

# CONICAL HILL RESERVE

Landscape Concept Plan

January 2018

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CONICAL HILL RESERVE LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

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| Prepared for: Hurunui District Council (HDC)  |          |
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| Concept Plan                                  | 19.01.18 |
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## Introduction

Conical Hill is a key asset for the Hanmer Springs community and is described as “a significant aspect of the Hanmer Springs experience, particularly as a family outing or as a prelude to soaking in the thermal pools.” (Hurunui Reserves Management Plan 2012).

The Conical Hill walkway is located approximately 1.5km away from the Hanmer Springs Thermal Pools and Spa and the centre of the township. The Conical Hill walkway leads to a lookout at the 550m summit, providing views across the town and wider region (southward over the entire Hanmer Basin, westward to the Waiau River, and northward toward Jacks Pass and the Hanmer Range).

Originally, Conical Hill was covered in kanuka and tussock reflecting the Maori name for the Hanmer Plains, ‘Mania Rauhea’ or ‘plain of shining tussock’ (Hurunui Reserves Management Plan 2012). At the start of the 1900’s the zigzag track was cut into the hillside with exotic forests first planted in 1910.

The site is owned and managed by Hurunui District Council, and comprises 11.7 hectares of medium to steep terrain, surrounded by forest land and private landowners at the base of Conical Hill. Vegetation on Conical Hill consists of a mixture of exotic species and regenerating natives.

### Project

Align are investigating options to upgrade Conical Hill Reserve on behalf of Hurunui District Council. This is designing refurbishments to address several relevant objectives within the Hurunui Reserves Management Plan (2012) that are yet to be met; including:

- *“That the walking tracks to the Conical Hill summit be maintained to a high standard”*
- *“That the Conical Hill summit lookout be enhanced and kept in a tidy condition, including the removal of weeds and exotic tree species blocking the view to the Hanmer Basin, and the installation of an interpretation panel detailing surrounding place names which can be seen from the summit.”*
- *“That educational panels are installed along the walkway as appropriate to inform walkers of relevant flora and fauna.”*
- *“That the eroded short cuts to the summit be closed or stabilised with steps as appropriate.”*
- *“That mountain bikes and other wheeled vehicles be prohibited from the reserve.”*
- *“That a toilet be installed.”*

### Concept Plan

The concept plan will address these issues by designing for several key components.

Create refurbishments in key areas implented through:

- *Public amenities such as seating, bins, amenity features, and hard surfaced environments; and*
- *Creation of a public toilet block representing appropriate placement, location and circulation around its immediate area.*

Increase legibility and information by:

- *Aligning path routes with desire-lines*
- *Wayfinding linkages*
- *Signage for user groups (pedestrian / vehicle prohibition etc)*
- *Stabilising eroded short cuts; and*
- *Entrance signs and information boards.*

Ecological planting design:

- *Enhancing existing native planting; and*
- *Establishing options for removal of weeds and exotic tree management.*



## Conical Hill Key Issues and Opportunities

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### 1. Entrance Legibility

Current primary entrance to Conical Hill is not well signposted.

*Opportunity to create a more prominent gateway by designing the entrance with signage, planting and footpath to base of stairs.*



### 2. Eroded Short Cuts

Numerous shortcuts across the walkway are heavily eroded, steep and potentially dangerous.

*Opportunity to formalise a number of the shortcuts where appropriate and restrict access where shortcuts are not appropriate.*



### 3. Wayfinding

Limited signage containing track information.

*Opportunity to improve signage at key points with track (track difficulty, return trip times etc.) and educational (flora and fauna) information.*



### 4. Key Area Refurbishments

Poorly developed key areas including Conical Hill Rd Entrance and the Conical Hill Summit Lookout, lacking public amenities and maintenance required.

*Opportunity to address maintenance issues and introduce enhanced public areas through landscaping features.*



### 5. Ecological Design

Large areas of Conical Hill covered in exotic trees and groundcover plant species with pockets that block views across the Hanmer Basin.

