

PROTECTING THE GAINS – RESTORATION AGREEMENTS

Introducing a new protection mechanism to secure enduring outcomes for Jobs for Nature projects.

We want to work with you to ensure the time, effort and investment you or your organisation are putting into conservation projects on private land are safeguarded into the future.

With significant Jobs for Nature investment into planting, fencing, weed control, pest animal management and other conservation activities, we want to help you to legally protect these areas, ensuring the values of your projects are protected forever.

We're working with recipients of Jobs for Nature funding on private land to offer two forms of legal protection:

- An Open Space Covenant – QEII's traditional form of permanent legal protection over an area with high existing biodiversity, landscape, or cultural values. (Our 'Protecting the Gains' fact sheet has more information on this.)
- A **Restoration Agreement** – a new form of legal protection that we have developed for Jobs for Nature projects that do not yet have the biodiversity values to meet the criteria for Open Space Covenant protection.

What is a Restoration Agreement?

A Restoration Agreement is an intermediate step to secure potential biodiversity values while an area develops to the point where it would warrant full Open Space Covenant status, for example an area of regenerating or revegetated bush or wetland. While Open Space Covenants require established biodiversity values, Restoration Agreements can be used much earlier, securing protection from day one.

Unlike an Open Space Covenant, if, despite everyone's best efforts, the values don't establish in some or all of a Restoration Agreement area, we can remove or change the boundaries of the protection.

QEII will share the costs of ensuring the area is stockproof and will cover the full cost of a survey to define the protected area. If the area is already appropriately fenced, we can provide a grant for ongoing management of the area. You'll also have access to our regional representatives who are able to provide support, expertise, and advice to help your project to thrive long-term.

A Restoration Agreement is registered on the title to the land so future landowners are subject to the same obligations, ensuring that your hard work is secured beyond the current landowner's tenure on the land. Restoration Agreements have obligations that require the landowner to take all reasonable steps to ensure the success and survival of the project.

Restoration Agreements have a "review term" at 10-year intervals by default, at which time we assess the site and agree with the landowner on whether the values justify Open Space Covenant status. If the area isn't there yet, the Restoration Agreement stays in place, and we review it in the future. If we are both comfortable that the project is a success, we will "convert" the agreement to an Open Space Covenant, meaning the protection can never be removed.

Areas subject to a Restoration Agreement will be monitored yearly by our regional reps to ensure biodiversity values are progressing and to identify any management actions that the landowner needs to carry out.

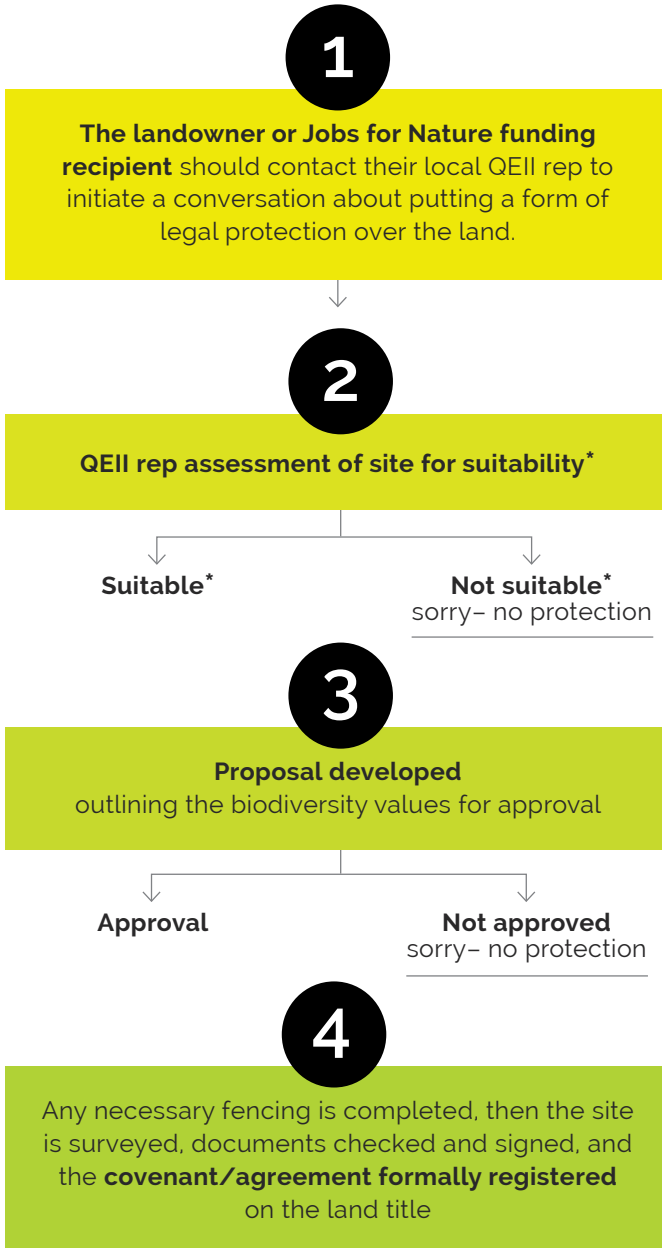
What are QEII's criteria for considering a Restoration Agreement?

- Sites to be protected must be on private land.
- Projects must be receiving "on the ground" investment from Jobs for Nature funding (including planting, weed and pest control, fencing, or hours from a project manager).
- The biodiversity values of the sites should be expected to be established and self-sustaining within 10-20 years.

Your regional rep will be able to talk you through these criteria in more detail as well as explain the responsibilities of a Restoration Agreement and any other requirements that may need to be considered.

What is the process?

The steps closely follow the process for a normal Open Space Covenant.



* Our reps will assess site suitability based on the criteria outlined in this document along with other requirements to ensure biodiversity values are likely to be sustainable and appropriate for eventual transition to an Open Space Covenant.

What next?

Contact your local QEII regional rep to discuss whether your Jobs for Nature project may be suitable for legal protection to ensure your effort is safeguarded. Regional rep contact details can be found on our website at www.qeiiinternationaltrust.org.nz/find-your-rep/

Government agencies, councils and other groups administering Jobs for Nature funding are encouraged to contact our Head Office on **0800 467 367** or email info@qeii.org.nz to discuss opportunities to work together.

