

# Existing and potential use and perceptions of the “Spine of the Lizard” walking routes:

An investigation into the Banks Peninsula summit walkway and associated feeder tracks



Prepared by:  
Phil Holland  
Stephen Espiner  
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Cover Image: Lyttelton Harbour and Pegasus Bay from Mt Herbert

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## Executive Summary

In the summer of 2013-14, Lincoln University, in conjunction with the Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust, undertook an investigation into the recreational use of Banks Peninsula Summit Walkway and associated feeder tracks. The purpose of this study was to assess the current and potential use of the track network, as well as to document perceptions of current track users about existing and future provisions to inform the “Spine of the Lizard” project, a joint partnership between the Trust and the Department of Conservation.

### Key Findings

- The Summit Walkway tracks are used extensively, peaking at over 1000 visitors a month with February through to April identified as the peak period.
- The majority (86%) of track users are from the Canterbury region, with middle-aged male adults representing the largest group of users.
- Current users of the track network express a high level of satisfaction with their recreational experience, noting that the tracks are an important part of the outdoor recreation culture in the Canterbury region.
- Packhorse Hut is an iconic building and a destination in its own right, although current hut facilities and levels of servicing may not be adequate for peak periods or future use.
- Information about the track network is limited and weakly coordinated.
- A large number of respondents surveyed at neighbouring parks were unaware of the recreational opportunities afforded by the Summit Walkway and associated tracks.
- Signage on the track network is inadequate in many places (especially at the track heads), potentially undermining the quality of the outdoor recreation experience.
- Support for recreational infrastructure development on the Summit Walkway network was evident among both current and potential track users, with particular interest in building an additional hut on the network.
- The majority of respondents were ambivalent about the proposed name the “Spine of the Lizard” for the upgraded walking tracks.



Figure 1: Near Monument track

## **Key Recommendations**

- The agencies and groups involved in the management of the track develop a unified vision and plan for the maintenance, development and promotion of the track.
- The Packhorse Hut is retained and the level of servicing is increased.
- That another hut is built on the Hilltop to Mount Herbert section of the track, to relieve the pressure on Packhorse Hut and offer alternative walks including 3 day/2 night options.
- A usable map, track maps and website with information on the whole network should be developed.
- Signage throughout the network is improved and standardised.



# 1 Introduction

The 'Spine of the Lizard' refers to an existing network of walking tracks on Banks Peninsula, including a main track along its central ridge from Gebbies Pass to Hilltop and a series of feeder tracks connecting to it. The Department of Conservation and the Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust are working in partnership to upgrade and develop these tracks into a cohesive recreation and education resource easily accessible from Christchurch. In order to contribute to this goal, this study sought to investigate existing and potential use of the network of tracks associated with the Spine of the Lizard by:

- Determining the profile of current users of the walking and biking tracks (e.g. activity type, frequency of use, preferences); and
- Assessing user perceptions of the current tracks, and their perspectives on potential future developments of the track and associated facilities.

The research project aims to provide an understanding of existing track users through:

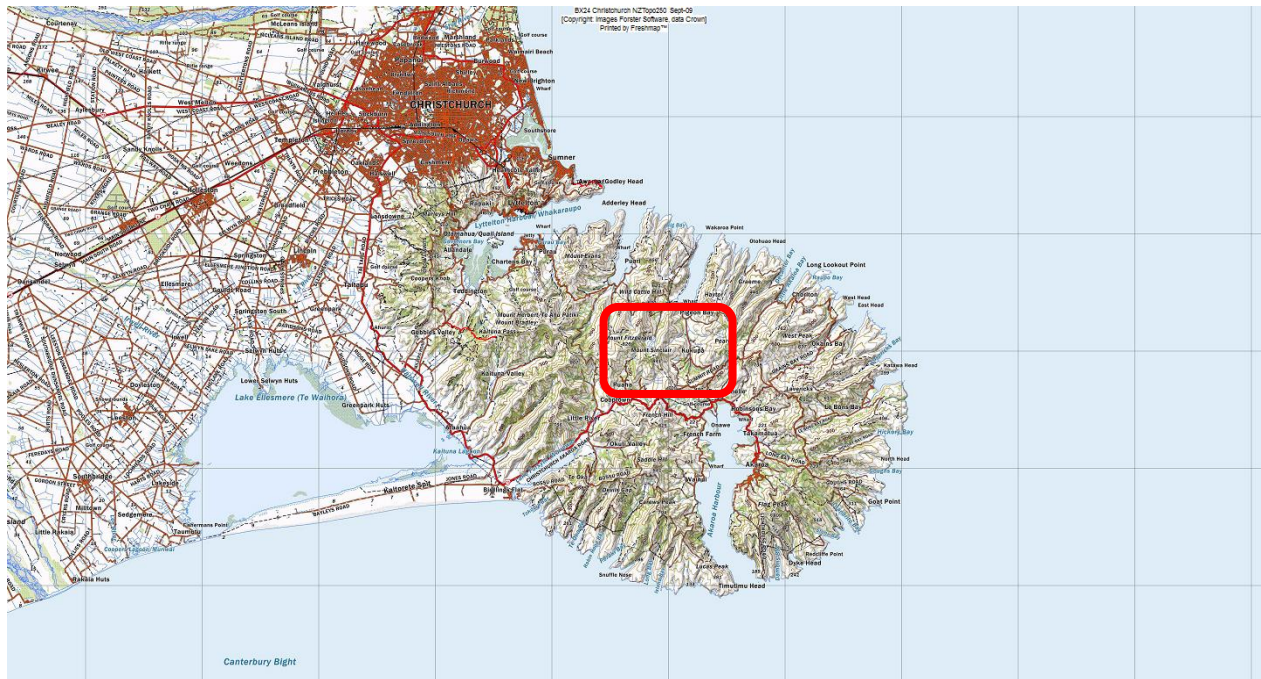
- Reviewing the existing data on use of the track from the Packhorse Hut books and any other sources held by DOC to determine user profiles and the ratio of walkers to mountain bikers;
- Interviewing existing users at several key locations to collect data on user perceptions, frequency of use and user perspectives on potential future developments of the track and associated facilities.



**Figure 2: Packhorse Hut**

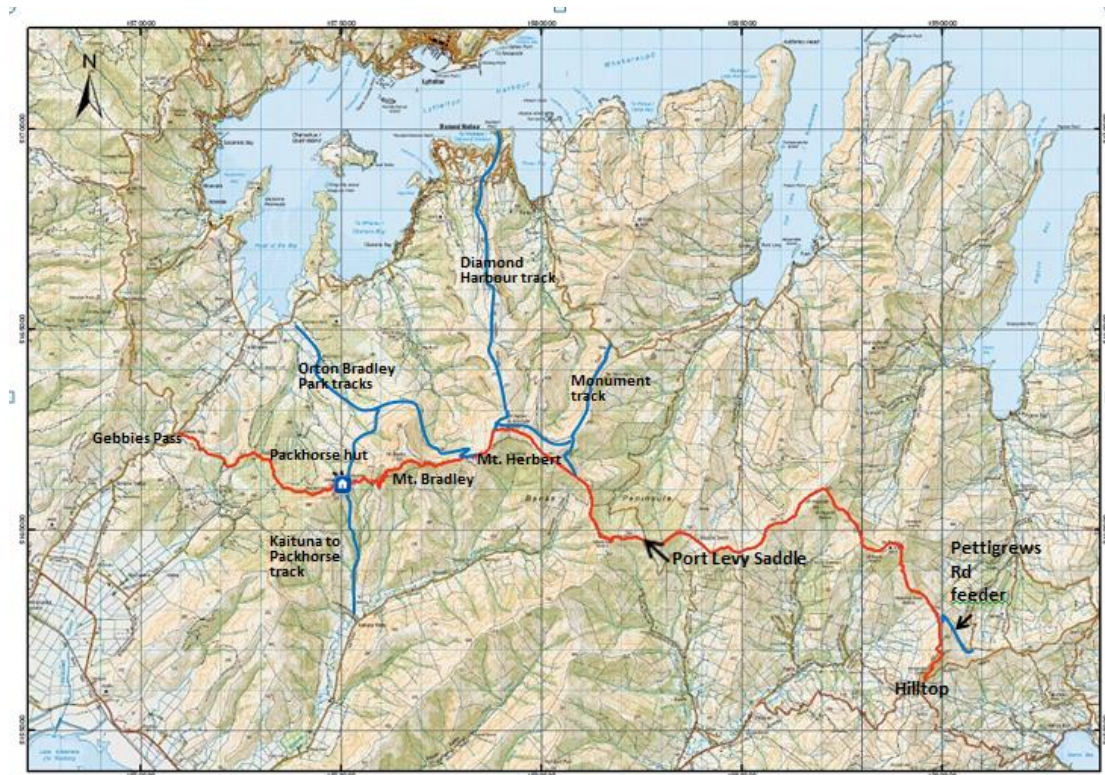
The Summit Walkway system is situated on Banks Peninsula, close to Christchurch city at one end, and Akaroa at the other (Figure 4). The tracks traverse a variety of different terrain including pastoral land used for farming and bush reserves, and are developed to a variety of differing levels. In part this is because the tracks traverse land managed and owned by different agencies including farm tracks on private land, farm tracks on unformed legal road and tracks through DOC reserves. The track network is accessible to varying degrees and is generally suitable for those on foot (and in some places mountain bikes) but access is restricted during early spring when most farmed parts are closed for

lambing. As [Pickering \(1999: 9\)](#) has noted, the track network is highly regarded: “This system of walking tracks is magnificent, overlooking the very heart of Banks Peninsula and has the potential to be one of New Zealand’s finest walk networks.”



**Figure 3: Track location  
(Freshmap, 2002-2010)**

Figure 4 shows the main spine route following the ridgeline from Gebbies Pass to Hilltop on the Christchurch Akaroa highway in red and the five feeder tracks linking to it in blue.



**Figure 4: The Summit Walkway system**

The current track system incorporates two huts, with the Packhorse Hut often regarded as the ‘jewel in the crown’ (Figure 5). The Packhorse Hut is managed by the Department of Conservation to a backcountry hut standard. Facilities include bunks, water supply, cooking areas, fireplace and firewood and a toilet.



**Figure 5: Packhorse Hut**

The other hut is the little used, Youth Hostel Association (YHA) hut on the Monument track (Figure 5). This structure is not managed by DOC and is more akin to a very basic shelter.



**Figure 6: The YHA hut on the Monument track**

The tracks owe their existence to the vision of Harry Ell who, in 1899, foresaw the need to preserve the public right of access to the Port Hills behind Christchurch. This concern about access and a deeply ingrained conservation ethic was the genesis of his concept of a walking track from Godley Head to Akaroa and he devoted much of the rest of his life to making his dream a reality ([Johns, 2006](#); [Oakley, 1960](#)). The Gebbies Pass to Hilltop Summit Walkway is part of his legacy, as is the Godley Head to Gebbies Pass Summit Road and the Crater Rim Walkway that runs parallel to much of the Summit Road. Another legacy of Ell's commitment and drive is the unique stone walled Packhorse Hut which has provided accommodation on the route since it was completed in 1916 (Figure 7).



**Figure 7: Historic View of Packhorse Hut (DOC)**

The Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust and others have followed Harry Ell's lead, recognising that the people of Christchurch use the Port Hills and Banks Peninsula to recreate, as observed by [Oakley \(1960: 8\)](#) in her biography of Harry Ell:

“During the week these hills lie quiet, only an occasional sight-seeing bus or car disturbing the peace. But comes the weekend and all Christchurch appears to arise and go to the hills. Only a people condemned to live on a plain can understand this yearning which finds expression in a weekly exodus to nearby hills”.

Today, the track network is primarily administered by the Department of Conservation with the Christchurch City Council managing the section from Gebbies Pass to the Packhorse Hut, and parts of two feeder tracks provided by Orton Bradley Park, a private charitable trust. Some track sections such as the Monument Track fall outside any administration and are effectively maintained through grazing only. The tracks pass through land that is in a mixture of private and public ownership.

## **2 Study Methods**

This project aimed to provide an understanding existing track users through the following approaches: reviewing the existing data on use of the track from the Packhorse Hut visitor books and any other sources held by DOC to determine user profiles and the ratio of walkers to mountain bikers; surveying existing users at several key locations to collect user perceptions of the current tracks, their frequency of use and their reactions to and their perspectives on potential future developments of the track and associated facilities; and surveying potential users of the Summit Walkway tracks engaged in tramping

and mountain biking at other local selected sites to discover their interest in an upgraded Spine of the Lizard route.

## 2.1 Track user data collection

The three methods used to collect data about current track users and their experience of the track network were an analysis of hut books, track counter data and the Summit Walkway tracks survey.

