

Waikato District Council

General Policies

Reserve Management Plan

DRAFT for Public Consultation
September 2022

Adopted by Council 8th June 2015

Reviewed and Adopted by Council XXXXXX

Process timeline

Public Consultation Pre-engagement	18 May – 17 June 2022
<i>Public Consultation on Draft Management Plan</i>	XXXX-XXXX
<i>Hearing for Public Submission</i>	XXXXXX
<i>Management Plan Adopted</i>	XXXXXX

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Purpose of this plan

How to use this document

Waikato District Council (Council) is responsible for managing local reserves within its area. Reserves are a key link to health, social wellbeing, and cultural identity of the Waikato District. These reserves contain some major natural landscapes and culturally significant settings that contribute to the character, sense of place and to the local economy.

For the simplicity of this document, the term “reserve” is used collectively for parks, open spaces, recreation areas, natural bush, coastal beach reserves, esplanades, that are managed by Council for a variety of purposes and public benefits.

Reserve management plans (RMP) provide direction for the day-to-day management of parks and reserves. Determining community preferences and establishing the best means to provide for them are essential ingredients of good management planning. A management plan provides the community with certainty about the function and management of reserves that are managed by Council. It also helps ensure that management decisions are consistent with the principles of the Reserves Act 1977.

This management plan provides generic policies that will provide consistent management practices across all the reserves administered by Council. The draft plan contains land for which the Council has decision making powers, land held under the Reserves Act and the Local Government Act (LGA).

This plan does not cover legal roads and land managed by the Department of Conservation. Land held as airfields, drainage and utilities are also not included within this plan.

This plan needs to be read and reviewed in its entirety, as multiple policies may relate to a single item, (e.g. club buildings have policies under the Buildings section and also the Leases and Licenses section, and new buildings also need to consider the Development section of policies).

Waikato District Council Reserves

Council manages approximately 484 local reserves, spanning of 2,177 hectares. This land includes playgrounds, local town reserves, coastal settings, sports grounds and natural bush areas. All Waikato District Council’s actively managed reserves are listed in Appendix 1.

The Reserves Act 1977 provides the legal classification system for reserves held under the Act (Appendix 2). This identifies the primary purpose of the reserve and the statutory framework for managing the reserves. Because the classifications are high level, Waikato District reserves are also grouped into different management categories, which have been developed by the Recreation Aotearoa (Appendix 2). The categories include Civic space, Cultural heritage, Neighbourhood, Outdoor adventure, Nature, Public gardens, Recreation and ecological links,

and Sports and recreation. These reserve categories are compatible with the Reserves Act Classifications but provide a more detailed framework that recognises the more specific function and character of each reserve and assists with the planning and management, including the level of service applied to the reserves (e.g. a sports and recreation reserve has a high level of built infrastructure and level of maintenance, whereas a natural bush area has low levels of infrastructure and different maintenance activities).

Relationship with Other Council Documents and Legislation

The development and management of local reserves and the implementation of this plan is guided by a range of legislation, statutory and non-statutory policies and council plans and strategic documents.

Please note that nothing in this plan avoids the need for activities and development on reserves to comply with other relevant legislation. Applicants for a proposed activity may require separate regulatory approvals and consents, such as under the Resource Management Act 1991, Building Act 2004 and Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014.

Reserves Act 1977

The Council has a responsibility as an administering body under the Reserves Act 1977, Section 41, to prepare management plans for the reserves and parks that it manages.

“The management plan shall provide for and ensure the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection, and preservation, as the case may require, and, to the extent that the administering body's resources permit, the development, as appropriate, of the reserve for the purposes for which it is classified, and shall incorporate and ensure compliance with the principles set out...for a reserve of that classification.”

The development of this plan follows a reserve management planning process as detailed in Figure 1. The RMP process has a strong focus on public engagement, allowing the communities to shape the document. In accordance with the Reserves Act 1977, this management plan will remain under continuous review.

Where specific reserve management plans exist for a category or individual reserve, the policies in that RMP take precedence over the General Policies RMP.

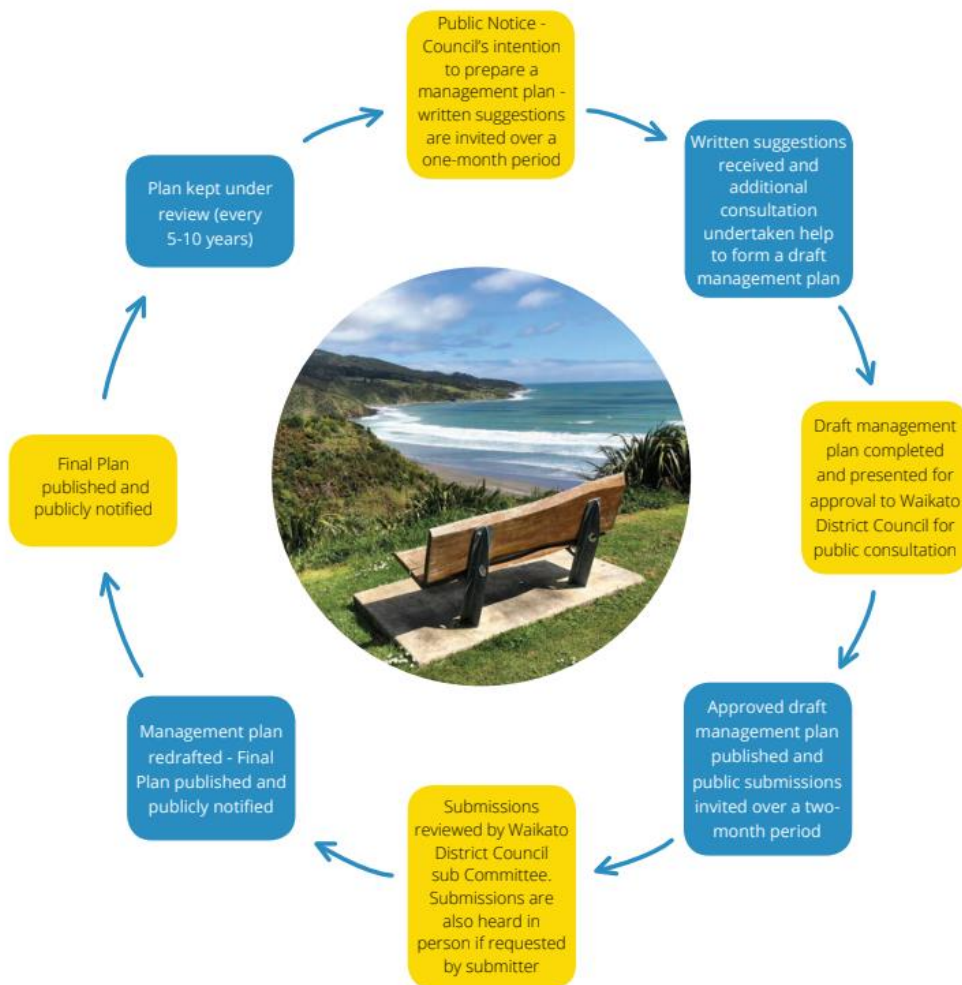


Figure 1: RMP process and detailed steps in accordance with the Reserves Act (1977).

Bylaws and Policies

There are existing bylaws and standalone policies that apply to the use of Council land and may impact on user behaviour or the management of a reserve. Most bylaws simply require compliance with specified rules for the activity, for example a person may only exercise a dog off a leash in certain reserves or parts of a reserve. Other activities may require a prior approval, with the criteria and process for obtaining the approval set out in a bylaw or policy.

Bylaws and standalone policies take precedence over the General Policies RMP and where possible duplication of content has been avoided.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi - The Treaty of Waitangi

The Treaty of Waitangi is the founding document of New Zealand. The principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi are applied to the decision-making process and management of reserves in the district. Mana whenua continue to maintain a presence and relationship with their ancestral sites and landscapes of significance. This relationship also extends to the taonga, and sites where historic events occurred, often within the boundaries of the reserves.

Council actively maintain relationships with iwi within the district through established Joint Management Agreements and Memorandum of Understanding.

Structure of this Plan

This RMP sets out policy on which applies to all Council Reserves in the District.

The Plan is set out in five policy sections, where the reader will be able to find objectives and policies associated with each subject.

The five policy sections are:

Section 1 - Reserve Values

Section 2 - Development of Reserves

Section 3 - Use of Reserves

Section 4 - Authorisations and Approvals

Section 5 - Management of Reserves

The policy sections should ***be read as a whole***. This means that more than one objective and/or policy may be relevant in any given situation. Plan readers should therefore seek to identify all relevant objectives and policies relevant to an issue in the General Policies document and in the individual plan which includes that reserve (e.g. Sports Park RMP).