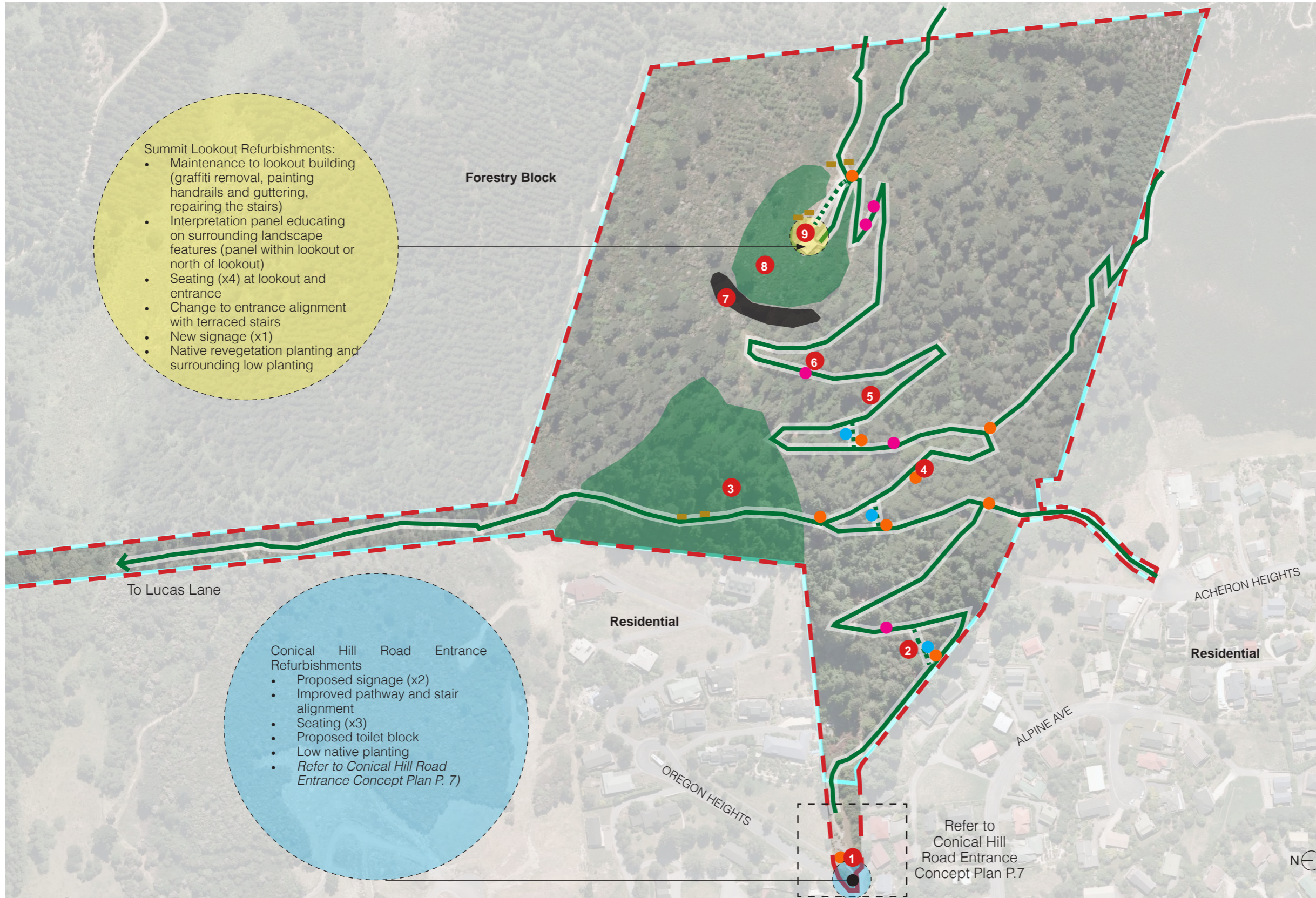
*Opportunity to remove weeds and exotic trees blocking views across the Hanmer Basin. Target revegetation planting of native species in key areas.*



### 6. Path Routes

Current path alignment does not match walking desire-lines (tracks worn into grass or planting).

*Opportunity to formalise routes through hardsurface and planting relocation, removal or reinstatement.*



NOTES:

- 1 Conical Hill Road Entrance Refurbishments (See notes adjacent)
- 2 Formalising of shortcut paths with steps, planting and signage.
- 3 Native revegetation planting
- 4 Nine new track wayfinding / education panels within native revegetation (at locations shown) to highlight restoration and list plant species
- 5 Infill planting of existing native vegetation areas across Conical Hill where required
- 6 Shortcut closed. Replaced with native planting, rocks or timber barriers to restrict access
- 7 Clearance of exotic trees blocking views across the Hanmer Basin
- 8 Native revegetation planting of Summit Lookout area
- 9 Summit Lookout Refurbishments (See notes adjacent)

KEY:

- Existing Walking Tracks
- - - Proposed Walking Tracks
- Proposed Entrance Signage
- Proposed Track Wayfinding/Educational Signage
- Proposed Seating
- Shortcuts to formalise: clearance of vegetation and path installed
- Shortcuts to close; combination of planting, and timber path edge barriers
- Proposed Native Revegetation
- Existing Exotic Trees to clear
- Proposed Refurbishment Key Areas

**Summit Lookout Refurbishments:**

- Maintenance to lookout building (graffiti removal, painting handrails and guttering, repairing the stairs)
- Interpretation panel educating on surrounding landscape features (panel within lookout or north of lookout)
- Seating (x4) at lookout and entrance
- Change to entrance alignment with terraced stairs
- New signage (x1)
- Native revegetation planting and surrounding low planting

**Conical Hill Road Entrance Refurbishments**

- Proposed signage (x2)
- Improved pathway and stair alignment
- Seating (x3)
- Proposed toilet block
- Low native planting
- Refer to Conical Hill Road Entrance Concept Plan P. 7)

Scale: 1:2500 at A3

# Concept Plan - Conical Hill Road Entrance



Residential









Residential


Residential

**NOTES:**

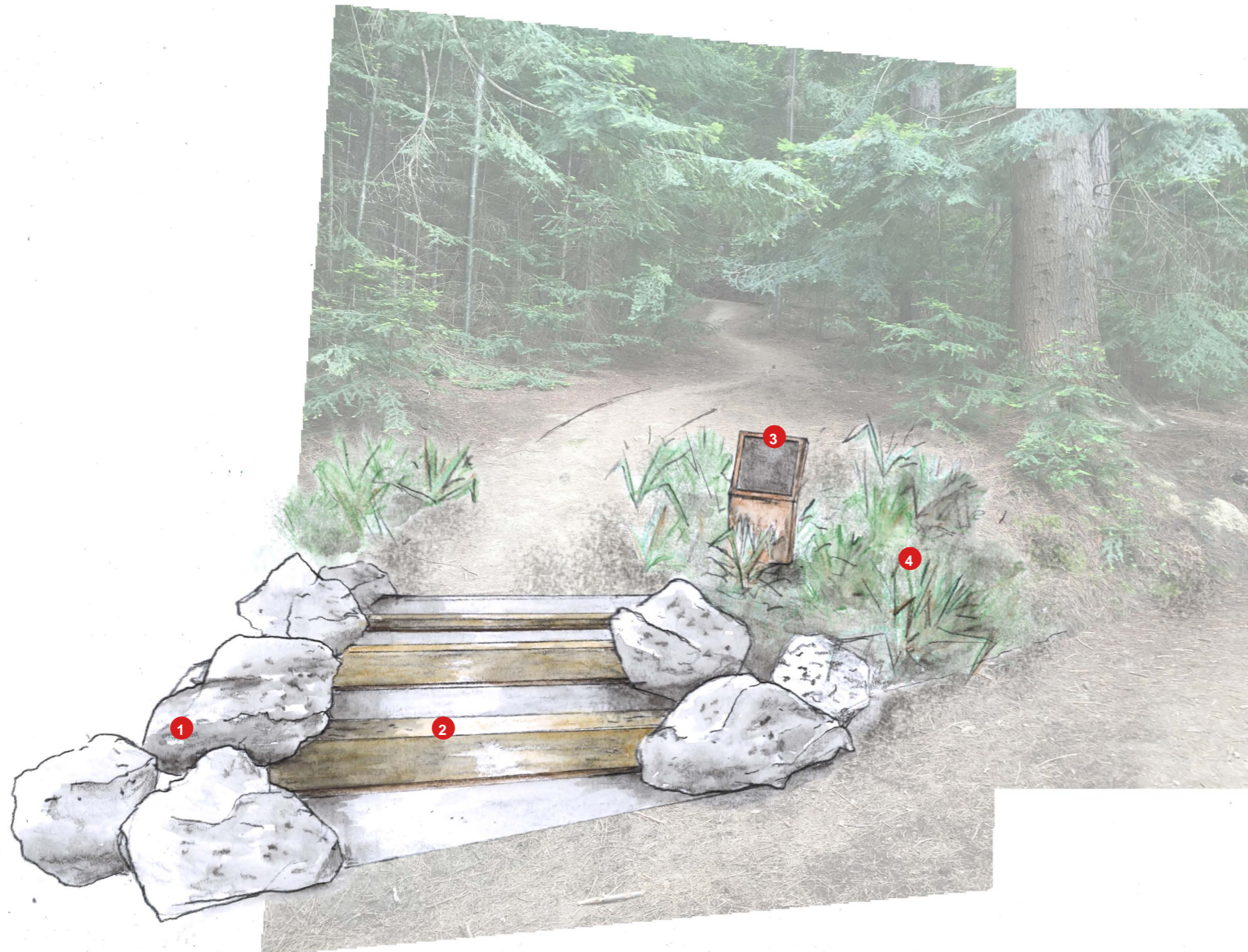
- 1 Proposed signage at base of stairs.
- 2 Widening of stairs from Conical Hill Road and relocation of existing handrails to the left side of stairs to allow users to alternate between the stairs and ramp. Stairs shortened to allow for the addition of a footpath at the base of the steps to ensure users aren't stepping directly onto road. Additional planting between kerb and footpath to direct users along footpath.
- 3 Additional clear and legible wayfinding signage within planting area.
- 4 Realignment of paths and planting areas. Removal of planting and existing trees to better allow sightlines through the space.
- 5 Inclusion of seating areas.
- 6 Existing low native planting retained with weeding carried out to remove pine saplings and other undesired species.
- 7 Terraced area in hardsurface with feature rocks. Timber seating area with native planting behind to define the space.
- 8 Toilet block with water fountain and drink bottle filling station.
- 9 Proposed new specimen trees
- 10 Low native planting to boundary to define space.
- 11 Existing exotic vegetation retained.