### 2.1.1 Hut book analysis

Every hut administered by the Department of Conservation has a visitors book (known as a hut book) in which users of the hut voluntarily record the date, the number of people in the party, the number of nights stayed, the tracks they have used to get to the hut, and any tracks they intend to use when leaving the hut. In addition to this information, some users record their impressions and observations, and as such these books form an interesting and useful record of recreational use (see Figure 8). Data were collated from the Packhorse hut books covering three time periods:

- December 2003 to April 2005
- January 2007 to January 2008
- January to February 2014

The dataset was limited to these three periods due to the availability of the hut books. The first two periods represent the only two historic hut books available from the Department of Conservation at the time of the study, and the last period represents the current book in use at the time of writing. The hut book analysis was carried out by coding the entries and entering the codes into a spreadsheet. This dataset comprises hut book entries of 1870 parties representing 6915 individual users.

Date of arrival at this facility	No. of nights at this facility	No. in party	Phase	Name of party members	Home town (include country if not from New Zealand)	Date out from this trip
22/2/07	0	2		Trace Foster + Clarke Jones	Chch	Andam
24/2/07	1	2		Rebecca Wolf + Andrew	Chch	25/2/07
25/2/07	1	1		Yohanny Homih	CHCH & Tokyo/Japan	26/2/07
26/2/07	1	3		Nick Smyth Gilda O'Brien/Sara + Emily Sinclair	Little River	26/2/07
26/2/07	1	1		Phillip Croftall	Tai Tapu	26/2/07
27/2/07	1	26 adults 7 Adults		Others + 19 students	Quararua	27/2/07
28/2/07	1	2		Patricia + Anna	Wainuiomata +	28/2/07
29/2/07	0	36		John Gibson + 35 others	Milwaukee, WI USA	29-2/07
29/2/07	0	30		Colleen	Christchurch	29-2/07
1/3/07	0	1		Phillip Croftall	Tai Tapu	1/3/07
1/3/07	0	38		Colleen Rees	Chch	1/3/07
2/3/07	2	2		R + C	Widow Seal/and	2/3/07
2/3/07	2	2		Beth + Kenzie	USA (Chicago)	2/3/07
2/3/07	1	4		Paul, Rachel, Nick, Peter	Chch	3/3/07
3/3/07	1	2		Sara Black + 1 other	Chch	3/3/07
3/3/07	1	2		Laura + 1 other	Chch	3/3/07
3/3/07	1	2		Alex + 1 other	Chch	3/3/07
3/3/07	1	2		Kim + 1 other	Seoul Korea	3/3/07
4/3/07	1	7		2/3/07	Chch	4/3/07
4/3/07	1	7		2/3/07	Chch	4/3/07
4/3/07	1	3		2/3/07	Chch	4/3/07

Planned route and destination from this facility	Main activity on this trip	Annual hut pass number	Comments
Orton Bradley park circuit	strolling		lovely hut what a surprise.
Down to Kaituma Valley camp	walking + observing		Chocoe.
Guide run up Mt Herbert	about 1000m		
Kaituma Valley from camp	hiking		fine place, nice views
Out to Kaituma	hiking		lovely
departed 11.49 AM for	Kaituma Valley		Fitness hike
trip - back to Kaituma	walking		Some walk, extended
Camp site			some - great hut.
CHC - 10.49 am	Hiking		Beautiful
Approp back to park	Walking		Chocoe's
departed for Kaituma Valley	12.05 PM		Fitness hike
day trip for Kaituma Group	Walking		lovely the view!!
"	"		"
Day trip from Christchurch	walking		Gorgeous country
One night with camp of kids	swimming		So good!
			Beautiful!
back to Kaituma valley	enjoying!		(real) fantastic summer day!
To Kaituma Valley	Walking		Great - nice hut
Back to Kaituma valley	enjoying!		"
departed for Kaituma valley	walking		Beautiful!
To Galloway	hiking		Vertical Day
Kaituma Valley	Walking		Great! Best
			Nice views
			Great view

Figure 8: A sample page of a hut book

### 2.1.2 Track counter data

Track counter data within the Summit Walkway network was obtained from the Department of Conservation who had installed them at two locations along the route.

- Orton Bradley to Mount Herbert, November 2008 to February 2013 (n = 5391).
- Summit Walkway Port Levy to Hilltop (Mount Sinclair), November 2008 to June 2013 (n = 4789).

The track counters most commonly used by the Department of Conservation are hidden pressure plates in the surface of the track, the counters are hidden to avoid vandalism.

### **2.1.3 Summit Walkway Tracks Survey**

In addition to these measures, a survey of existing Summit Walkway users was conducted (see Appendix A). The survey consisted of 17 questions to assess user perceptions of the current tracks, their frequency of use and their reactions to, and their perspectives on, the proposed Spine of the Lizard Walkway and other possible future developments of the track and associated facilities.

In total, 96 surveys were administered during December 2013 and January 2014. Given logistical constraints, and owing to its central location on the track network, most of the questionnaires were completed in the Packhorse Hut area. This part of the track has the highest concentration of track users as it is at the junction of four tracks and is the part of the track which is closest to the main population of Christchurch. A minority of surveys were completed at Gebbies Pass car park and the Mount Herbert summit and the Monument Track.

Where users of the track were in groups, only one person from the group was asked to complete the survey in an effort to avoid duplication of the user data.

### **2.1.4 Potential user data collection**

In conjunction with an associated project, a survey of potential users who were participating in similar outdoor recreation activities close to Christchurch city also was undertaken. The aim of this survey was to assess the level of knowledge about the Summit Walkway network of tracks among individuals who undertake similar recreation activities to those available on the Summit Walkway. Those recreationists who had previously used the walkway were asked to assess three possible track development scenarios presented in the Summit Walkway Tracks survey.

The potential user survey was conducted at three locations: Halswell Quarry Park (n = 50), Victoria Park (n = 50) and Godley Head Recreation Area (n = 47) (see Appendix B) during December 2013 and January 2014. These locations were chosen because of their proximity to Christchurch (where most users of the Summit Walkway Tracks live) and their high usage by people undertaking walking, running, mountain biking and other outdoor recreation activities.

Data from both surveys were collated, coded and entered into an Excel spread-sheet, then analysed using SPSS (v.22) software.

### **2.1.5 Limitations**

Runners and mountain bikers were difficult to survey across all the various sites due to their speed and reluctance to stop so as a consequence these activity groups may be under represented in this research.

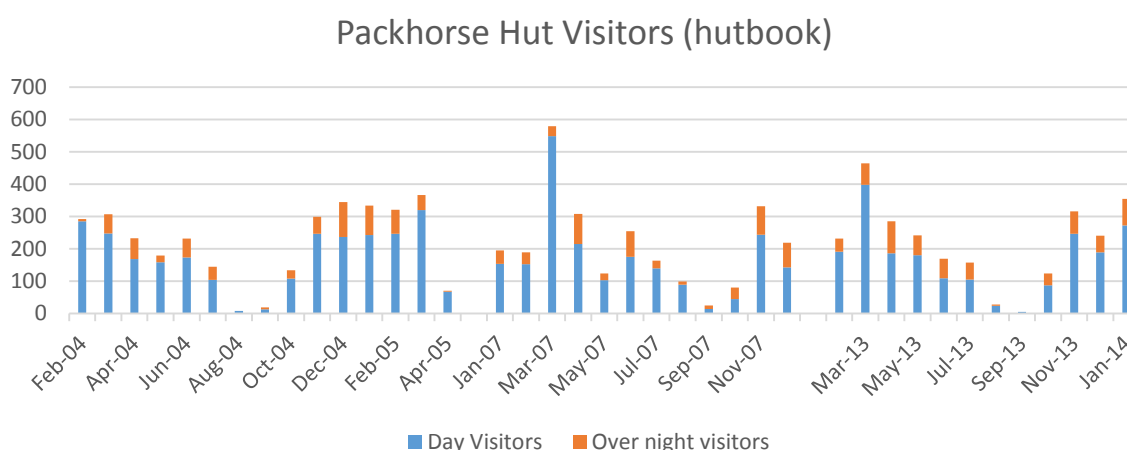
This study was conducted over a relatively short and wet summer period that has been described by many as having an atypical start, resulting in a reduced numbers of outdoor recreationalists over the Christmas to New Year period.

Given logistical constraints, and the concentration of track users, most of the questionnaires were completed in the Packhorse Hut area. Only a minority of surveys were completed at Gebbies Pass car park and the Mount Herbert summit and the Monument Track.

### 3 Results

#### 3.1 Hut book data

The hut book analysis revealed that the number of day visitors far exceeded the overnight visitors (Figure 9). In each of the three periods under analysis, the month of March represented the highest use. Further examination of the hut books showed that this period is popular with school groups which are often up to 30 in number. Periods of lower use reflect the fact that much of the track system has restricted access during lambing in August and September each year. The usage also appears to be weather and season dependent. Not surprisingly, the number of people on the track during the times the survey was conducted increased when the weather was warm and dry.



**Figure 9: Packhorse hut visitor data from hut book entries (n=1790)(Note the dates of this dataset are discontinuous.)**

Table 1 below records the average use of the Packhorse Hut as measured by the hut book in the peak months of February, March and April.

**Table 1: Average visitors per month numbers at Packhorse Hut taken over three years 2005, 2007 and 2013**

Average visitors per month (Packhorse Hut)	Day Visitors	Overnight	Total
February	306	53	359
March	258	69	327
April	266	55	321

The figures given above are taken from the actual entries in the hut books. However, this is likely to be an underestimate of use, as when asked in the on-site surveys if respondents had completed an entry in the hut book when visiting Packhorse Hut, 66 per cent of respondents said they had not. Observations at the hut when administering surveys confirmed this. The proportion was the same in both day visitors and overnight visitors. In order to estimate the true level of hut and track use, a multiplication factor of 2.94<sup>1</sup> has been used to estimate the total usage of this section of the track (see Table 2). When asked about their reluctance to complete the hut book, many reported that they don't fill in hut books on day walks and in particular in a place as 'tame' as this section of track. Of those

<sup>1</sup> Calculated on the basis that 34% of visitors complete an entry in the hut book (100/34 = 2.94)

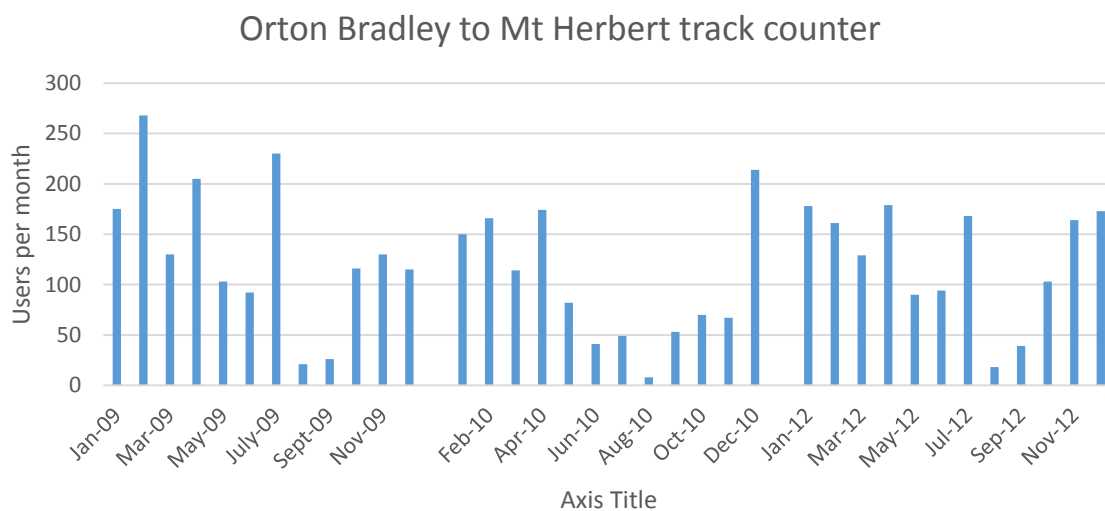
overnight visitors willing to talk about their non-use of the hut book, the most common reason given was that they did not pay hut fees and thought that the Department of Conservation would trace them if they left their names.