1. Reserve Values

1.1 Relationship with Mana Whenua

Objective

- A. To work in partnership with mana whenua to implement the principles of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) of reserves and recognise mana whenua's connection with the land

Policies

- 1. Work with mana whenua to understand their aspirations and priorities for Waikato District reserves
- 2. Integrate principles of kaitiakitanga into the planning and management of reserves
- 3. Recognise and support mana whenua tikanga, kawa, customs to access sites and gathering of resources
- 4. Identify, protect, and celebrate sites of taonga in accordance with mana whenua tikanga wishes

Explanation

Mana whenua are not considered key stakeholders but partners with how Council manages reserves and together we lean on the principles of kaitiakitanga. The values held by kaitiaki (guardians or protectors) include their environmental and spiritual ties to ancestral lands, water, sites, wāhi tapu (sacred areas) and other taonga (treasures), and the wellbeing of the community. Kaitiakitanga invites people to form and maintain relationships with the environment in which they live.

By nature of these principles, we will work together to address access to sites and resources to support cultural practices.

1.2 Relationships with Volunteers and Partnerships

Objective

- A. To encourage and facilitate volunteering activities on reserves that align with the policies of this plan and support resource efficiencies resulting in mutual benefits for our communities and the reserves themselves

Policies

- 1. Create and maintain relationships with volunteer groups. Volunteering activities on reserves require Council authorisation and the assessment of proposals will be subject to Council agreement.

2. Volunteer activities shall be formalised under a formal Council agreement.
Appropriate roles and responsibilities to be defined in partnership with Council
3. All volunteer groups must meet and comply with health and safety requirements relative to the nature of the work they are undertaking

Explanation

Some partnerships may be simple arrangements between the Council and one community partner/ group. In many cases, Council provides most of the financial investment in the form of land, buildings or funding, and the partner/group providing volunteer know-how, physical work, networks, and programming expertise.

Other partnership arrangements may be large and complex, with multiple investors sharing the capital development costs of a new facility, and professional operators playing a role alongside community partners. The Council will consider a wide range of partnership arrangements, within broad parameters. The importance of partnership is not the size of the group but has the skills to successfully and sustainably meet the community's needs. Given the variety of potential scenarios, it is important that our Council processes can adapt to suit.

1.3 Cultural and Historic Heritage

Objectives

- A. To identify, protect and manage significant historic and cultural heritage for its intrinsic value, for the enjoyment and education of reserve users
- B. To ensure the design and use of reserves recognises and celebrates the district's historic and cultural heritage

Policies

1. Ensure areas of cultural significance or heritage value located on a reserve are protected, managed, and conserved in proportion to their significance and the level of threat posed to them, in accordance with:
 - a. Any preference of mana whenua and tikanga (protocols)
 - b. Legislation, such as the Reserves Act, Resource Management Act 1991 and the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014 (NZHPT 2014)
 - c. Council statutory and non-statutory policy such as the District Plan
 - d. Any heritage conservation plans
2. Any development work carried out on or adjacent to historic structures shall be sympathetic to their historical context
3. Encourage public appreciation and enjoyment of historic and cultural heritage in reserves through education, interpretation, cultural markers, public art, and opportunities for community participation

4. Where kōiwi (remains) or artifacts of cultural or historic value are discovered during reserve operations or development, mana whenua will be consulted in the first instance and an accidental discovery protocol will be followed

Explanation

It is important to recognise and retain heritage features, which may include historic structures and archaeological sites. Such sites provide physical evidence of historical events and add to the depth of experience for visitors and local residents when they visit the reserves.

The NZHPT (2014) provides legal protection for all pre-1900 archaeological sites (including recorded and non-recorded) and those post 1900 sites gazetted for protection under the Act. An archaeological authority from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga is required to modify or destroy any archaeological site. Any site where there may be an archaeological interest will require that Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga is notified and an archaeological assessment completed along with archaeological authority being obtained before any works can commence. Known sites may have archaeological site information detailing the importance and management of the site.

1.4 Sustainability

1.4.1 Climate Change, Fire Risk and Natural Hazards

Objectives

- A. To manage reserves in a way that minimises and mitigates the impact of climate change
- B. To improve the resilience of reserves by acknowledging and adapting to the effects of climate change, flooding and impacts of natural hazards
- C. To manage significant risks from natural hazards to reserve users and assets in accordance with local, regional, and national policy
- D. To prevent and reduce risk of fire damage on reserves by effective operations and visitor management of fire risks

Policies

1. Adapt to climate change impacts and coastal hazards including:
 - a. Promoting as a general policy, a managed retreat from erosion zones and coastal areas that are increasingly inundated
 - b. When structures affected by coastal hazards fail or when other trigger points are reached, in general prefer to move them to less vulnerable sites or remove entirely rather than repair them
 - c. Follow best practice guidance for hazards risk management
 - d. Decision making in response to the impact of coastal hazards or land instability to a reserve or reserve infrastructure will be consistent with a national, regional, or Council policy or site-specific hazard management plan

2. Avoid and mitigate the impact of climate change and coastal erosion by:
 - a. Undertaking restoration and planting programmes where appropriate
 - b. Promoting soft engineering solutions to retain a natural beach buffer and to strengthen natural features (such as salt marshes or other natural flood zones, beaches, and dunes) in preference to using hard protection structures to manage natural hazards
 - c. Continuing to maintain and create natural dune ecosystems to help stabilise them and slow down the rate of erosion
3. Stormwater, flooding, and erosion
 - a. Manage stormwater runoff and flooding through soft engineering including but not limited to grass swales, riparian plantings, wetland holding areas riparian planting of ecologically appropriate native species
 - b. Require the siting of facilities and planting on reserves to have regard for avoiding natural hazard threats, including flooding and erosion
 - c. Avoiding earthworks near streams
 - d. Planting steep slopes to prevent erosion and sedimentation
4. Fire management
 - a. Reduce fire risk around public designated picnic sites, tracks, and heritage buildings and structures by appropriate vegetation management, including species selection of any future plantings in the surrounding area
 - b. Only permit the use of public open fires, including portable barbeques using solid fuel, in public amenity picnic areas, and where the fire is permitted by controls implemented through the Fire and Emergency Act 2017
 - c. Support Fire and Emergency New Zealand through any prohibition or restrictions and any associated processes to manage a fire season

Explanation

In order to manage the use, protection and development of reserves across the district, Council needs to be aware of natural hazards and climate change, and their potential impact on the use and safety of public reserves. Flooding, coastal inundation, and erosion/land instability are the main climate change hazards that can occur in areas of the Waikato District that are likely to impact on reserves.

Risks from natural hazards are expected to increase as a result of climate change, with sea levels rising and an increase in the frequency and severity of storms.

Public demand for hard erosion protection works such as seawalls or groynes is often high when harbour/coastal processes affect private property, public infrastructure, or reserves. While hard erosion protection works can in some cases shield property, they can have significant adverse effects on harbour/coastal processes and natural features (e.g. increasing erosion further in or along the harbour/coast) and on natural character, amenity values and public access to and along coastal margins.

Erosion protection works can cause coastal (including harbour) edge degradation which can threaten coastal habitats and ecosystems. There is no one solution that suits all sites where coastal edge erosion is occurring.

Climate change is creating changes to natural physical processes, ecosystems and habitats on many of the local reserves. Altered weather patterns may have negative impacts such as an increase in plant and animal pests and the spread of pathogens. It could also change recreational access to areas if the ground is saturated for longer periods.

Stormwater assets and recreational assets are frequently developed together to provide a dual amenity and function for a new subdivision. The primary purpose of the space must be clearly defined at the time of development. Seasonally there may be an adverse effect of stormwater on recreational assets resulting in a lowered level of service (e.g. flooding on walkways).

All fires, whether lit naturally, accidentally, or deliberately can pose a risk to reserve visitors, native vegetation, species, historic places, reserve assets and adjoining property. The risk of fire is likely to increase as an impact of climate change, where the climate is likely to become hotter and drier.

Council will take the approach of only allowing open fires in purpose built solid fuel barbeques or fire pits. Reserve users are not allowed to make fires in other places, including uncontrolled settings such as beaches or dunes. Fireworks are to be restricted to particular public events and conditions for the activity approved by Council. No private informal displays permitted. No fires will be permitted when a prohibited fire season has been declared by Fire and Emergency New Zealand.

Council will manage climate change by focussing on mitigation and adaptation through the Waikato District Council Climate Response and Resilience Action Plan Framework (2020).