**KEY:**

-  Proposed Signage
-  Proposed Trees
-  Existing Trees
-  Proposed Planting
-  Existing Planting
-  Grass
-  Timber Seats
-  Rocks

N  
  
 Scale: 1:250 at A3

# Perspective Sketch - Eroded Slope Formal Stabilisation



Proposed

## NOTES:

- 1 Boulders to integrate stairs within surrounding area and define pathway.
- 2 Concrete and timber stairs with potential timber fengraving detail on tread.
- 3 Signage with wayfinding information to direct users. Signage to also display educational panels with information on flora and fauna.
- 4 Native revegetation planting.

## Existing





Exemplar Imagery



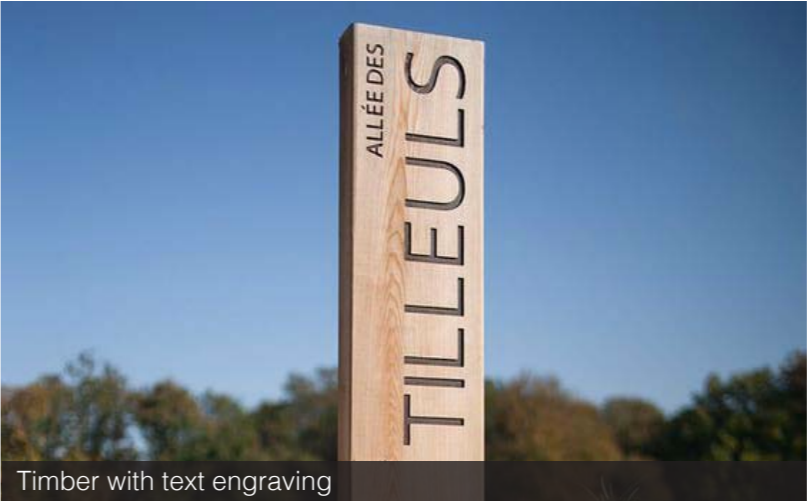
Terraced seating/stair combination



Clear, legible signage



Timber decking and seating



Timber with text engraving



Engaging education panels



Native revegetation planting


















Toilet block example



Native revegetation planting and rustic character furnishings

# Revegetation Planting Palette

|                        |   |   |  |   |
|------------------------|---|---|--|---|
| SHRUBS & GROUND COVERS |    |    |    |    |
|                        |   |   |   |   |
|                        |  |  |  |  |
|                        |  |   |  |  |
|                        |   | TREES   |  |   |

Two types of planting are proposed in the concept plan for Conical Hill.

**1. Feature Planting**

For key areas such as entrances, formalised shortcuts etc, low flaxes, small shrubs and tussocks should be used to provide structure to spaces and aid in wayfinding while maintaining viewsheds to surrounding areas.

**2. Revegetation planting**

Adjacent to the track and on other areas of the hill, plant species shall include beech and totara trees on higher slopes to blend the revegetation in with the existing vegetation on Conical Hill.

Planting types to be developed further in next stages of design.