**Table 2: Adjusted average visitor numbers at Packhorse Hut taken over three years 2005, 2007 and 2013**

Average visitors (Packhorse Hut)	Adjusted usage day visitors	Adjusted usage overnight visitors	Adjusted usage total visitors
February	900	156	1055
March	759	203	961
April	782	162	944

### 3.2 Track counter data

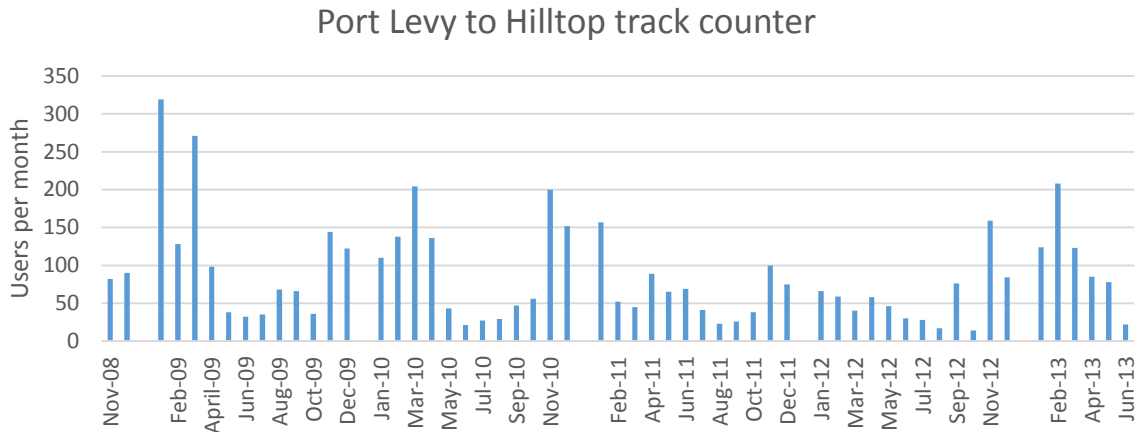
The way this data is collected differs from the hut book data because the users don't need to make a conscious effort to be recorded. The data shows the same overall trends in seasonal usage, with the summer months being higher. Usage of the Orton Bradley section of the track has a number of spikes (Figure 10) which are likely caused by the use of the track by large groups partaking in outdoor education activities. Because of the large number of feeder tracks between Gebbies Pass and Hilltop, the appropriate placement of counters to capture the total usage of the system is challenging. Either a large number of counters or personnel would need to be deployed over a long period to capture the full extent of the usage.



**Figure 10: Track usage Orton Bradley to Mt Herbert section (n=5391) (DoC track counter) (Note the dates of this dataset are discontinuous.)**

The Port Levy to Hilltop data (Figure 11) again shows the seasonal nature of track use with the summer months being the peak.





**Figure 11: Track usage Port Levy Saddle to Hilltop section (n=4789) (DoC track counter)**  
**(Note the dates of this data set are discontinuous.)**

The two track counters show dissimilar trends to the hut book data (Figure 9). Unlike the Packhorse Hut book data, the average usage appears to vary between the years recorded.

**Table 3: Average visitor numbers over three years on Orton Bradley track 2009, 2010 and 2012 in addition Port Levy track data contains 2011, and 2013**

Mean track usage per month	Port Levy to Hilltop Track	Orton Bradley to Mt Herbert Track
February	117	198
March	137	124
April	93	186

Track use data were collected from three primary sources: the Packhorse hut books and the track counter in two locations. Each of the three datasets generated from this work represent different and distant parts of the track system, so it is unlikely that many people would be counted in more than one of the places on any one day. It is therefore possible to add the figures from the three places and get an estimate of the average usage. This figure is conservative and likely to be lower than the actual use since it is possible to use the track system and not pass any of the three places where track use is recorded.

When combined, the hut book data and the track counter data gives an indicative average of track usage for a ‘typical’ February to April peak season (Table 4). It must be emphasised that, for the reasons outlined previously, this is likely to be a conservative estimate of actual usage.

**Table 4: Estimated total number of people using the track in a given month**

Month	Average visitors across the whole track system
February	1370
March	1222
April	1223

### 3.3 Visitor Survey Results

This section contains the results of the survey completed by 96 track users in December 2013 and January 2014. The respondents were all using part of the Summit Walkway Track.

#### 3.3.1 Profile of track users

The majority of survey respondents (73%) reported having used the track on at least one occasion in the past. This high rate of return visits is an indicative of a high level of satisfaction among current users. Respondents were asked how often they used the track network, with almost two thirds (62%) of all respondents reporting using the track network at twice per year, and more than a third (37%) reporting four or more visits per year (Figure 12).

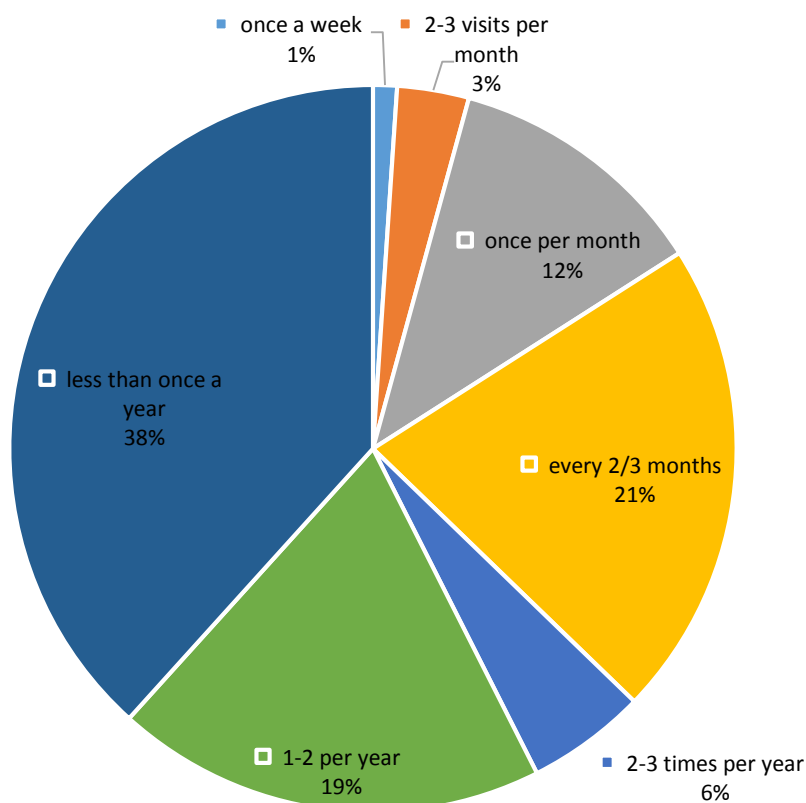
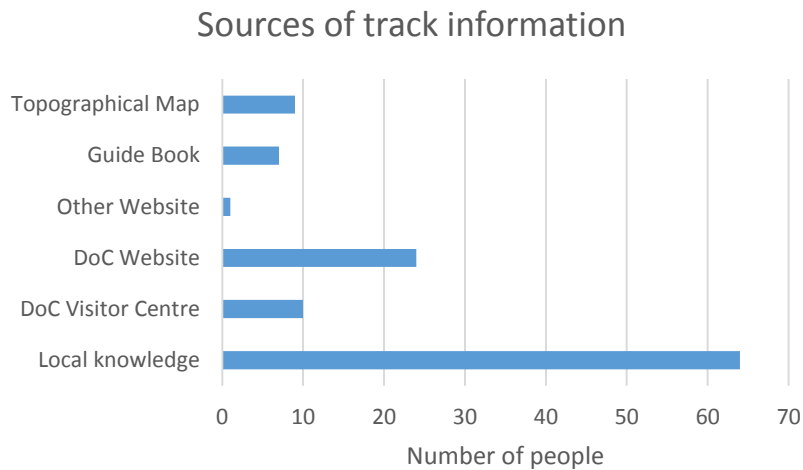


Figure 12: Frequency of use profile of questionnaire respondents (n=94)

#### 3.3.2 Information sources

Survey respondents were asked to identify their key source of information about the track network (Figure 13). While many reported using multiple sources of information, 64 per cent of respondents reported local knowledge, either their own or that of an acquaintance as their key source. Beyond this, the DOC website is a relatively popular source of track information, with approximately one quarter of respondents identifying this as a key information source. Anecdotally, many respondents commented to the interviewer about the lack of a single source of information about the track, either online or in a printed format.



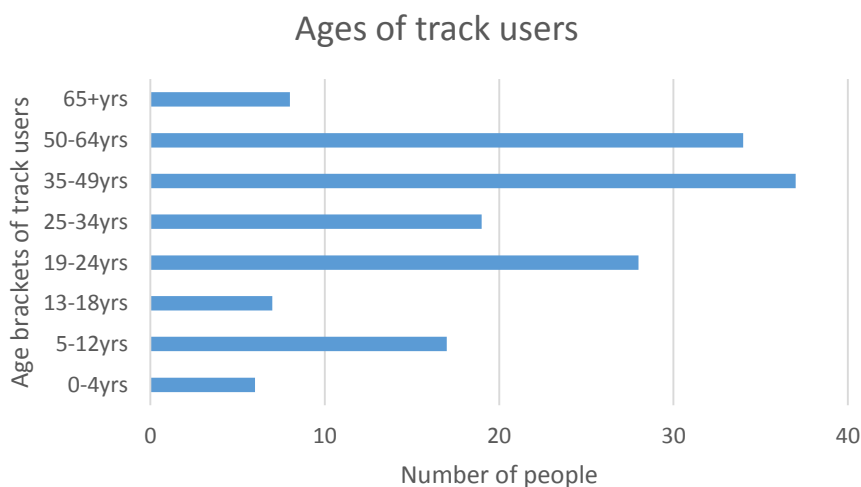
**Figure 13: Sources of track information reported by users (n=94) (Note: some recipients used multiple sources.)**

### 3.3.3 Track user profile

Middle-aged male adults represented the largest group of users in this research. Among the young, primary school-aged children are the most significant group of users. Both the hut book notes and field observations indicate that Packhorse Hut and its two shorter access tracks are frequently used by family groups to introduce five to twelve year old children to the ‘tramping experience’. Typically these family groups include a male with one or more children.

### 3.3.4 Age profile of track users

Respondents were asked to indicate which ages were represented in the groups they were visiting with (Figure 14). Consistent with the family orientation of most user groups, many of the groups contained a range of ages. Three quarters of all groups (75%) had someone aged between 35 and 64 years of age, and a third (32%) included children (18 years or younger) – the majority of whom were aged 5-12 years. The use of the track by parents to expose their children to the outdoor experience was a common theme offered in conversations with respondents. This early exposure to the area seems to have made a lasting impression, with some of the older users speaking about childhood experiences in the area. One group of users aged in their forties said “we have been coming here every year since we were 14 to have a birthday party.”



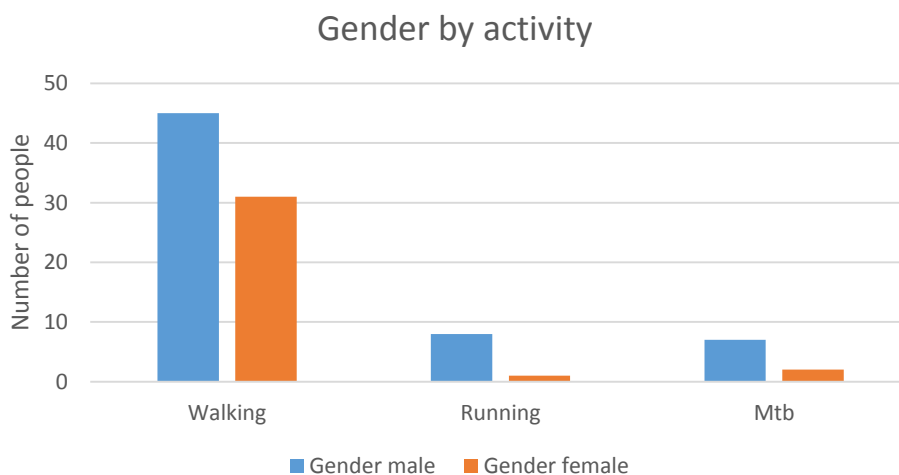
**Figure 14: Ages represented in user groups (n=94)**

### 3.3.5 Place of permanent residence of users

The vast majority (86%) of respondents were from Canterbury, with smaller proportions visiting from other regions in New Zealand (6%) and internationally (8%).

### 3.3.6 Gender of track users

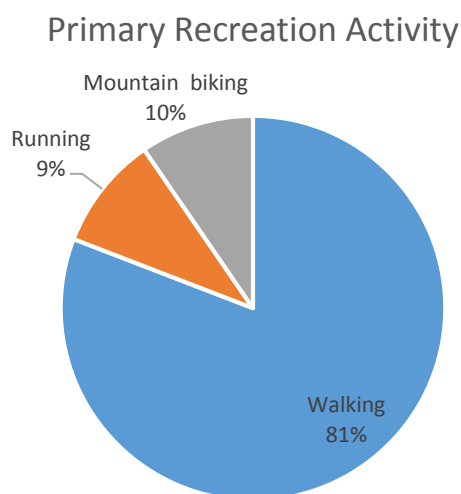
Approximately two thirds (64%) of survey respondents were male, representing a significant gender imbalance among users. The ratio of men – women is slightly more even when certain recreation activities are excluded (as per Figure 15).