1.4.2 Biodiversity

Objectives

- A. To protect, maintain and enhance the long-term viability and resilience of native species, habitats, and ecosystems on reserves
- B. To inspire and encourage people to be actively engaged in caring for natural values on reserves

Policies

- 1. Maintain restoration and ecological enhancement programmes on the district's reserves, and giving priority to:
 - a. Deliver biodiversity programmes with a focus on pest animal and plant management as required by the Waikato Regional Pest Management Plan (and any subsequent updated plan) as resources allow
 - b. The restoration and enhancement of natural value reserves for the benefit of the community and the environment

- c. Ensuring, where practical, that natural value reserves are accessible to the community and well connected to wider open space and trail networks
 - d. Continuing to foster enduring relationships with key partners to support the ongoing enhancement of natural value reserves and agreed regional priorities such as site led biocontrol and pest management programmes, collaboration efforts with Waikato Regional Council, Waikato RiverCare, and other relevant management agencies or volunteer groups to co-ordinate and compliment efforts across the Waikato
2. Any plantings undertaken on reserves will:
- a. Be consistent with the overall character and function of the reserve
 - b. Utilise species appropriate to the site
 - c. Generally, be indigenous and sourced from the same ecological district
 - d. Generally, be aimed at creating native species dominated, self-sustaining habitats over time
 - e. Will give regard to retaining and enhancing significant views from the reserve, without loss of existing habitat
 - f. Landscaping will be designed for low on-going maintenance
3. Tree maintenance will take account of:
- a. Naturally occurring native trees on reserve land will not be pruned or removed to create or maintain private views
 - b. Addressed appropriately to manage health and safety risks
 - c. Where possible, pruned to allow for natural habitat to remain for native species
4. Consideration may be given to the planting of exotic species¹ where there is:
- a. A desire for a commemorative or symbolic exotic species for a recognised individual or group
 - b. A need for a fast-growing species to control erosion
 - c. The advantage of fruit or specimen feature trees or hedging
 - d. Low maintenance and resilient species for amenity purposes
 - e. Replacement plants that are consistent with existing vegetation species
5. Where practicable foster the resilience of native species, habitats, and ecosystems to the adverse effects of unpredictable events, such as climate change or new incursions of pests or pathogens, through an adaptive management response, on a case-by-case basis

Explanation

The Council reserves contain a wide range of the significant biodiversity and ecosystems. These natural resources are considered to be living taonga by mana whenua.

¹ Exotic species will not include any species identified in the Waikato Regional Pest Management Plan 2021-2031 or considered to be an ecological weed threat.

The Reserves Act requires that indigenous biodiversity present on a reserve is managed and protected in a way that is compatible with the principal or primary purpose of the reserve.

The management of the reserves provides opportunities to demonstrate best environmental practice and sustainability to the local community, both in the day-to-day management of reserves and in specific conservation projects. This includes revegetation to mitigate the impacts of climate change and allow for carbon sequestration.

Volunteers currently play a role in delivering biodiversity outcomes and utilise their efforts for educational opportunities. Volunteering and education activities are a great way to engage the next generation of environmentally minded people.

Indigenous biodiversity and ecosystem functions can be significantly threatened by some introduced plants and animals. The Waikato District provides a favourable climate for many introduced species and has a high number of introduced plants that have naturalised in the area. It is anticipated that climate change is likely to increase the number and extent of invasive plants, invertebrates, such as wasps, and pathogen incursions like myrtle rust in the future.

The threat of pathogens, such as kauri dieback and myrtle rust, spreading through the Waikato District may need to be actively managed in the near future. In some circumstances recreational access may need to be restricted through the closure of tracks, or quarantining zones or rāhui to protect areas within reserves to contain areas of infection to prevent the spread of disease.

1.4.3 Sustainable Practices

Objective

- A. To incorporate sustainable practices into the provision, management, and development of reserves

Policies

1. Ensure that sustainable management practices are taken into account in the design, operation, maintenance and development of the reserves across the Waikato District. This may include:
 - a. Considering the life cycle of products used for reserve development and maintenance
 - b. Considering renewable and reusable materials in reserve design elements
 - c. Considering low energy efficient devices for new or replacement services
 - d. Low impact design practises for stormwater management
 - e. Conservation and adaptive re-use of all forms of heritage items including buildings, structures, and fixtures such as pathways, trees, streetscapes, and paving, where appropriate
2. Facilitate sustainable transport options to reserves by incorporating supporting infrastructure

Explanation

The Council is committed to the principles of creating a sustainable community and environment. Council will endeavour to incorporate sustainable practices into both the provision of reserves within the district, and to their management and development where resources permit.

Sustainability is a process of ensuring all resources are used and managed for a balance of environmental, social, cultural, and economic wellbeing. It means meeting the needs of today without adversely impacting the needs of future generations.

There is a suite of sustainable practises that can be employed on reserves from choosing materials for reserve developments that have greater longevity to decrease maintenance and increase the life of assets to utilising environmentally friendly technologies to reduce energy costs.

Council can also encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport by including infrastructure such as bike parking into reserve designs. This technology will evolve over time and Council needs to keep abreast of new innovations in this space.

2. Development of Reserves

2.1 General Reserve Development

Objective

- A. Development is aligned with the reserve's purpose and the communities' needs without significant or ongoing adverse effects on other reserve users, adjoining property owners or the reserve itself

Policies

1. Reserve development shall occur through integration of the following:
 - a. The classification status of the reserve and the reserve category
 - b. Outcomes and recommendations of design guidelines, concept plans and /or relevant specialist assessments
 - c. The impact the proposed development has on existing reserve values, including the natural, cultural, landscape and open space characteristics of the reserve
 - d. Minimising the opportunities for vandalism
 - e. Consider crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) principles
 - f. Universal design and how people of all ages and abilities use, access, and enjoy the reserve
2. Council may develop a concept plan to guide development of a reserve where this is not sufficient design detailed in an RMP

3. Council will consult the community over any major development² of a reserve, including targeted engagement with key user groups in the design and development of any concept plans

Explanation

Reserve development can protect and enhance the landscape and natural values, assist with activating a reserve and enhance community appreciation and enjoyment of the reserve. This covers many aspects, from designing and developing reserves in new subdivisions to upgrading existing reserves.

Council needs to ensure that reserves are developed to meet the community's aspirations and deliver the types of recreational experiences they are seeking whilst ensuring the natural values of the reserve are retained and potentially enhanced. For a number of key reserves across the district this will include the future development of a concept plan that will provide a more detailed guide as to how the development of the reserve will be co-ordinated.

2.2 Access and Parking

Objectives

- A. To provide safe, logical, and adequate access to and through reserves and car parks for vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians whilst minimising impact on users, facilities, amenity values, and the general character of the reserve
- B. Ensure access to reserves is free of barriers for all members of the community
- C. Manage safety risks and visitor experience with temporary reserve closure where necessary

Policies

1. Provide and maintain safe and accessible routes to and through reserves and facilities, following CPTED principles
2. Allow for emergency and service vehicle access to reserves for operational purposes
3. Access to a reserve or area of a reserve may be temporarily restricted for a specified time³ where:
 - a. A rāhui is in place
 - b. Health and safety risk identified
 - c. Maintenance or remedial works are being carried out

² As defined in the Waikato District Council Significance and Engagement Policy (2020)

³ Reserve closures for temporary periods of time may only require public notification as permitted under the Reserves Act 1977

- d. An activity or event has been granted the right to restrict public access as part of its conditions of authorisation
 - e. There are unfavourable ground conditions or a biodiversity risk
 - f. Limiting vehicle access at night for security purposes
 - g. An isolated event or activity where the impact may have a detrimental impact to reserve visitors
4. When developing public spaces including parking and access roads, consider the general reserve development policies outlined in other sections of this plan, and the following:
- a. Where there is a District Plan or resource consent condition or a proven requirement directly related to the use of the reserve
 - b. Consider options to encourage passive transport (e.g. cycling) into and through a reserve
 - c. It is both physically and financially feasible to provide parking facilities
 - d. Locate parking closest to the site boundary and adjoining roads to minimise the loss of usable recreation space
 - e. Incorporating water sensitive design to reduce stormwater runoff and contaminants entering the stormwater system
 - f. Consider appropriate signage and speed calming techniques, (e.g. speed bumps), to slow vehicle movements through parks, where required
 - g. Volume of parking should consider regular daily usage (as oppose to peak parking)

Explanation

Public access to and through reserve areas is an essential aspect of reserve management. It enhances reserve use for the enjoyment and the benefit for residents with attractive connections throughout townships. Pedestrian access and circulation within a reserve needs to be coherent, appropriate to the site and safe. It also needs to allow access to the variety of facilities that are located within reserves. It is important that access points are clear and where applicable, clearly define a direct route through a reserve to makes users feel comfortable. Reserves carparks are not exclusive to a certain user group.

