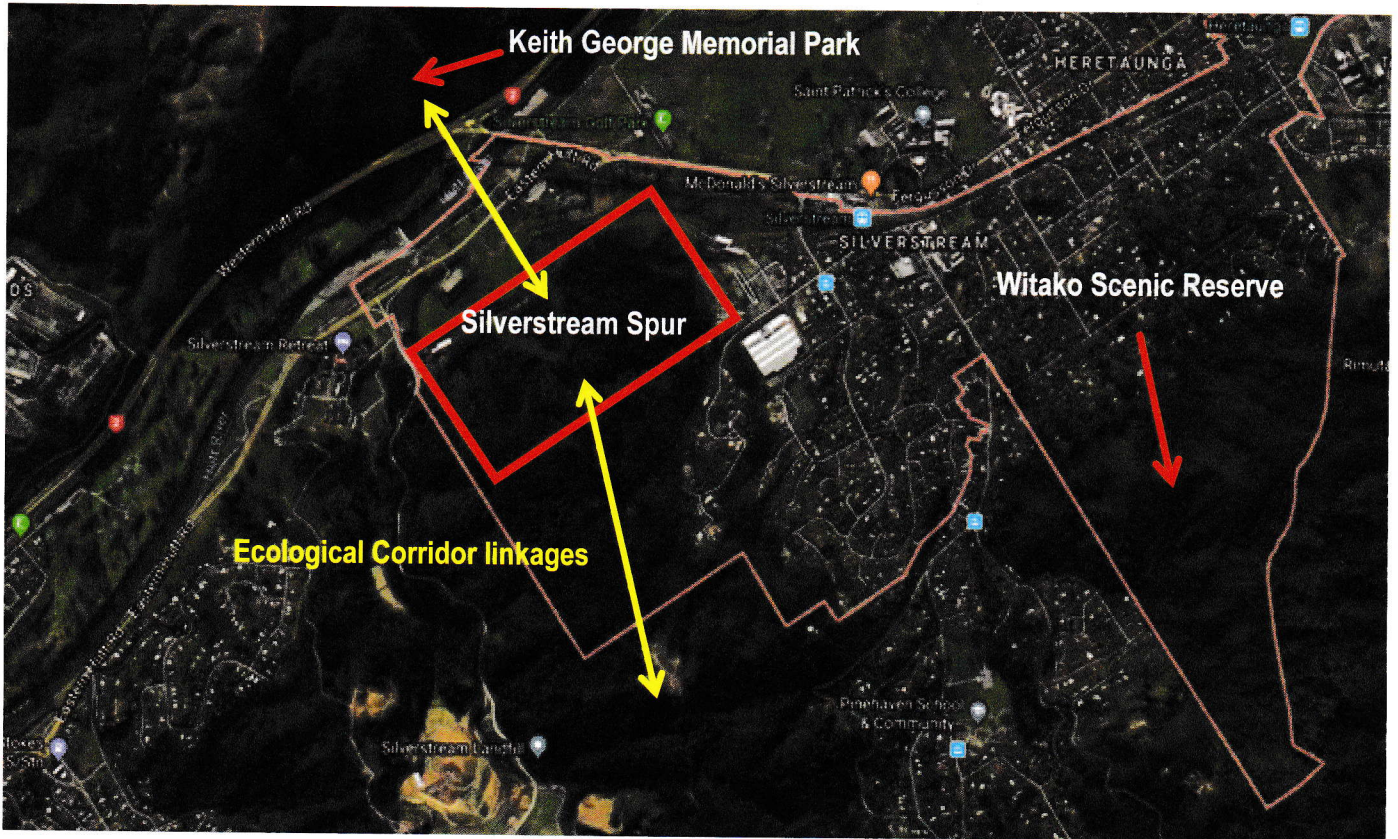




➡ Keep Silverstream Spur in Public Ownership ⬅



What You Should Know

- The 35ha Silverstream Spur belongs to the Upper Hutt community.
- UHCC is proposing to sell the public land to a private developer for housing development.
- UHCC is working towards deciding on this proposal as early as March/April 2021 – this follows a Memorandum of Understanding signed in 2016 between the developer and the UHCC.

Your Views Are Important - What Do You Think?

Do you support retaining the land in public ownership and considering options to develop the Spur for conservation, visual amenity and recreation purposes (eg, walking, cycling, ecological corridor establishment), for the benefit of future generations?

Questions You May Have

Q. Why is UHCC proposing to sell the land?

The Council has identified the tops of the Pinehaven Hill ridge as being suitable for housing development to meet future housing needs (*UHCC Land Use Strategy*). In addition, road access through the Spur is needed to access ridge housing.

Q. How did UHCC acquire the Silverstream Spur?

The land was purchased for Reserve purposes by UHCC around 1998 and is currently part-zoned Rural Hill and Residential Hill.

Q. Who wants to buy the land?

The Guildford Timber Company (GTC), owners of the Pinehaven Hill ridge, wish to buy the Spur to develop a larger area of ridgeline (300ha) for residential housing and forest conservation.

Q. How does the UH community benefit from the sale?

While GTC is proposing to include a land swap as part of 'the deal' (this land being 132ha of steep forested slopes in Pinehaven, proposed as a reserve contribution), the benefits to the UH community are limited, especially because future options become limited. While more land opens up for residential housing, the land is no longer available for public use. The benefits of Open Space are lost. There are limited recreation opportunities in the land being proposed to be swapped.

Q. What is the land worth?

UHCC is currently getting value estimates on the 35ha Spur and the 132ha land proposed for the land swap.

Q. How many houses are proposed to be built on the Pinehaven Hill ridge?

It is unknown how many houses are proposed to be built but proposals of over 1000 have been circulating.

Q. What needs to happen for the sale to proceed?

UHCC must go through a public consultation process before deciding on whether to proceed with the sale and land swap. In Dec 2021, it deferred an original proposal to consult over an extended holiday period.

Q. What other options has UHCC considered for the Spur?

None that we are aware of. By signing the MoU in 2016, UHCC launched itself into a focused discussion around land disposal. It has failed to actively explore other options that benefit the wider UH community.

Q. What is Forest & Bird (F&B) proposing for the Spur?

F&B objects to losing the land from public ownership and believes the UH community should be given the opportunity to explore options for retaining it as Open Space for purposes that potentially have wider benefits to future generations.

The Spur forms the eastern side of the narrowest part of the Hutt Valley, thereby creating a natural ecological corridor between the Western and Eastern Hills, bridging reserve land and open space between Keith George Memorial Park, Trentham Scenic Reserve and other forested area on both sides of the Hutt River. North and South. For many years, F&B Branches have been extensively planting native trees in this area of the Valley, thereby enhancing an aesthetic entranceway to Upper Hutt and restoring degraded habitats.

Q. In the wider context of things?

- It is acknowledged that we need more housing but a more strategic approach should be to better use the residential land we have now and build more high density housing – losing Open Space should be a later consideration.
- Even allowing a few houses on the Spur means an Open Space designation could not apply and inevitably over the years infill housing will gradually mean the loss of the aesthetic entranceway and the ecological area
- The Spur will be a sorely needed oasis in future when the tops of Pinehaven hills are in housing, the St Pats land is in housing, and there are multi-storey residential buildings near transport hubs such as Silverstream Station and Heretaunga Station.
- By its very essence, Open Space is beneficial to communities, providing multiple social, environmental, aesthetic, amenity, spiritual and ecosystem services and benefits – once it's gone, it's gone forever. Upper Hutt prides itself on its parks, reserves and other Open Space; long-term, these provide enduring benefits to the UH community. Let's not lose sight of that.