**Figure 15: Gender split by activity of questionnaire participants (n=94)**

### 3.3.7 Main recreational activity

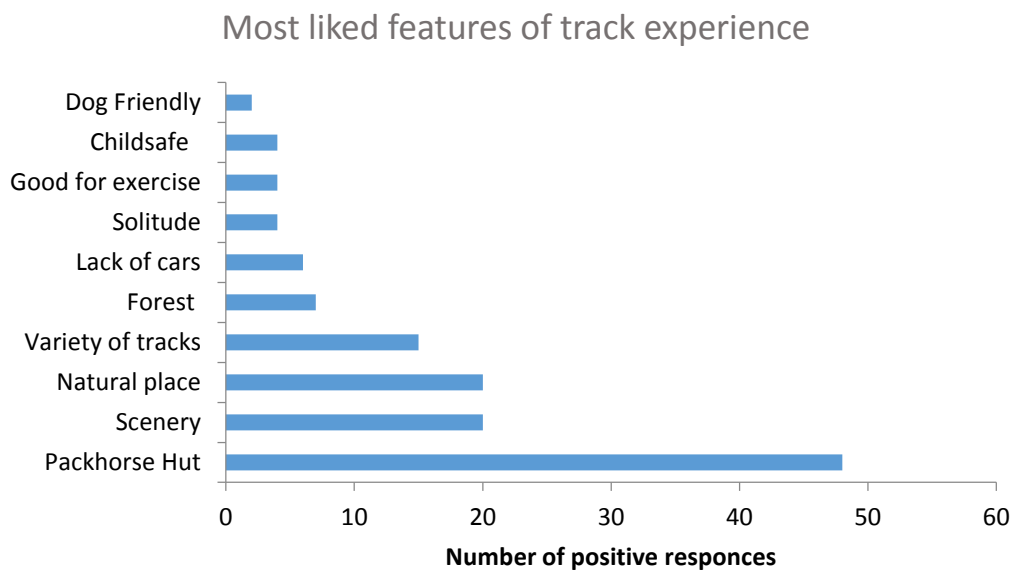
The respondents were asked about their primary recreation activity on the day of the survey (Figure 16). All users interviewed were either walking, running, or mountain biking. Walkers were by far the biggest group (81%), although it should be noted that this was also the most straight-forward user group to intercept. A number of runners were observed passing the hut without stopping and are, therefore, likely to be under-represented in the survey sample.



**Figure 16: Main activity undertaken by party (n=94)**

### 3.3.8 Most liked features of visit

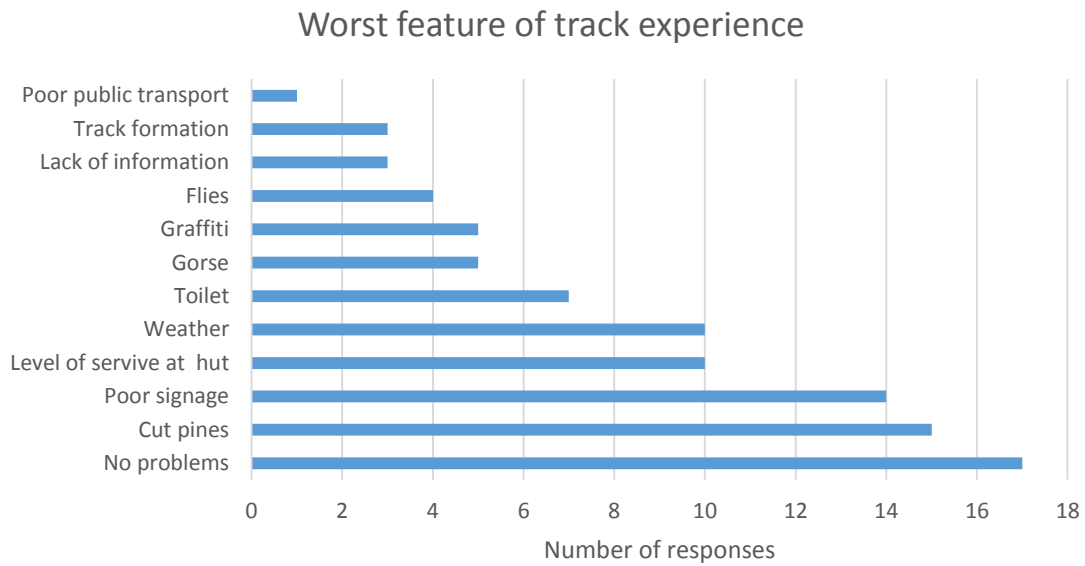
Survey participants were asked to nominate the “most liked” aspects of their visits (Figure 17). Just over half (51%) of respondents specifically nominated the Packhorse Hut, indicating both its unique character and the high regard that track users have for the building. Other comments made in response to the ‘most liked’ question included the scenery (21%), reference to ‘natural place’ (21%) and ‘the forest’ (7.5%) - both the regenerating native forest on the Kaituna access and the pine plantation on the Gebbies Pass access. Positive responses about the variety of tracks (16%) available largely came from runners and mountain bikers. Despite the regulations excluding dogs from the track network, dog exercising featured in a small number of responses.



**Figure 17: Most liked features of the track experience (n=94) (Note: some respondents gave multiple answers.)**

### 3.3.9 Least liked aspect of visit

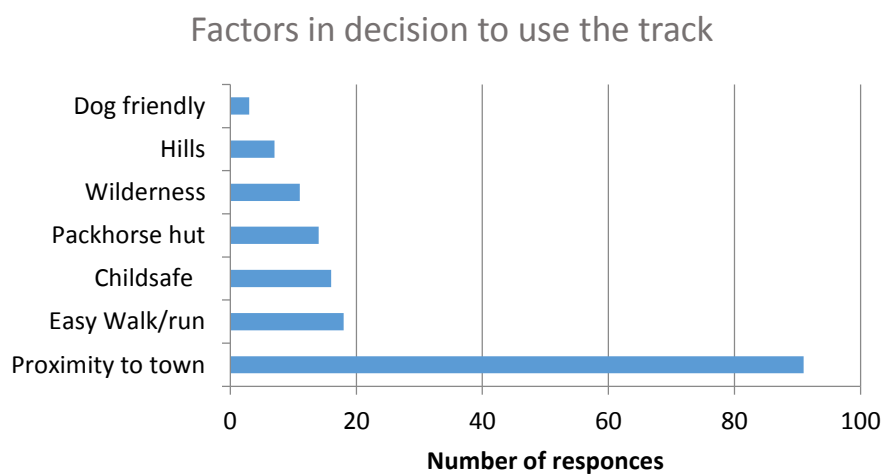
Survey participants were also asked for an open-ended response about what part of their track experience they liked the least (Figure 18). Reflecting the overall level of satisfaction among these users, the most common response was ‘nothing’ (18%). However, some respondents reported concerns about the ‘unsightly’ cut over pine blocks on the Gebbies Pass route (16%), poor signage (15%), and the level of service of the Packhorse Hut (11%). Respondents observed that signs at road ends are poor or non-existent, and that signage on the system varied because of the various organisations managing different parts of the track. Most common among remarks about service levels at the Hut, were references to the state of the toilet (full to overflowing). Gorse was identified as an issue by some respondents, although this ceased to be a problem when the track between the Packhorse Hut and Mt. Bradley was cleared during the survey implementation period.



**Figure 18: Least liked feature of the recreational experience (n=94)**

### 3.3.10 Decision making

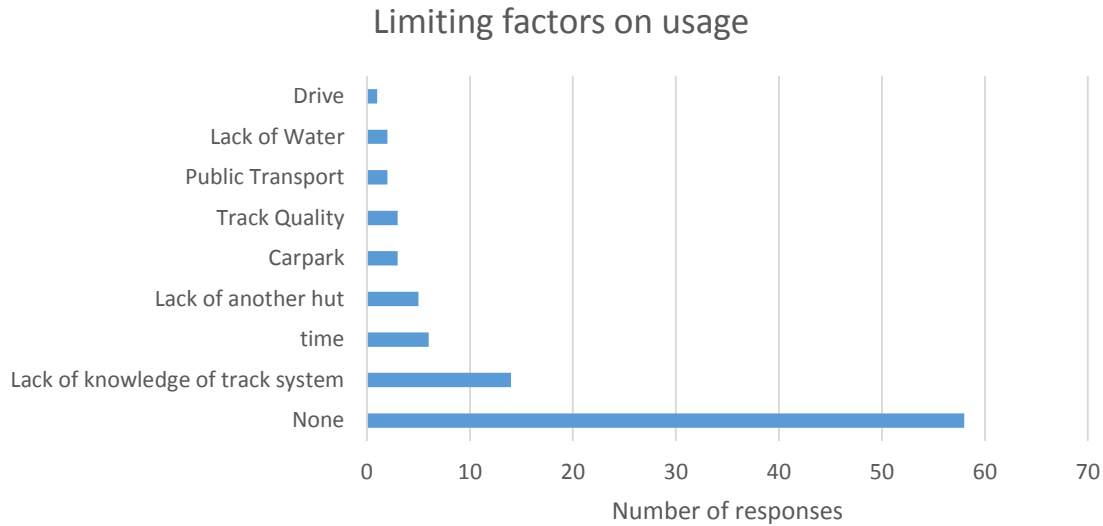
When asked about their decision to recreate on the track network on the day that they were interviewed, most respondents (97%) identified the importance of proximity to where they lived and the short traveling time (Figure 19).



**Figure 19: Reasons for choosing to use track system (n=94) (Note: some respondents gave multiple answers.)**

### 3.3.11 Limits to use

When respondents were asked about what factors might limit their use of the track network, the majority of respondents (62%) reported none. As Figure 20 shows, 'lack of knowledge of the track system' (15%) was the next most common limiting factor.

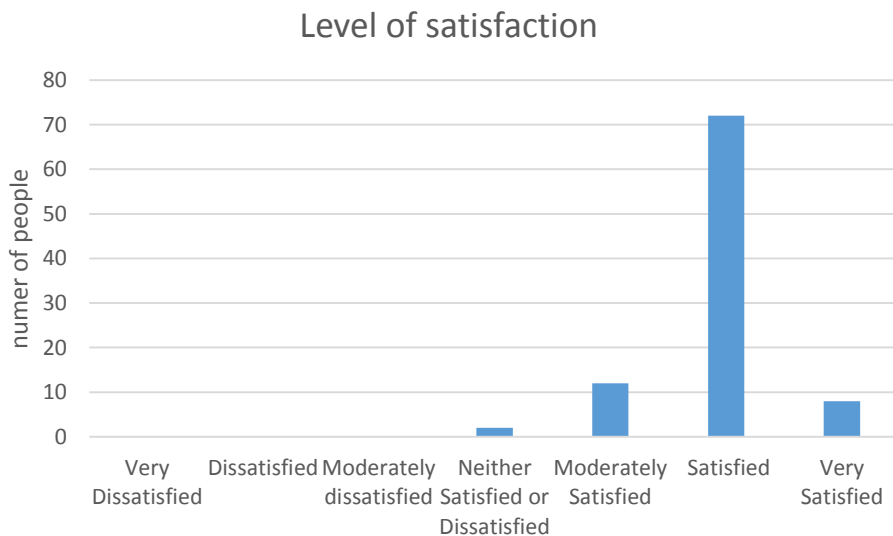


**Figure 20: Perceived limits to track usage  
(n=94)**

### 3.3.12 Level of satisfaction

The survey used a Likert-type scale to assess the level of satisfaction among users. As is indicated in Figure 21, virtually all respondents (98%) expressed satisfaction with the track experience, and 85 percent were ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied’. The mean scale score for satisfaction was 5.9 (on the 7-point scale) a feature also reflected in the high proportion of people who reported using the track more than once in the past (Figure 12).

In an open-ended question designed to capture ways in which users believed the area could be improved, respondents had many positive things to say about the track network. One of the repeated themes to emerge was ‘how lucky Cantabrians are to have access to such an amazing place so close to a city’. Those who knew that parts of the track crossed private land were very appreciative that land owners allow continued access. Others talked about Harry Ell and the legacy of his vision.