As with buildings, car parks and vehicle access impact on the usability of reserves by taking up space which would otherwise be available for other reserve activities. In addition, the hard surfaces (from access roads and car parks) have the potential to create adverse environmental effects, such as polluted stormwater runoff. Council intends to provide car parking that is relevant to the reserve's purpose, location, and likely demand during non-peak use of the reserve, and in accordance with District Plan Rules.

2.3 Buildings and Other Structures

Objectives

- A. To ensure the provision and maintenance of buildings and other structures necessary to facilitate public recreational use and enjoyment of the reserve is of a condition, design and scale suited to the reserve environment
- B. To ensure buildings or structures that are of benefit to reserve users are well utilised

Policies

1. In proposing to locate a new building or structure on a reserve (by Council or by others), or when considering proposals for the extension or upgrade of an existing building or structure, in addition to the General Reserve Development section the following shall be considered:
 - a. The Reserves Act classification of the land and the allocated reserve category and whether the purpose is compatible with the reserve's use and function
 - b. The need for the building or structure to be located on reserve land, considering evaluation of other sites, the potential to co-locate the activity in an existing building, to adapt an existing building and the opportunity to cluster buildings (hubbing) if a separate building is required
 - c. The scale of the proposed building or structure in relation to the reserve and its potential impact on foreseeable use of the reserve for outdoor recreation, the amenity of the reserve and the conservation of open space, views, significant vegetation, and significant landscape features
 - d. The siting, design, materials and colour of the proposed building or structure
 - e. The potential impacts generated by ancillary activities used to provide ongoing operational funding
 - f. The effects of providing access to, parking and service areas for the proposed building or structure
 - g. The ability, including the financial position, of the applicant to construct and maintain the building and operate the proposed activity
 - h. Consent requirements in accordance with the district plan
2. Where a building or other structure is no longer required by an occupier or Council, the following steps will be undertaken:
 - a. The occupier will be required to find a new approved occupier or remove the building or structure from the reserve
 - b. If the occupier cannot either find a new suitable occupier or remove the building or structure, then Council will take reasonable efforts to find a new suitable occupier or use for the building
 - c. If no suitable occupier or use can be found, Council will consider moving the building or structure
 - d. If no suitable occupier can be found and the building or structure cannot be relocated and there is no reasonably foreseeable use for the building or structure then it will be either tendered to be removed, or demolished
 - e. Where Council does not own the building, feasible costs associated with removal or demolition of the building and or structure and reinstatement of the reserve to Council's satisfaction shall be charged to the owner

Explanation

Sporting and community groups often request new buildings or facilities to be located on reserves. Well designed, sited, and integrated buildings and facilities can complement the reserves character and aesthetic values, while also enhancing the public's use and enjoyment of them.

This policy seeks to ensure that buildings and structures do not compromise the open space values of the reserve unless the provision of buildings and structures supports the use and enjoyment of the reserve.

Council owned buildings and structures on reserves assist in their day-to-day maintenance and management, such as equipment storage and public amenities (change/toilet facilities). These buildings will continue to be maintained to ensure these do not impact on the amenity or use of the reserve.

Changes in levels of population and participation sometimes result in sports clubs and groups dissolving, amalgamating, or falling into recess. A consequence of this is the abandonment of facilities such as playing courts, practice nets, clubrooms etc. Where a facility is not being used for its intended purpose Council can undertake a variety of options to seek a new occupier or consider removing the facility from the reserve land.

Council recognises the limited resources of community groups occupying reserves and notes some existing reserve facilities could sustain higher levels of use, and the sharing of such facilities would prevent unnecessary duplication and cost. Pre-approved sub-letting (or hubbing situations) of facilities by lessees can generate revenue and spread the load of paying for overheads such as power. Such uses must however be consistent with the purposes for which the reserve is held.

2.4 Furniture

Objectives

- A. To provide sufficient reserve furniture to facilitate public use and enjoyment of the outdoor recreational environment
- B. To ensure a coordinated and consistent approach to the design, selection, and placement of all reserve furniture

Policies

- 1. Consider installing furniture where there is a demonstrated need and it is appropriate to the functional use and purpose of the reserve, in accordance with Council's levels of service
- 2. Ensure that all new or replacement furniture is of an approved and environmentally practical design or style
- 3. The Council may remove furniture where the condition of the furniture is below an acceptable standard, where the furniture is not in keeping with the reserve, or where there is no longer a demonstrated need

Explanation

The provision of reserve furniture such as seating, picnic tables, barbeques, drinking fountains, and litter bins may enhance the usability of a reserve by supporting a variety of activities, encouraging people to gather within reserves and stay longer. It may also play an important role in public health.

It is important to manage reserve furniture and take the time to consider its installation, in accordance with the reserves purpose and use. If unmanaged, reserve furniture can add to visual clutter and detract from landscape and amenity values. Unmanaged reserve furniture can also become an ongoing maintenance burden to Council and the community.

Some reserve users may wish to commemorate loved ones who have had a connection to a reserve location. Where commemorative assets are proposed, Council will assess each application against the Memorials, Plaques, and Monuments Policy.

2.5 Lighting

Objective

- A. To provide lighting to facilitate evening or early morning use and access where appropriate

Policies

1. Council provision of lighting in a reserve, including along cycle and pedestrian paths will consider:
 - a. The use and purpose of the reserve
 - b. Whether there is a clear public benefit
 - c. Whether it supports the principles of CPTED
 - d. Lighting that is energy efficient (e.g. moving towards LED lighting)
2. Installation of exterior lighting by reserve occupiers, such as sports clubs, is subject to the approval of the Council. Lighting must at all times meet the relevant electrical safety standards, District Plan requirements and comply with the policies of this plan.
3. Hours of operation of lights shall be limited to those hours approved by the Council and District Plan. The use of adaptive lighting controls or light suppression techniques will be required to limit the hours or intensity of light.

Explanation

Lighting is sometimes required to improve the safety and functionality of reserves, to extend the period by which the reserve can be used, or to enhance the amenity of a reserve.

Good lighting design can reduce the impact of lighting on neighbours and the environment and significantly enhance the safety, use and appearance of reserves. Likewise, poor lighting

design and installation can have negative effects for neighbours and the environment. Care must be taken with flood lighting and security lighting.

Consideration of new lighting will be assessed in accordance with Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles. In some instances, perceived or real safety issues cannot be addressed by lighting alone. In these cases, lighting may encourage people to enter a reserve, where it may be unsafe to do so.

Where a user group uses lighting for a particular purpose (e.g. sports lighting), the cost of installation and ongoing supply charges may be undertaken by the user group.

2.6 Play Facilities

Objective

- A. The reserve network has a diverse range of enjoyable, stimulating, and safe play opportunities for all ages and abilities

Policies

1. Enhance and develop play facilities to reflect community demand, provide quality play outcomes and a cohesive network of designated play spaces for each urban locality
2. All new play equipment and associated safety surfaces and all renewal of play areas shall be designed, constructed, and maintained to conform to New Zealand standards for playground equipment and surfaces
3. Require that any proposal to upgrade or locate a new play space in a reserve consider the following:
 - a. The appropriateness of the play space in terms of the current and future needs of the local community
 - b. Existing play space provision, to identify gaps or avoid duplication and to ensure a variety of play opportunities are easily accessible, in accordance with Council's Levels of Service for play provision
 - c. Design for all ages and abilities and consider the principals of universal design
 - d. Urban design standards (including CPTED principles)
 - e. Appropriately located to maximise existing site features, enable passive surveillance, and reduce negative effects or site hazards
 - f. The provision of sun and shelter (for those playing and supervising)
 - g. Opportunities to incorporate artworks, or to introduce or retain natural play elements and landscape features
4. Explore opportunities to develop spaces and facilities that engage youth (beyond basketball courts and skateparks) across the reserve network to cater for varying youth interests based on consultation with youth

5. Remain flexible to adopt new play technology or concepts that are financially supported and beneficial for recreation

Explanation

Reserves provide important open space areas for children and teenagers to play, whether that is through using natural features, or through the provision of formal playgrounds, skate parks and bike parks.

Play facilities will be developed and maintained in accordance with the Councils guidelines and New Zealand's playground standards. Where possible universal design will be taken into account which is "the design of products and environments to be useable by all people to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaption or specialised design."

'Play' has a broad definition with many concepts that help facilitate play. Technology and concepts such as 'nature play' and 'play-on-the-way' can be affordable to implement and make a positive difference to how our community interact with their open spaces. It is important that our reserves continue to evolve, where practical, to cater for all play options.