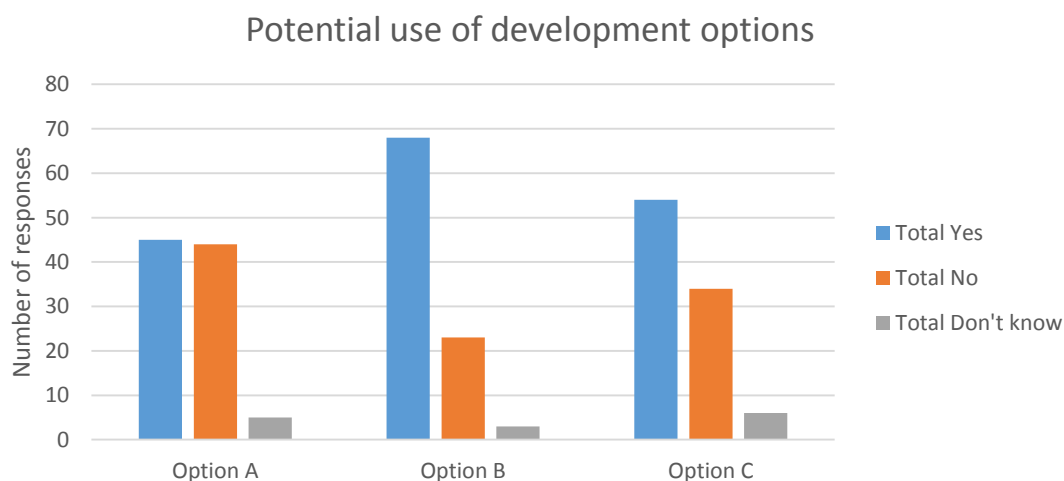
**Figure 21: Level of satisfaction with visit to Summit Walkway tracks on day of visit  
(n=94)**

### 3.3.13 Future scenarios

Respondents were shown maps of three different development scenarios and asked to comment on each of them, and to share any other ideas they had. The respondents were encouraged not to limit their thinking to the options presented (see Appendix 1 for maps of the three options).

- **Option A:** Focused on a relatively easy introductory one night walk/bike ride, with users parking at Orton Bradley Park and being shuttled to Gebbies Pass in a vehicle, to walk from there to the Packhorse Hut, stay overnight and then walk down to finish back at Orton Bradley Park.
- **Option B:** focused on an intermediate-level walk including an overnight stay at a newly proposed hut with various public transport options for access.
- **Option C:** focused on a two night walk staying at the Packhorse Hut and the newly proposed Hut.

As highlighted in Figure 22, the two development options (B and C) that would involve the proposed new hut had the strongest positive response, with 72 per cent and 56 per cent of respondents indicating that they would use these options. Most people surveyed approved of the concept of a new hut and many said they would use it in ways other than that presented in the two options. Others commented along the lines of “I would love to have another hut to go to on the Peninsula, but would probably not do a two night tramp”. The group with responses like this said they would use a new hut for single night tramps but would rather go into the ‘backcountry’ if doing a two night walk. Another common theme is summed up in the comment “...wow what a great idea, when is it going to be finished?!” The final common theme of the respondents’ comments is emphasised by the remarks of one participant who said: “if there is going to be any development I hope the character of the area doesn’t change.”



**Figure 22: Potential use of track and hut development options (n=94)**

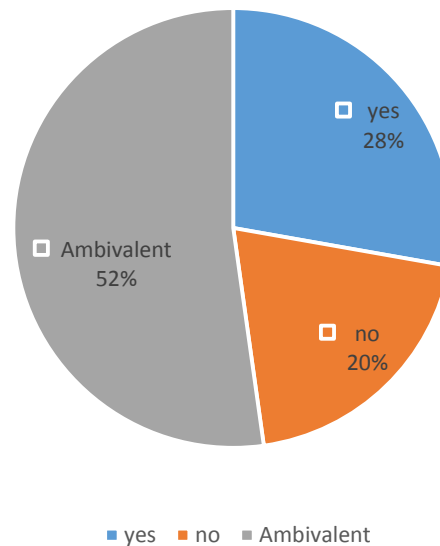
### 3.3.14 Naming of the track network ‘The Spine of the Lizard’

The final question in the user survey related to the name of the upgraded network of tracks. Respondents were asked to comment on one possible suggestion which was ‘The Spine of the Lizard’ (see Figure 23). Just over one-half of respondents (52%) were ambivalent about the proposed name with typical comments such as “I don’t mind”; “It sounds okay but why bother?” and “It doesn’t bother me”. Of those who answered favourably (28%), very few expressed enthusiasm. Those who were unfavourably disposed to the possible name (20%) tended to hold stronger views with many echoing



the comment “that sounds stupid and why does it need a name anyway”. A cross tabulation of opinion against frequency of use does not reveal any major variation of opinion between frequent uses and infrequent users.

### Opinion about 'Spine of the Lizard' name



**Figure 23: Opinion of users about naming of system (n=92)**

## 3.4 Potential User Survey

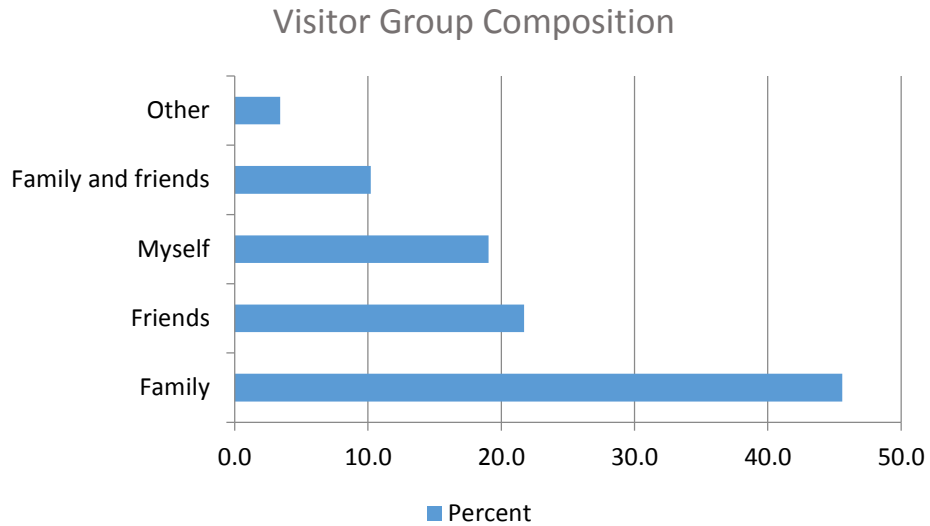
Part two of this study examining views about the Summit Walkway was undertaken in conjunction with a similar project which was focused on use of Orton Bradley Park. Fifty questionnaires were administered in each of Halswell Quarry Park and Victoria Park, and an additional 47 were conducted in Godley Head Park providing an overall total of 147 survey completions at parks beyond the Summit Walkway area. These locations were chosen to represent potential users of both the Summit Walkway network and Orton Bradley Park.

- Halswell Quarry Park has a variety of picnic areas, walking tracks and access to other walking and biking tracks in the area, and a longer track linking it to the Lyttelton harbour crater rim.
- The Godley Head Recreational Reserve provides extensive multi-use tracks, farm-style atmosphere and a feeling of remoteness from the city.
- Victoria Park provides access to an extensive network of short, medium and long distance walking tracks and a dog exercise area.

Respondents in each of these locations were asked about their knowledge, previous and potential use of the Summit Walkway (see Appendix B).

### 3.4.1 Respondent profile

The vast majority (75%) of respondents were recreating with family (46%), family and friends (10%) or friends (19%) (see Figure 24). A relatively high proportion of those surveyed were recreating alone (20%), and less than 5 per cent were part of a tour, school or youth group. The vast majority (89%) of people were visiting in groups of five or fewer although larger groups of between six to ten (6%) and more than ten (5%) were present.

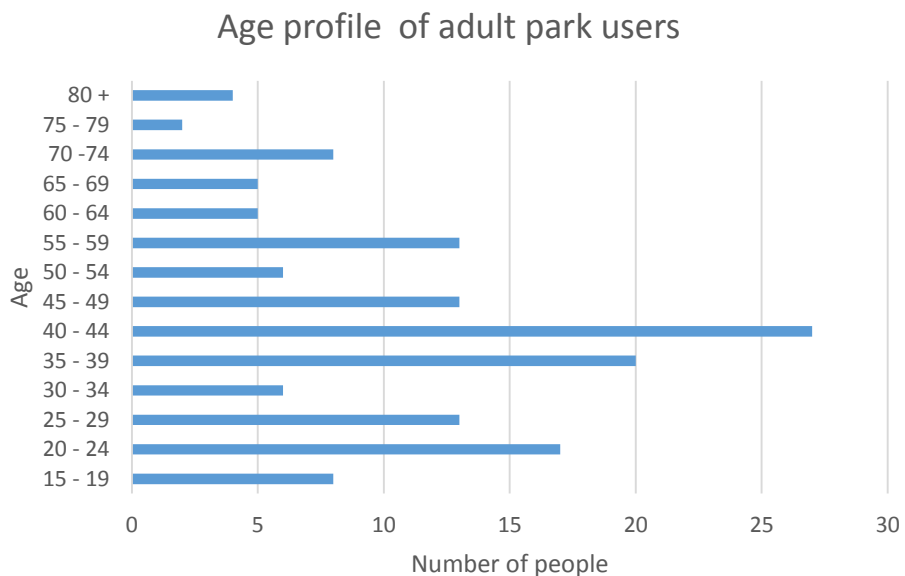


**Figure 24: Group composition  
(n=147)**

Of those who were accompanied by children (n=68), 75 per cent were with primary school aged children, 32 per cent were with pre-school aged children, and 24 per cent were with secondary school aged children.

Users of parks were overwhelmingly local residents with 80 per cent from the Christchurch region and 15 per cent from the Greater Canterbury area. Only three per cent came from elsewhere in New Zealand and another three per cent were from overseas.

The age of the users of the parks was similar to that of the Summit Road Walkway users, with the majority of respondents falling into the 35-65 age bracket (Figure 25).

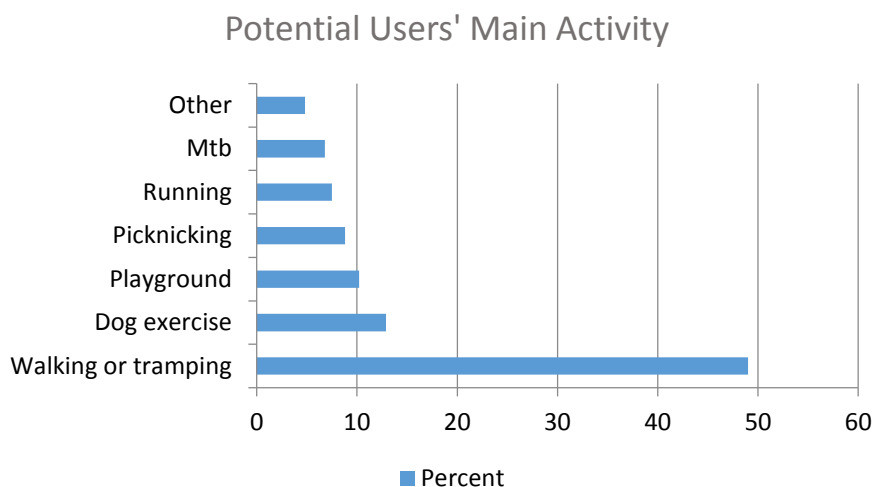


**Figure 25: Ages of adult park users  
(n=147)**

The survey sample was divided approximately evenly between men (46%) and women (54%). This differed from the Summit Walkway Survey results where 64 per cent of the users were male.

### 3.4.2 Activities

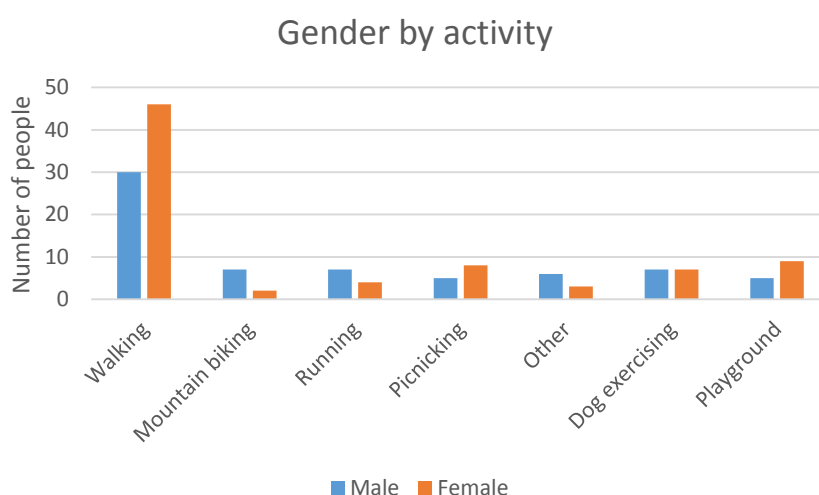
Overall, just under one-half of the respondents surveyed (49%) indicated that their main activity was walking or tramping. Other popular activities included exercising a dog (13%) using a playground (10%) picnicking (9%), running (8%) and mountain biking (7%) (Figure 26).



**Figure 26: Main activities of users at other parks (n=147)**

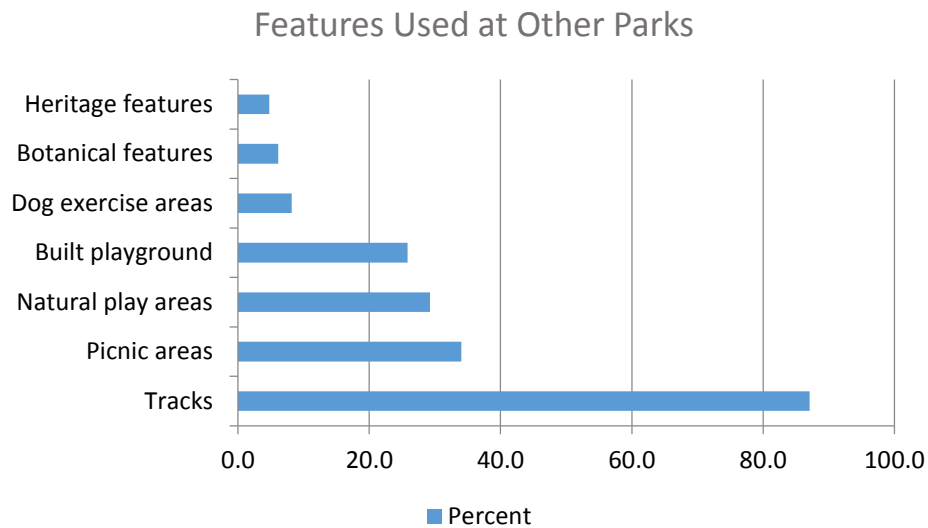
While walking or tramping was the main activity for all users (66 per cent at Godley Head, 48 per cent at Halswell Quarry Park and 34 per cent at Victoria Park), other activities noted were: dog exercising which was most common at Halswell Quarry Park (18%); mountain biking which was equally popular at both Halswell Quarry Park and Victoria Park (8%); picnicking which was most popular at Victoria Park (18%); and running which was most frequently noted at Godley Head Reserve (17%).

As in the case of the Summit Walkway users, mountain bikes seem to be dominated by males, but the gender split of runners is more even. It is notable however, that in these three parks a higher percentage of women were walking (60%) than men (Figure 27).



**Figure 27: Gender split by activity of questionnaire participants (n=147)**

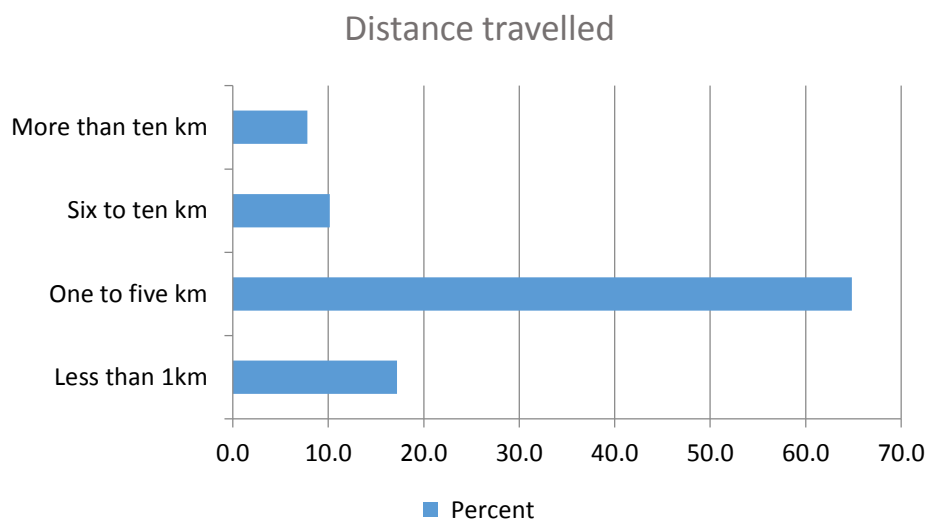
Survey participants were asked which features of the park they had utilised on that particular day, and were allowed to indicate as many responses as necessary. The results show that the majority of users of other parks used the tracks and trails (87%), followed by picnic areas (34%), natural play areas such as streams, trees for climbing and rock outcrops (29%) and the playground at Victoria Park (26%). Dog exercise (8 %), botanical (6 %) and built heritage (5%) features all showed smaller use across the three parks, although it is worth noting that many heritage structures in these areas are currently closed to the public due to earthquake damage (Figure 28).



**Figure 28: Park features used by respondents (n=147)**

### 3.4.3 Use of Tracks

Of the respondents who utilised the tracks and trails in the three parks, the most common distance covered (walking, running or cycling) was between one and five kilometres (65%). Ten per cent of respondents reported travelling between six and ten kilometres, but few (7.8%) ventured beyond ten kilometres. One in six (17%) travelled less than one on a tracks while in the park (Figure 29).

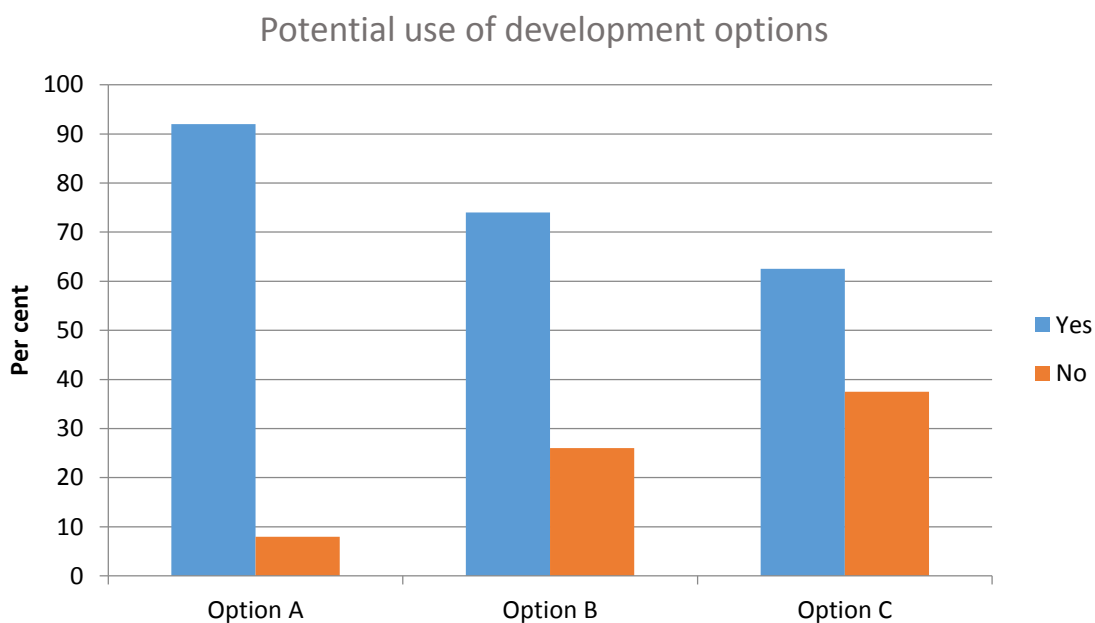


**Figure 29: Distances travelled by track users in other parks (n=128)**

Of the respondents intercepted in the park areas, approximately two thirds (68%) had used the Summit Walkway network previously. Of those who had not used the Summit Walkways system, many indicated that they unaware of the network of tracks. This finding does suggest that targeted publicity might increase the use of the track system.

### 3.4.4 Future scenarios

Visitors to the three park areas who were familiar with the Summit Walkway setting (n=61), were invited to comment on the three future development scenarios outlined previously (and presented in Appendix A). Figure 30 shows that, among potential uses, Option A is the most popular (92% support). Three quarters of the respondents (74%) were positive about Option B, and 62 per cent supported Option C.



**Figure 30: Potential use of options for the Summit Walkway (n=61)**

A higher number of the respondents in this survey, compared to those completing the Summit Walkway survey, preferred Option A (upgrading of the Orton Bradley, Packhorse Hut, Gebbies Pass route). However, in both surveys, respondents indicated a high level of support for the two options that involved building another hut on the track system.

## 4 Concluding Discussion

While the full extent of the use of the track network is unknown, the results of this research indicate that the Summit Walkway tracks are used extensively with February through to April identified as the peak period. The hut book data and the track counter data utilised in this study provide an estimate of recreational usage, but it is likely that actual use is higher. Middle-aged male adults represented the largest group of users in this research. Among the young, primary school-aged children are the most significant group of users.

Current users of the track network express a high level of satisfaction with their recreation experience, noting that the tracks are an important part of the outdoor recreation culture in the Canterbury region. The proximity to the city and the character of the Packhorse Hut was identified by many respondents as 'destination' in itself with regular users of the hut expressing a deep attachment to it.

That the hut is frequently used by family groups to introduce primary school aged children to the 'tramping experience' is further evidence of its pivotal role and function.

However, while Packhorse Hut is used extensively, the hut book records under-represent this use. Furthermore, this research reveals that the current hut facilities and levels of servicing may not be adequate for the current or increased usage in the future.

Current users identified the lack of track information (pre-visit) as problematic. Information about the track network is limited and weakly coordinated. There is no single comprehensive information source (such as a website or track guide), and it is indicative that a large number of respondents surveyed at neighbouring parks were unaware of the recreational opportunities afforded by the Summit Walkway and associated tracks.

In addition, survey responses and field observations confirmed that the signage on the track network is inadequate in many places. The style and format of signs varies between sections of the track, contributing to a fragmentation and inconsistency that is likely to cause confusion (especially for users new to the area), potentially undermining the quality of the outdoor recreation experience.

Data presented in this study indicate firm support for recreation infrastructure development on the Summit Walkway network, with particular interest in building an additional hut. Such an investment may be justified on the basis of an observed shortage of such facilities close to Christchurch city, and the current and future demand. As a caveat, some users expressed concern that additional development may diminish the experience of the area.

## **5 Recommendations**

1. Opportunities to enhance the coordination of the management of the track network should be explored by the various public, private and volunteer sector groups with interests in the network.
2. The lack of signage on the track system and particularly at the trail heads requires improvement.
3. The identified gaps in track information for both those planning visits to the area and those potential users yet to discover the network, several promotional strategies should be considered. These might include feature articles in local newspapers; multi-agency adoption of the Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust maps (currently in development); and the location of information about the Summit Walkway track network in the other parks (such as Godley Head).
4. A usable map, track maps and website with information on the whole network should be developed. These resources need to include web links to and from all of the organisations involved in the network.
5. The development of a unified 'brand' for the whole network using the proposed name (or an alternative) would be useful when developing and distributing information about the network.
6. The use of Harry Ell's name in the naming of a new hut might be appropriate and was mentioned by a number of survey respondents.
7. As part of the development of a brand, organisations could be encouraged to utilise the network for appropriate events such as running, multi-sport, rogaining (long-distance cross country navigation), orienteering, geocaching, and mountain biking.

8. The sense of attachment to Packhorse Hut demonstrated by the users of the track means that its retention is essential.
9. Due to the complex nature of the track system, and the need to accurately assess the area's recreational use, investment in multiple track counters should be considered.

## **6 Future Research**

- There needs to be a comprehensive attempt to quantify the track usage across the whole track network including Gebbies Pass car park and the Mount Herbert summit and the Monument tracks.
- A qualitative investigation into people's perspectives on the area as 'wilderness' would be interesting as very little of the track system fits with the traditional New Zealand view of wilderness.
- An investigation into the views, attitudes and experiences of the private landowners over whose properties the track traverses, would inform both current and future management, as well as aiding the setting up of similar tracks elsewhere.

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## Appendix A



Date

### Summit Walkway Tracks Survey 2013-14

Researchers at Lincoln University have been commissioned by the Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust, in consultation with the Department of Conservation, to undertake a survey of Summit Walkway Track users over the 2013-14 summer period. By participating in this survey you will help us understand more about how these tracks are used and what future management might be appropriate. All responses are anonymous. Your participation in this project is voluntary and you may also decline to answer any question. You may withdraw at any time during the survey. Completion will be taken to indicate your consent to participate.

[Interviewer to show card outlining the network of Summit Walkway tracks and then leads into questions about this visit.]