2.7 Public Art

Objective

- A. To allow the installation of public art within reserves where appropriate

Policies

1. Permanent public art may only be installed in reserves with the formal approval of the Council and any required consents
2. Include opportunities to engage with mana whenua and Māori artists to provide cultural pieces on reserves, such as whakairo or pouwhenua
3. The location of any public art installation must be in keeping with the scale and values of the reserve, and it must not unduly impact on the cost of reserve maintenance and operational activities or detract from reserve use

Explanation

Public art is one of the more visible and accessible forms of art. Some forms of public art, such as permanent installations like paintings, sculptures, or carving can often be best appreciated if located within reserves. However public art can be controversial, and if located in the wrong place, can conflict with the primary purpose of the reserve.

Council may require that any public art be accompanied by a landscape assessment, detailing how the public art will fit within the proposed setting. Art may also be received as a gift to the community. In this scenario, a written agreement will be established with Council and the 'gift giver' on the acceptance or decline and suitable location of the art piece.

2.8 Signage

Objectives

- A. To provide sufficient signs to facilitate public use, heritage and site appreciation, and enjoyment of the outdoor recreational environment
- B. To control the display of advertising and sponsorship signs on reserves

Policies

- 1. All signs located within reserves will comply with Council's signage guidelines to ensure consistent sign branding, styles, and information throughout the district
- 2. Signs will generally be grouped or clustered within a reserve to avoid visual clutter and to assist visitors to easily access all relevant information
- 3. Provide directional and way-finding signage within reserves for suitable to all visitors
- 4. All signs within reserves will be subject to the provisions of the District Plan
- 5. Reserve occupiers wishing to erect signs on buildings or facilities they occupy will require approval from Council and be responsible for obtaining all relevant statutory consents and meeting the costs of producing, erecting, maintaining, and replacing signs relating to their activity
- 6. No commercial signs will be permitted on reserves except with the particular approval of Council (including acknowledging sponsorship). Council may permit advertising signs on recreation reserves developed as sports grounds where these will not detract from the character and amenity of the reserve or adversely affect neighbours. The cost of such signs, any associated resource consents, and the regular maintenance of any such sign will be borne by the advertiser.
- 7. Council may permit community notice boards on recreation reserves in association with sports grounds and/or public facilities where these signs will not detract from the character and amenity of the reserve or adversely affect neighbours
- 8. Council retains the right to request the removal of and/or to remove any inappropriate, poorly located or maintained, or obsolete signs
- 9. On-site interpretation will be utilised to:
 - a. Contribute to people's understanding and appreciation of the reserve's values, history, or significant features
 - b. Increase awareness of mana whenua's role as kaitiaki and their connection to a reserve
 - c. Raise awareness of environmental issues, community-led activity, or restoration programmes

Explanation

Signs are necessary to identify reserves, to assist access and orientation within reserves, to encourage the appropriate use of reserves and to provide for the safety of reserve users. Signs provide an opportunity for Council to 'brand' public land and clearly identify public resources. However, signs can individually or cumulatively detract from the amenity of a reserve and need to be designed, located, and maintained to avoid visual clutter.

Interpretive material on reserves can enhance the visitor experience by increasing awareness of a reserve's history and special features and inspire visitors to explore the reserve. This can be achieved in several formats, such as, through signs, displays, audio visuals, activation, and public art, which can also contribute to the unique character of an area.

The District Plan limits the type, location, and size of signs on reserves (and elsewhere), including commercial signs. Utility warning signage is allowed where it informs the public with regards to any health and safety requirements. Community Notice Boards are designed for the advertising of local events, small business, non-profit groups or other information pertaining to the local community they're posted in. These will be managed by a relevant local committee.

3. Use of Reserves

3.1 General Use of Reserves

Objective

- A. To enable recreational use and enjoyment of local reserves that does not unduly compromise the reserve's values or impact other reserve users

Policies

1. Provide for and manage the impacts of recreational use through a range of mechanisms, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Identifying the range of recreational opportunities sought from the community through the reserve classification and category
 - b. Managing recreational use on a network wide basis, recognising not all opportunities can be provided in every reserve
 - c. Utilising bylaws or codes of conduct to set parameters or conditions on activities
 - d. Utilising council's reserve booking system to manage the allocation of spaces in reserves
 - e. Requiring the authorisation of activities that have the potential to impact the reserve values or other reserve users
2. Enable recreational use and enjoyment of reserves through:
 - a. Responding to shifts and changes in demand for recreational activities
 - b. activating reserves through events, programmes and other initiatives including authorised activities
 - c. Developing or naturalising reserves to increase their resilience and capacity

- d. Promoting opportunities that may broaden reserves user's experiences, such as public art and interpretation
- e. Recognising the value of reserves in providing respite

Explanation

Reserves are provided for the public's general use and enjoyment. They cater for a wide range of recreational opportunities from informal activities such as walking and picnicking to highly organised activities such as sporting events.

All recreational activity needs to be managed in a way which minimises the impact on reserve values and is consistent with the reserve classification (where the reserve is held under the Reserves Act). Most everyday activities on reserves are allowed as of right. However, some activities on reserves that have the potential to impact either the environment or other reserve users, or require the temporary allocation of space, may be allowed subject to meeting conditions. These may be by way of a bylaw, bond, or a code of conduct.

All activities are subject to the controls of the Waikato District Plan and Council's other policies and bylaws

Some activities will require specific permission or authorisation (refer to Section 4). Everyday activities that are permitted without the need for approval from the council, are those that:

- Are informal or casual in nature and are consistent with the values of the reserve, such as walking, relaxing, picnicking and the like; or
- Meet conditions in a bylaw or code of conduct to avoid any potential impact on either the environment or other reserve users, such as dog walking
- Are not identified in this plan or by the Reserves Act as requiring authorisation or regulated in a bylaw, and do not unduly interfere with the use and enjoyment of other users of the reserve

3.2 Drones / Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) and Model Aircraft

Objective

- A. Allow for the flying of recreational drone flying with parameters to prevent impacts on other reserve users including privacy and nuisance

Policies

1. Flying will be a permitted activity provided that it aligns with the code of conduct (refer to Council website⁴) and Civil Aviation Authority rules
2. Remotely piloted aircraft systems, such as drones, are permitted to fly over council reserves, except for playgrounds, cemeteries, as well as cultural and historical reserves

⁴ Editors Note: The code of conduct for drones is current being drafted and will be made available on the Waikato District Council website prior to the adoption of the General Policies Reserve Management Plan being finalised.

Explanation

Model aircraft enthusiasts sometimes use reserves for the operation of their aircraft. This can either be for personal recreational use or for club and competition activity such as at the Tuakau Domain.

The recreational and commercial use of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAV) is becoming more common place and will no doubt increase as technology improves and UAV reduce in cost.

While drones and UAV use has similar impacts to those of model aircraft with respect to noise and potential for injury, the frequent inclusion of on-board cameras, the technology is rising as a new recreational activity. Utility providers are also using drones more often to check their activities or project development.

The Council has issued a code of conduct (located on the website⁴) which users must adhere to receive permission to operate from a reserve. Any activity that does not follow the code of conduct must be applied to Council, in writing. Further information is available on the Council website.

3.3 Multi-use and activation of locations

Objective

- A. To encourage the health and wellbeing of communities through the provision of multi-use resources and linkages

Policy

- 1. Investigate opportunities to create recreation opportunities within and on the way to reserves across the district to encourage people of all ages and abilities to be active

Explanation

There is plenty of research that testifies to the benefits of physical activity on personal well-being. Council will support communities to be active in a range of ways by providing and promoting recreational spaces to cater for all abilities. To support this work Council will also create and maintain strategy and policy documents to guide development and decision making.

4. Authorisations and Approvals

4.1 Approvals framework

Objective

- A. To ensure a consistent approach is taken to assessing proposals requiring authorisation in accordance with any legislation, bylaw or policy and is consistent with the primary purpose of the reserve

Policies

1. Ensure a consistent approach is taken to assessing proposed activities requiring authorisation, including:
 - a. Compatibility with the reserve classification, if applicable (defined under the Reserves Act)
 - b. Compatibility with the reserve category and reserve specific information, values and development plans
 - c. Consideration of the capacity of the reserve to accommodate the activity, the current use of the reserve and all potential impacts on the environment and other reserve users

Explanation

The authorisation and approvals acknowledge that some activities or requests may not be detailed specifically by a section, objective, or policy. The approvals framework allows for consistency to approach and decision making on items not specifically detailed. The purpose of authorisation is to ensure impacts on the reserve and its users are considered, managed, and a consistent and balanced approach is taken to assessing proposals to ensure the reserve is protected.

Some people or groups will want to use reserve space for activities that might have a lasting impact on the reserve, or that might prevent others from also using the reserve. Under these circumstances people will need to apply for a specific permission or 'authorisation' to use the reserve. Additionally, throughout the timeframe of this plan, new activities may arise which have not been addressed within this plan, other council policies, nor any bylaws. This provides a framework for considering their authorisation.