1. Which of the Summit Walkway Tracks are you using today? (Tick (☑) all that apply)

- |   |                          |  |                          |  |                          |                                      |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Gebbies Pass –<br>Packhorse Hut             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Packhorse Hut –<br>Orton Bradley Park          | <input type="checkbox"/> | Packhorse Hut – Mt.<br>Herbert Track via<br>Kaituna side of Mt.<br>Bradley | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mt Herbert-<br>Orton Bradley<br>Park | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mt Herbert-Port<br>Levy Saddle              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Monument Track                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mt-Herbert- Diamond<br>Harbour   | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                      |                          |
| Port Levy Saddle<br>– Montgomery<br>Reserve | <input type="checkbox"/> | Port Levy Saddle -<br>Pettigrews Road<br>track | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other (please specify)   | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                                | _____                    |

2. How often do you use any of the Summit Walkway Tracks identified above? (Tick (☑) ONE box)

- |                           |                          |                            |                          |                                |                          |                             |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Once a<br>week or<br>more | <input type="checkbox"/> | 2-3<br>times<br>a<br>month | <input type="checkbox"/> | Once<br>a<br>month             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Once<br>every 2-3<br>months | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2-3<br>times a<br>year    | <input type="checkbox"/> | 1-2<br>times<br>a year     | <input type="checkbox"/> | Less<br>than<br>once a<br>year | <input type="checkbox"/> |                             |                          |

3. Which of the Summit Walkway Tracks have you used in the last 5 years (Tick (☑) all that apply)

- |                                 |                          |                                       |                          |  |                          |                                      |                          |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Gebbies Pass –<br>Packhorse Hut | <input type="checkbox"/> | Packhorse Hut –<br>Orton Bradley Park | <input type="checkbox"/> | Packhorse Hut – Mt.<br>Herbert Track via<br>Kaituna side of Mt.<br>Bradley | <input type="checkbox"/> | Mt Herbert-<br>Orton Bradley<br>Park | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|

- Mt Herbert-Port Levy Saddle  Monument Track  Mt-Herbert-Harbour  Diamond
- Port Levy Saddle – Montgomery Reserve  Port Levy Saddle - Pettigrews Road track  None of these tracks

[If respondent answers yes to any of options 1, 2 or 3 in question 3 ask following.]

3a. When you visited Packhorse hut did you fill in the hut book? (Tick (☑) ONE box)

- Yes  No  Don't know

4. How did you find out about the Summit Walkway Tracks? (Tick (☑) ONE box)

- Word of Mouth  DOC visitor Centre  DOC website  Other website
- Guide book (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_ (please specify)
- Newspaper (specify) \_\_\_\_\_  Magazine (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Who are you visiting the tracks with today? Please tick one that best describes your group (Tick (☑) ONE box)

- Private Group – family  Private Group – friends  By myself
- Recreational club or youth group  Education or School group  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

6. How many people are in your group today?

Total group size \_\_\_\_\_

Which age groups are represented? (Tick (☑) all that apply)

- 0-4yrs  5-12yrs  13-18yrs  19-24yrs
- 25-34yrs  35-49yrs  50-64yrs  65+ yrs

7. What is your main activity on your visit to today (Tick (☑) ONE box)

- Walking  Running  Mountain biking
- Geocaching  Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

8. How long did you (or will you) spend on this activity today? (Tick (☑) ONE box)

- Less than 1 hour       1-2 hours       3-4 hours       Full day (4+hrs)
- Overnight       More than 1 night

9. What have you liked the most about today's visit to the Summit Walkway tracks?

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10. What have you liked the least about today's visit to the Summit Walkway tracks

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11. What sorts of things were important to you in deciding where to recreate (visit) today?

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[Interviewer examples for question 11.]

Scenic views, Proximity to home, Standard of huts and shelters, Well-marked routes or tracks, Secure off-street car parking, Availability of circular (loop) tracks, Separate tracks for walkers and mountain bikers, Opportunity to be close to nature, Information about natural and human heritage, Availability of transport links back to start point, Any others

12. Are there any things that limit your use of the Summit Walkway tracks?

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[Interviewer examples for question 12.]

Parking Quality, Lack of information, Numbers of huts and shelters, Quality of tracks or facilities, Any others

13. Overall, how satisfied were you with your visit to the Summit Walkway today? (Circle ONE number) Tracks

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7  
 Very                                                                                                                                                                         Very  
 dissatisfied                                                                                                                                                                         satisfied

Is there anything that would make this a better place for you to visit?

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14. Future scenarios [Interviewer to use maps and images to prompt]

The Department of Conservation and the Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust are investigating options

for developing the existing network of Summit Walkway tracks.  
Please comment on the following scenarios for the area's future development:

Option A: How do you feel about this option?  
[ interviewer prompt: what factors might encourage or constrain your use of this option]

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Would you use Option A?

Yes  No  Don't know

Option B: How do you feel about this option?  
[ interviewer prompt: what factors might encourage or constrain your use of this option]

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Would you use Option B?

Yes  No  Don't know

Option C: How do you feel about this option?  
[ interviewer prompt: what factors might encourage or constrain your use of this option]

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Would you use Option C?

Yes  No  Don't know

15. One possible name for the upgraded network of tracks is  
'The Spine of the Lizard' What is your reaction to this suggestion?  
[Interviewer to prompt, show visual map with lizard graphic]

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16. Do you have other comments or suggestions you would like to have recorded?

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Finally, some brief details about you

17. Gender (Tick (☑) ONE only)

Male  Female

17. Where do you normally live? (Tick (☑) ONE only)

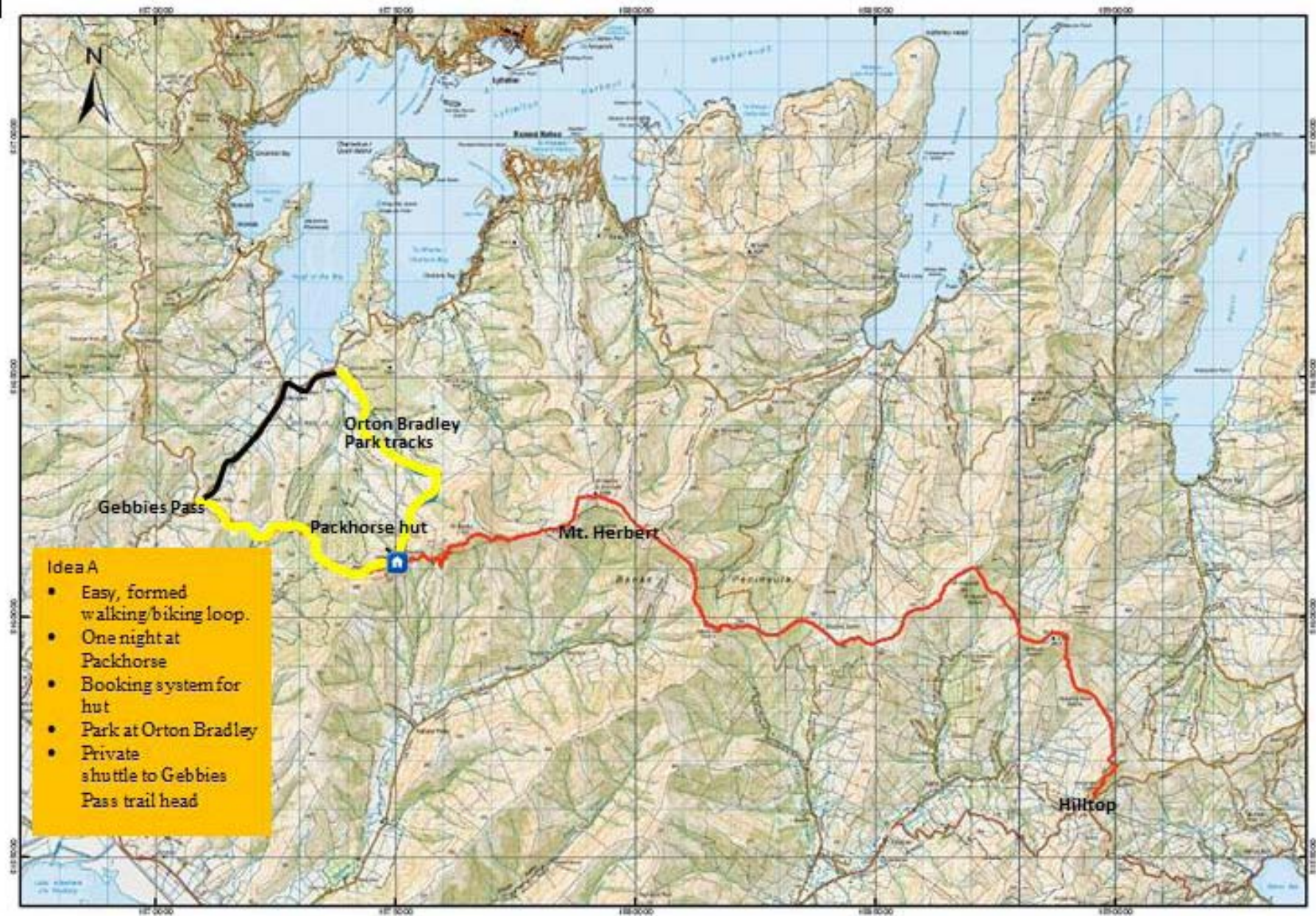
Canterbury  If Canterbury, from what suburb or location?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Elsewhere  If New Zealand, from what region?  
in NZ \_\_\_\_\_

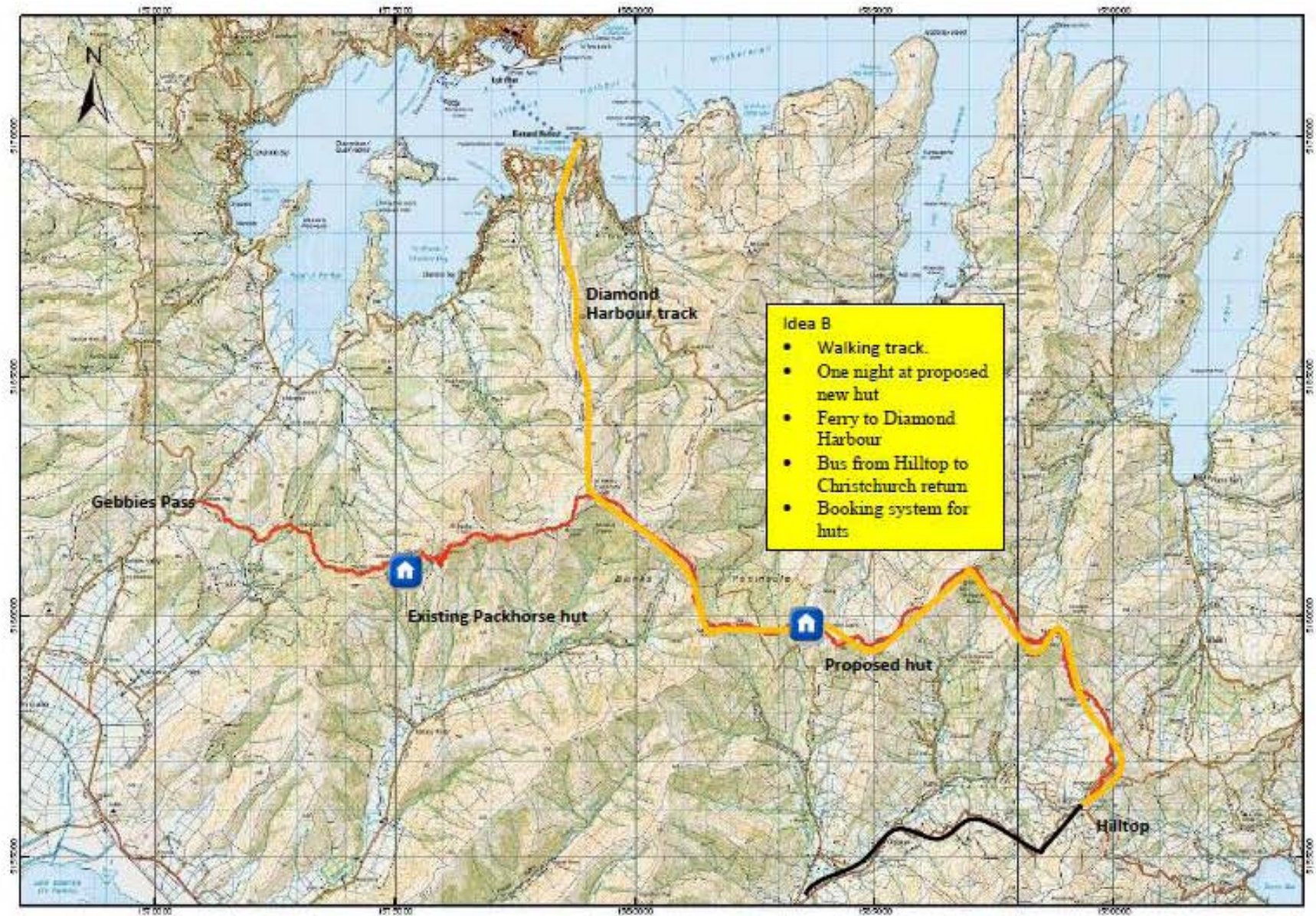
Elsewhere  Please specify  
in the world \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for your time!