4.2 Occupation Agreements

The following objectives apply to all sub-categories of Occupational Agreements

Objectives

- A. To formalise the current occupation of reserves for approved uses and facilities by the granting of occupation agreements where users can demonstrate the sustainability of their occupation and it is consistent with the reserve purpose
- B. To protect reserve primary purpose and values by minimising the number of buildings, easements, and utilities on reserves
- C. To ensure adequate compensation is provided to remedy or mitigate the adverse effects of all private infrastructure (e.g. utility, stormwater discharge, accessways) and including private underground facilities on reserves
- D. To require compensation for all temporary or permanent effects on reserve values caused by occupation agreements

- E. To permit reasonable access to holder of easements for the inspection and maintenance of their assets and networks on or across reserves
- F. Consideration of applications of an occupation agreement will address requirements for minimal impact and/or beneficial services for reserve users

4.2.1 Leases

Policies

- 1. Any exclusive use of reserves, including buildings, will be subject to a lease
- 2. Land may be leased to groups and organisations for the following purposes:
 - 2.1 The construction of sports facilities and associated buildings at the group's or organisation's expense.
 - 2.2 The construction of buildings and other structures that increase or improve the use of the reserve for recreation at the group's or organisation's expense.
 - 2.3 The occupation of Council owned buildings on reserves where it is prudent for the management of the building and community access to the building.

Provided that:

- 2.4 The proposed activities cannot satisfactorily take place in existing facilities (including those occupied by other reserve users), or elsewhere in the locality
- 3. Where required, existing leases will be renegotiated. In cases where they do not comply with the policies of the Management Plan or, in the case of land that is subject to the Reserves Act 1977, with the requirements of the Act, the occupation may terminate at the end of the current lease and the lessee improvements removed
- 4. Where users have occupied reserves without formal leases or where previous leases have expired, Council will review the use, sustainability and suitability of the occupation prior to issuing a new occupancy agreement. Council may decline issuing a new lease where the use is insufficient or the sustainability or suitability of an occupation cannot be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Council and the improvements removed from the reserve
- 5. Leases of Reserve Land shall incorporate the appropriate provisions of the Reserves Act 1977, and shall refer to the this Management Plan
- 6. Unless otherwise agreed to, the maintenance of buildings such as clubrooms and associated facilities are the responsibility of individual clubs and organisations. These buildings will be maintained to a high degree of visual amenity

determined by Council staff. Council will not provide compensation for improvements at the termination of a lease/licence. Where an occupation agreement has expired or been terminated, Council will retain the right to:

- a. Require the occupier to remove or dispose of any facility they are responsible for, at the occupier's expense, in line with their occupation agreement and the First Schedule of the Reserves Act 1977. Council will retain the right to remove the facility and on-charge the costs of removal and disposal, or
 - b. Council may instead allocate use of the facility to other users within the community and no compensation for facilities will be payable in this instance
7. The notification of proposed leases within publicly notified management plans shall serve as public notice for the purposes of the Reserves Act 1977
 8. All outgoing costs associated with leases and other agreements are the responsibility of the lessee or holder of the agreement
 9. Rents will be payable on all leases, in accordance with current Council policy. Rents for approved users (e.g. voluntary recreation facilities, approved community users) will be set at an agreed level. Other rents (e.g. commercial use, residential tenancies) will be based on 'market' levels.

Explanation

The leasing provisions of the Reserves Act 1977 emphasise the retention of open space and the public accountability of park management. On all reserves, leases must be drawn up subject to the relevant provisions of the Reserves Act 1977.

The leasing of reserves to a specific entity restricts the uses to which it can be put and usually limits use of the land by the general public. The needs of the local community should take precedence over the wishes of particular organisations. Unnecessary duplication of facilities, particularly among organisations that are active for only part of the year, should be avoided.

For sports clubs, it is preferred that only clubroom building footprints are leased as appose to a ground lease for a larger area of a reserve for exclusive use.

4.2.2 Licenses

Policies

1. Licences may be granted subject to an assessment on likely impacts of existing reserve users and the likely benefits of the proposed activity in terms of recreation and reserve promotion or use
2. Applications for licences will need to be made in writing
3. Licences will include provision for public access (subject to conditions) where this is appropriate and desirable

4. A fee may be charged for a licence. Council may charge a fee other than a market cost for approved recreational or management purposes
5. It shall be a condition of all licences negotiated that Council may, before expiry, cancel all or part of the tenancy at one month's notice, should the land be required for recreational use or if the licensee fails to meet the conditions of the licence
6. It shall be a condition of every licence that Council will not compensate occupiers for improvements upon termination of the agreement
7. All licences shall include a condition providing adequate safeguards to prevent the destruction of or damage to any natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, geological, or other scientific features or indigenous flora and fauna

Explanation

Licence to occupy grants the non-exclusive right to use a park for a specific purpose.

Licences for commercial activities such as events, entertainment, street trading, vending, filming, commercial photography, product launches, personal training etc. may be granted subject to an assessment on likely impacts of existing reserve users and the likely benefits of the proposed activity in terms of recreation and reserve promotion or use.

The Reserves Act 1977 permits the granting of licences for communication stations and any works connected with the station.

Such agreements shall include a condition providing adequate safeguards to prevent the destruction of or damage to any natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, geological, or other scientific features or indigenous flora and fauna.

4.2.3 Easement

Policies

1. Applications for infrastructure (e.g. pipes, cabling, discharge or drainage rights) must be made in writing and contain the following information:
 - 1.1 A statement of alternative infrastructure location or discharge options and their costs
 - 1.2 Discussion on why these alternative options cannot be used
 - 1.3 Evidence that the infrastructure will not detract from the purpose of the park
 - 1.4 A diagram of the proposed works and a survey
2. An easement or formal agreement will be required for all private infrastructure on a reserve
3. An as-built plan of all infrastructure shall be provided to Council

4. All legal costs and the costs of formation and maintenance to the Council's satisfaction shall be borne by the grantee
5. Payment for the benefit of the infrastructure easement shall be made as a yearly rental or lump sum
6. Council will require those holding easements for services crossing reserves to meet the costs of maintaining the infrastructure. The Council will provide reasonable access for the maintenance of services and network utilities
7. Permit vehicle access associated with the ongoing operation, maintenance, development and upgrade of the National Grid transmission lines
8. When services and utilities are no longer required, they shall be removed from the site, the area reinstated to Council's satisfaction, with the costs recovered from the services/utility owner

Explanation

An easement lawfully grants the rights for one person to use another persons land for a specified purpose, in this case the use of reserves for access or utility facilities.

Easements, in particular for assets above ground, can have a negative effect on reserve values and as such they will be limited and may be declined by Council where alternatives exist or where the impact on the reserve is considered unacceptable.

Easements granted may have an annual fees for rental may be required or an up front compensation payment to Council. Existing easements may also be required to pay rental fees. Conditions regarding reinstatement of the site at the completion of the agreement period may also be included with any permission granted. By not granting easements in perpetuity, and requiring reinstatement of the site, the values of the reserves will be re-established

4.3 Facilities and Chattels Abandonment

Objectives

- A. To ensure buildings or structures that are of benefit to reserve users are retained.
- B. To ensure that at all times reserves are safe and well presented public places.
- C. To seek the adaptive reuse or relocation of buildings where practical.
- D. To ensure the owner of a building or structure is responsible for the maintenance and security of a building until disposal has occurred.

Policies

1. The owner of a building or structure will dispose of the facility under the terms of the lease agreement and in conjunction with this policy
2. Where a building or other structure is no longer required by an occupier or Council, the following steps will be taken in priority order:
 - 2.1 The occupier may with Council prior approval seek a new occupier and they must seek a new lease or an assignment (as permitted by relevant Acts, or policies) or remove the building or structure from the reserve
 - 2.2 If the occupier cannot either find a new suitable occupier or remove the building or structure, then Council may take reasonable efforts to find a new suitable occupier or use for the building
 - 2.3 If no suitable occupier or use can be found, Council will consider moving the building or structure
 - 2.4 If no suitable occupier can be found and the building or structure cannot be relocated and there is no reasonable foreseeable use for the building or structure then it will be demolished at the cost of the owner of the building
 - 2.5 Council will have the option to tender or sell the building (not the land) as an alternative to demolishing it, providing it can be removed from the site
 - 2.6 Where the building or structure is not compatible with the primary function and values of the reserve, it will be removed from the reserve
 - 2.7 Where Council does not own the building, the costs associated with removal or demolition of the building and or structure and reinstatement of the reserve to Council's satisfaction shall be charged to the owner

Explanation

Facilities and chattels can become abandoned on a reserve for a range of reasons (e.g. club or organisation becomes insolvent due to a lack of membership). Where possible, Council will work with the organisation prior to abandonment of facilities and chattels.

Abandonment is determined when the organisation or group who held an existing or expired occupational agreement is no longer occupying the facility and/or chattels for the intended and agreed purpose of the occupational agreement OR the organisation or group no longer has capacity to secure a new occupational agreement following the policies outlined in this RMP.

Where the previous occupational agreement holder may have financially contributed to improvements on the reserve, there is no compensation available for abandonment or the termination of an occupational agreement.

Unfortunately there is often significant history and contribution a group leaves behind when managing abandoned facilities. Where possible and appropriate, the history of facilities will be celebrated and recognised while maintaining fit-for-purpose facilities for the community.

4.4 Events

Objectives

- A. To manage the use of reserves for events and occasional use so that it is consistent with the reserve values and existing use
- B. To allow reserves to be used for public and private events and other occasional use

Policies

- 1. Any proposed event on a reserve will be assessed by Council, in accordance with the Approvals Framework, any Council events strategy, and consider:
 - a. The nature and purpose of the event including how it will provide for public access and enjoyment
 - b. The date(s) and duration of the event
 - c. How provision for safety (including safe preparation and sale of food), security, and waste management
 - d. The effect(s) on neighbours
- 2. The cost of organisation and running of any approved event on a reserve will be the responsibility of the event organiser
- 3. Any reserve used for an approved event will be left in the condition in which it was found prior to the event to the satisfaction of the Council's Service Delivery General Manager or their representative
- 4. Council will retain the right to:
 - a. Apply fees and charges to event applicants for the uses of reserves
 - b. Require a refundable bond from any event organizer and retain the discretion to expend the bond to reinstate the reserve should this be required
 - c. Event organisers for any approved event will be fully responsible for securing in advance all consents and approvals for the operation of the event and will ensure they respect any relevant bylaws or District Plan requirements
- 5. Any event wishing to present a fireworks display must apply by written application to the Council and provide prior permission from Fire and Emergency New Zealand and proof of public liability insurance

Explanation

Any proposed use for special events requires due consideration of the extent of possible damage to reserves, any effects on other use or users, and any effects on adjoining land use or users before approval is given. The Council reserves the right to close reserves or to decline applications for use where conditions warrant.

Events can enhance the public use and enjoyment of reserves and contribute to the diversity and vibrancy of the community. Events with large numbers of people and activities can also adversely affect the reserve and its neighbours. Council therefore needs to retain full discretion over the number, nature, and organisation of any event on Council reserves or in a Council owned/operated building or facility.

4.5 Reserve Management Plan Document Review

Objective

- A. Reserve management plans are to be kept in continuous review to reflect the community's aspirations for reserves

Policies

1. A RMP's content can be updated for minor edits, where the intent of objectives and policies is maintained, by Council (or delegate) resolution
2. A review of a RMP section or introduction of new objectives and policies may be undertaken with draft changes presented in a one month public consultation period⁵. Public submissions will be provided to Council (or delegate) for decision. Final edits are to be approved by Council (or delegate) resolution

Explanation

Reserve management plan are required under the Reserves Act (1977) to be kept in continuous review, at minimum a 10 yearly review.

Minor edits are likely to be required as reference documents (e.g. specific referred policies) are updated resulting in minor content change require to ensure the reference is applicable. Addressing minor edits is best practice and does not impact the objectives and policies which have been consulted on with the community, therefore will not require public consultation.

Reviewing sections of an RMP or introducing new content may occur for a number of reasons (e.g. new technology or activity is identified for management or a new reserve is required to be included in an omnibus RMP). As the review or new content may alter the intent of existing publicly contributed material, further public consultation is required.

Final decision for any edits to an RMP document is made by Council (or delegate) resolution.

5. Reserve Management

5.1 Ashes & Whenua

Objective

- A. Balance cultural wishes while maintaining safe spaces for all reserve users

⁵ Different or additional consultation may be required in accordance with the Waikato District Council Significance and Engagement Policy (2020)

Policy

1. Discourage the scattering or placement of ashes from cremation or burying of placenta/whenua in reserve gardens, or in any place that is easily or frequently accessed by the public

Explanation

The scattering of ashes from cremation is a deeply significant experience for a loved one's family and friends, however it can be alarming for people working in or using a reserve to realise that they may have inadvertently disturbed, ashes from cremation.

The burying of placenta/whenua on reserves can also cause difficulty for reserve management. Families who have buried placenta on reserves may be concerned if such sites are disturbed during redevelopment. For this reason, placenta should not be buried within reserves unless done so with the consent of Council, and in an area that is not regularly maintained or disturbed.

Reserves may be able to accommodate the scattering of ashes or burying of placenta in some cases, but only in managed circumstances.

5.2 Waste

Objectives

- A. To encourage the removal of litter from reserves by users so that it can be appropriately disposed or recycled at home
- B. To provide litter bins only where there is significant volume of litter generation or dog waste from on-site activities

Policies

1. Council will promote “rubbish-free” reserves that encourages people to take rubbish away with them. Where rubbish bins are provided Council will, where appropriate, move toward providing facilities that cater for recycling as well as general rubbish
2. The Council may install or remove litterbins as required to minimise waste issues within reserves and to encourage users to take responsibility for their waste. New litter bins will only be installed where:
 - a. Litter or dog-waste is being generated by reserve users
 - b. There is a clearly demonstrated need
 - c. A reserve is categorised as a destination area requiring a higher level of service
3. Where a reserve is used for an event or tournament, the organisers will be responsible for the collection and approved disposal of all associated litter and waste

Explanation

The provision of litterbins in reserves enables the convenient disposal of waste. However, it also has several negative effects including:

- A need to reduce waste, single use plastics and move towards reusable materials
- The high cost of providing, emptying, and maintaining litter bins
- Visual effects of litter bins and potential waste overflows during peak times
- Encouraging vermin such as possums, wasps, and rodents
- Lack of waste separation and recycling

As most waste generated is brought to reserves in the form of food and drink, many reserve agencies are encouraging visitors to take their litter home with them, this concept is known as “carry in/carry out”. Where possible Council will be encouraging waste minimisation, recycling and carry in/carry out principles. However it is acknowledged that rubbish bins are a reserve user convenience and therefore will be placed at destination reserves or where there is a clearly demonstrated need for the service.

5.3 Public Health and Safety

Objective

- A. To provide safe, well designed, and managed reserves, that support appropriate use and protection of the reserve

Policies

1. The design, development and management of reserves will consider public safety and promote appropriate use
2. All Waikato District reserves are designated as smoke-free and vape-free zones
3. Council will use a mix of education and signage to promote reserves as smoke-free and vape-free
4. Provide shade in high use reserves, primarily through tree planting, where practical and as resources permit

Explanation

The provision of quality parks and reserves contributes to an active and healthy community. The Council can also contribute to the health of the community by providing adequate opportunities for protection from the sun in reserves and by supporting smoke-free and vape-free environments.

Smoke-free and vape-free outdoor areas protect young people from the negative role-modeling effect of smoking and vaping. The less young people see smoking and vaping around them, the less 'normal' this activity becomes and the less likely they are to take up smoking themselves. Smokefree reserves also lessen the risk of damage by fire.

In terms of current best practice, committing to smoke free recreation areas is nothing new or extraordinary. Many local authorities have already contributed towards the goal of a

smoke free New Zealand and adopted smoke free outdoor public places policies that cover areas like playgrounds, parks, sports fields, reserves, and skate-parks.

Users protecting themselves and limiting their exposure to the sun during times of high UV conditions can mitigate the harmful effects of ultraviolet light. Council can assist by providing shade in reserves where practical. This will generally take the form of tree planting but may take the form of shade structures where appropriate.