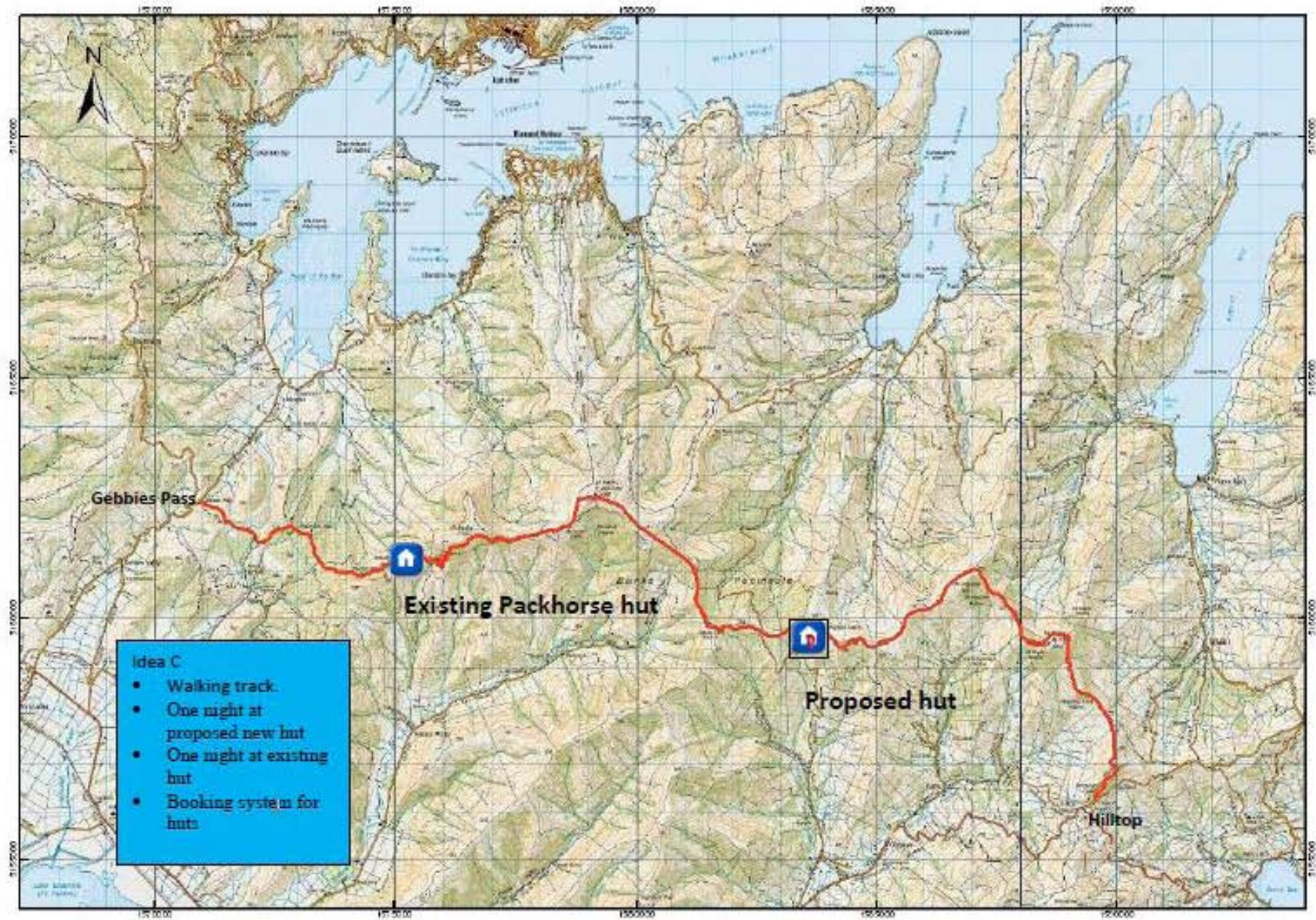
## Option A: One night introduction level walk



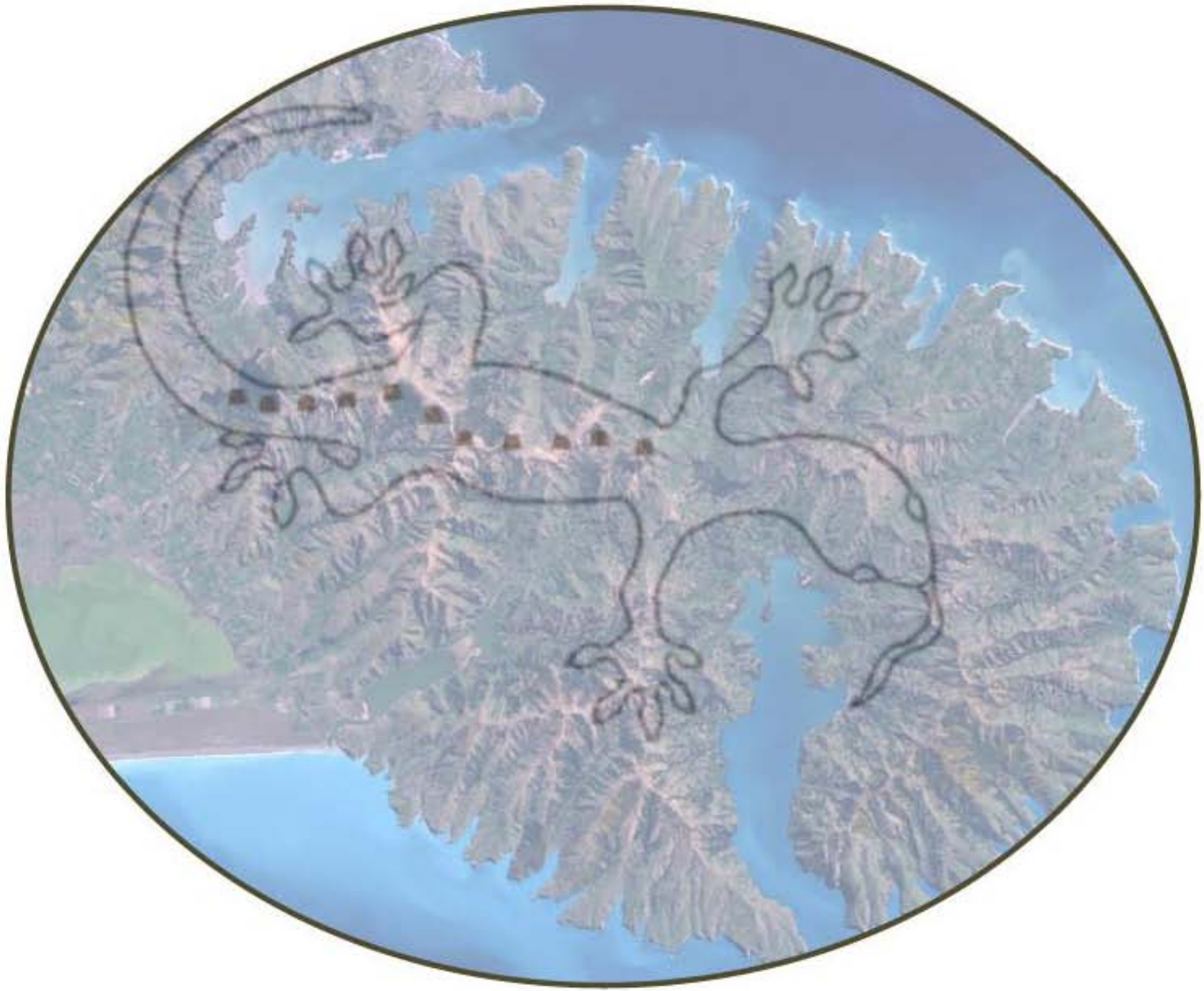
## Option B: One night intermediate level walk with public transport options



### Option C: Two night intermediate level walk







## Appendix B

Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Orton Bradley Park Survey 2013-14: Potential Users

Researchers at Lincoln University have been commissioned by the Rod Donald Banks Peninsula Trust, to undertake a survey of existing and potential users of Orton Bradley Park in Charleis Bay, Banks Peninsula over the 2013-14 summer period. By participating in this survey you will help us understand more about how this place is used and what future developments might be appropriate.

Even if you have not visited Orton Bradley Park, we want to hear from you!

The survey is organised into three sections: (1) your visit today; (2) your experience of and opinions about Orton Bradley Park recreation areas; and (3) profile information.

Please follow the directions carefully, and answer each of the questions in as accurately and truthfully as you can. There are no "right" or "wrong" answers, and your responses are just as valuable as those of every other visitor who completes the survey.

Your participation is very much appreciated. All responses are anonymous.

### Section 1: About your visit today [Victoria Park, Halswell Quarry or Godley Head]

Q1 How often do you visit places like this for outdoor recreation?  
[Please tick (☑) one only]

1  Once a week or more often

2  Several times a month

3  Once a month

4  Once every two or three months

5  Once or twice a year

6  Once every two years

7  Less than once every two years

Q2 What is the main activity you will do here today? [Please tick (☑) ONE activity]

1  Walking or tramping

2  Mountain biking

3  Running

4  Picnicking

5  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Q3 What features of the area have you used, or will you use on your visit today?  
[Please tick (☑) any that apply]

Picnic areas

Built playground

Natural playground (ie streams)

Tracks (walking, running or riding)

Camping areas

Built heritage

Botanical areas

Other

Q4 If you selected 'Tracks' in Q3, what length of track have you used (or will you use) today? [Please tick (☑) any that apply]

Less than 1km

1 to 5km

6-10km

More than 10km

**Section 2: Visiting other places for outdoor recreation**

Q5 Before today, had you heard of Orton Bradley Park 1  Yes  
2  No (go to Q8)

Q6 Have you ever visited Orton Bradley Park 1  Yes  
2  No (go to Q8)

Q7 In a few words, are you able to recall your impressions of Orton Bradley Park [Interview to prompt: what was good, bad or indifferent about the Park]

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Q8 The list below includes some existing or proposed features of Orton Bradley Park on Banks Peninsula. Please indicate what influence each feature has on the likelihood that you would visit the Park in the future. [Tick **ONE** box on each line]

	More likely I would visit	Less likely I would visit	No difference to whether or not I would visit
Availability of family-friendly mountain bike tracks in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A café in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A plant nursery in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
A dog exercise area in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Historic tours offered in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Year-round basic camping facilities in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Easy walking tracks in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overnight tramping tracks in the Park	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Secure parking for cars	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Park entry fee (\$10 /car)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q9 Using this list of selected tracks and routes on Banks Peninsula, please indicate which you have used at any time in the past [map available showing selected tracks] [Please tick () any that apply]

- Cebbies Pass – Packhorse Hut
- Packhorse Hut – Orton Bradley Park
- Packhorse Hut – Mt. Herbert Track via Karuna side of Mt. Bradley
- Mt Herbert-Orton Bradley Park
- Mt Herbert-Pottery Saddle
- Monument Track
- Mt Herbert-Diamond Harbour
- Port Levy Saddle – Montgomery Reserve

- Putt Levy Saddle - Pelligrews Road track
- I've not used any of these tracks (Please go to Q11)

Q10 If you selected any of the tracks or routes in U5, please comment on the following scenarios [Interviewer to use with map / Images]

Are you interested in overnight tramps on Banks Peninsula? 1  Yes

2  No

Would you use a multi-day track incorporating the Packhorse Hut? 1  Yes

2  No

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### Section 3: About you and your group

Q11 Who are you visiting with today?

[Please tick (✓) ONE that best describes your group]

1  By myself

6  With a School or youth group

2  With my family

7  With a tour group

3  With friends

8  Other \_\_\_\_\_

4  With friends and family

Q12 How many people are in your group today? Include yourself in the total number

Q13 Are there children in your group?

[Please tick (✓) any that apply]

1  Pre-school children

2  Primary school children

3  Secondary school children

4  No children in the group

Q14 Where do you normally live?

[Please tick ONE box only and then fill in the place name]

1  Christchurch

\_\_\_\_\_ → Suburb:

2  Canterbury

\_\_\_\_\_ → Town or rural area:

3  Elsewhere in New Zealand

\_\_\_\_\_ → City, town or rural area:

4  Overseas

\_\_\_\_\_ → Country:

Q15 Are you:

1  Male

2  Female

Q16 What is your age in years?

1  15 - 19

6  40 - 44

11  65 - 69

2  20 - 24

7  45 - 49

12  70 - 74

3  25 - 29

8  50 - 54

13  75 - 79

4  30 - 34

9  55 - 59

14  80 yrs +

5  35 - 39

10  60 - 64