5.4 Reserve Naming

Objectives

- A. The names of reserves will reflect the local history, identity, and culture
- B. Names will be identifiable to the function of the reserve

Policies

- 1. An application to name or rename a reserve must explain and provide evidence that the proposed name reflects one or more of the following:
 - a. The historical significance of the location
 - b. The cultural significance of the area to mana whenua
 - c. People important in the history of an area (once they are deceased).
 - d. Events, people, and places of international, national, or local significance to the community
 - e. Flora and Fauna significant or important to the history of an area
- 2. Council acknowledges gifted Te Reo Māori names for reserves. To recognise the significance of names provided by mana whenua, Council does not require consultation on names proposed by mana whenua for the purpose of obtaining wider community approval.
- 3. A reserve may not be named:
 - a. After a commercial enterprise. Community facilities or reserve assets may be individually negotiated sponsorship agreement including naming rights that may supersede Objective 1
 - b. Duplicated name existing in the district, including recognised common names
- 4. Renaming of reserves may be supported where:
 - a. A new name would better meet the objectives of the policy to promote local identity and mana whenua connections
 - b. Change to reserve infrastructure of primary purpose
 - c. The current name is culturally inappropriate or addresses a significant grievance
 - d. To correct inaccuracies or spelling errors
 - e. Any other reason Council considered to be appropriate

5. While Te Reo Māori or English monolingual names are preferred, Council supports dual naming in the following limited circumstances:
 - a. where there is an opportunity to promote Te Reo Māori by use of a direct Te Reo/English translation of an existing reserve name
 - b. where both English and Te Reo Māori names are already in current use in the community for the same reserve
6. Where there is dual naming, the Te Reo Māori name shall be placed first unless there are special circumstances such as where there are considerations for emergency services responses, or a gazetted English name exists
7. Generally, contiguous reserves will be given the same name. Identifiers such as North or West are not required
8. Council is responsible for all decisions to approve or decline requests to rename or dual name reserves
9. The process for assessing a name or renaming application will follow:
 - a. Where no names are proposed, or where Council initiates the project, Council will facilitate a discussion with Mana Whenua and the applicant and/or landowner to identify suitable names to be used

OR

A written application for a reserve name is received by Council in writing with detail on how the name meets the objectives and policies,

AND

 - b. Council staff assess the merit each application to ensure it aligns with legalisation, regulation, and the policies above
 - c. Where required, council will undertake public consultation in partnership with the local community board or committee. The extent of consultation is determined on a case-by-case basis
 - d. The final decision on the choice of names shall be taken by Council by way of resolution and gazetted in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977

Explanation

Most reserves within the Waikato District, both existing and new, are informally named after the name most commonly used by the local community or after the nearest street in the locality. Section 16 (10) of the Reserves Act sets out the procedure for officially naming or renaming reserves.

When new reserves are created or when existing reserves have names that are poorly related to the locality, purpose, or nature of the reserve or to its community use, it is desirable for the reserve to be named, or renamed, to ensure ease of identity and consistency.

Reserve names should tell the story of the place and reflect the area's natural and cultural heritage.

Naming or renaming reserves with a Māori name makes a significant contribution to increasing the visibility of Te Reo Māori in our communities. It will result in communities being able to see, hear, learn, and share some of Waikato's rich Māori history

Appendix 1: Reserves Actively Maintained by Waikato District Council

Editors Note: Updated tables OR online maps will be provided within the final General Policies Reserve Management Plan. For current information please see General Policies Reserve Management Plan (2015) Schedule 1: List of classified reserves administered by Council <https://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz/your-council/plans-policies-and-bylaws/plans/reserve-management-plans/reserve-management-plans>

Appendix 2: Reserve Act Classifications and Management Categories

Reserve classification

The classification of a reserve under the Reserves Act 1977 defines the primary purposes for which a particular parcel of reserve land is retained and managed. There are seven types of reserve classification: recreation, historic, scenic, nature, scientific, government, and local purpose.

The majority of reserves in the Waikato District are held as recreation reserves, there are a few scenic reserves, one historic reserve, and a number of local purpose reserves held for utilities, community use, carparking, access ways, segregation and esplanade purposes.

The Reserves Act does not require a management plan be prepared for local purpose reserves; however where they are associated with a reserve covered by this plan they have been included to ensure a consistent approach to the entire reserve area.

Recreation Reserves are for;

“...the purpose of providing areas for the recreation and sporting activities and the physical welfare and enjoyment of the public, and for the protection of the natural environment and beauty of the countryside, with emphasis on the retention of open spaces and on outdoor recreational activities, including recreational tracks in the countryside.” (Reserves Act 1977, Section 17 (1))

Historic Reserves are held;

“For the purpose of protecting and preserving in perpetuity such places, objects, and natural features, and such things thereon or therein contained as are of historic, archaeological, cultural, educational and other special interest” (Reserves Act S18 (1)). The structures and sites must be managed to illustrate with integrity the history of New Zealand

Scenic reserves are held;

“For the purpose of protecting and preserving in perpetuity for their intrinsic worth and for the benefit, enjoyment, and use of the public, suitable areas possessing such qualities of scenic interest, beauty, or natural features or landscape that their protection and preservation are desirable in the public interest...[and]...for the purpose of providing, in appropriate circumstances, suitable areas which by development and the introduction of flora, whether indigenous or exotic, will become of such scenic interest or beauty that their development, protection, and preservation are desirable in the public interest.” (Reserves Act 1977, Section 19 (1))

Local Purpose reserves are held:

“For the purpose of providing and retaining areas for such local purpose or purposes as are specified in any classification of the reserve” (Reserves Act 1977. Section 23 (1)). These areas of land (or land and water) are suitable for a specified local educational or community purpose which does not duplicate any other purpose. Secondary purposes are to manage and protect scenic, historic, archaeological, biological or natural features, and/or maintain soil, water and forest conservation areas.

Management Categories

Recreation Aotearoa developed a categorisation framework to assist local authorities to provide a consistent approach to the management of their reserves. The categories are designed so that organisations will be able to allocate all their parks, reserves and open spaces (in all but exceptional circumstances) to one or more of the categories. This can include land that is not subject to the Reserves Act.

In broad terms, the categories selected are based on the following factors:

- i. Character (what the park looks like)
- ii. Function (what the park is used for)
- iii. Level of service (standard of provision, development, and maintenance)

When applying the parks category framework, it is recognised that most parks have a range of uses and values. Also, no parks category system will perfectly cover every park type. Therefore, a flexible yet consistent approach needs to be applied to allocating park land to the categories. To determine the appropriate category for each park, organisations must determine the predominant function of that park.

Category	Description/ Predominant Function
Sports and Recreation Parks	Parks (often quite large areas) set aside and developed for organised sport and recreation activities, recreation facilities and buildings, often multiple use.
Neighbourhood Parks	Parks developed and used for informal recreation and sporting activities, play and family based activities, and social and community activities.
Public Gardens	Parks and gardens developed to a very high horticultural standard with collections of plants and landscaping for relaxation, contemplation, appreciation, education, events, functions and amenity/intrinsic value.
Nature Parks	Parks that offer the experience and/or protection of the natural environment, containing native bush, coastal margins, forestry, farm parks, wetlands, riparian areas and water bodies.
Cultural Heritage Parks	Parks that protect the built cultural and historical environment, and/or provide for heritage conservation, education, commemoration, mourning and remembrance.
Outdoor Adventure Parks	Parks developed and used for recreation and sporting activities and associated built facilities that require a large scale, forested, rural or peri-urban environment.
Civic Parks	Areas of open space often provided within or adjacent to central business districts, and developed to provide a space for social gatherings, meeting places, relaxation and enjoyment
Recreation and Ecological Linkage Parks	Areas of open space that are often linear in nature, that provide pedestrian and cycle linkages, wildlife corridors and access to water margins. May provide for environmental protection, and access to waterways.

Appendix 3: Glossary

Council: Abbreviation referring to Waikato District Council.

CPTED: Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design or CPTED suggests that the design of buildings, landscaping and outdoor environments can either encourage safety and/or discourage crime.

Gazette: It is an authoritative journal of constitutional record and contains official commercial and government notifications that are required by legislation to be published.

Iwi: Tribe, people.

Kaitiaki: A custodian or a guardian.

Kaitiakitanga: The exercise of guardianship / custodianship / stewardship by mana whenua. Mana whenua: The right of a Māori tribe to manage a particular area of land.

Kōiwi: A spirit or remains.

Legislation: An Act is a law passed by Parliament. Before an Act is passed by Parliament it is called a bill.

Mana whenua: People of a particular area of land.

Pouwhenua: Carved wooden post used by Māori.

Private utility: Means all utilities, both public and private, which provide sewerage and/or water service and that are not municipal corporations.

Public utility: Is an organization that maintains the infrastructure for a public reserve (often also providing a service using that infrastructure).

Rāhui: A rāhui is a form of tapu restricting access to, or use of, an area or resource by the kaitiakitanga of the area.

Reserve: Is used collectively for parks, open spaces, recreation areas, natural bush, coastal beach reserves, esplanades, that are managed by Council for a variety of purposes and public benefits.

Tangata whenua: Means the people of the land: that is the Māori iwi or hapu (sub-tribes) which have mana whenua (customary authority) over a particular area.

Taonga: Treasure, artifacts.

Te Reo Māori: Māori language.

Tikanga: Protocols, practices. Tikanga holds the kawa; Kawa is the applicable custom applied. Kawa is the policy and tikanga are the procedures on how the policy is realised.

Universal design: Universal Design is the design and composition of an environment so that it can be accessed, understood, and used to the greatest extent possible by all people regardless of their age, size, ability, or disability.

Wāhi tapu: Sacred areas.

Whenua: Is the placenta and/or the land.

Whakairo: art carving