

Draft Woodlands Estate

Reserve Management Plan



Draft – June 2019

Reserve Management Plan Process

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1.0 Purpose of this plan

This reserve management plan outlines the Waikato District Council (Councils) and community vision for Woodlands Estate (Woodlands). This plan collates ideas and feedback from community consultation and professional landscape analysis to address issues and opportunities for the reserve. This historical reserve provides recreation and leisure opportunities for local residents and visitors, and is highly valued for its early European heritage and landscape features.

Woodlands, located at 42 Whitikahu Road, Gordonton, includes a historic homestead and gardens set back from the main road. This is the second reserve management plan prepared for Woodlands with the first plan being adopted in 1991.

The Reserves Act 1977 requires the preparation and review of management plans on a regular basis. Reserves Act management plans are an important park management tool. Management plans are developed in consultation with park users, community and key stakeholder groups, with consideration to current management of a reserve. A management plan will provide for continuity between legislative requirements, council plans and policies, and the day-to-day operation of a reserve.

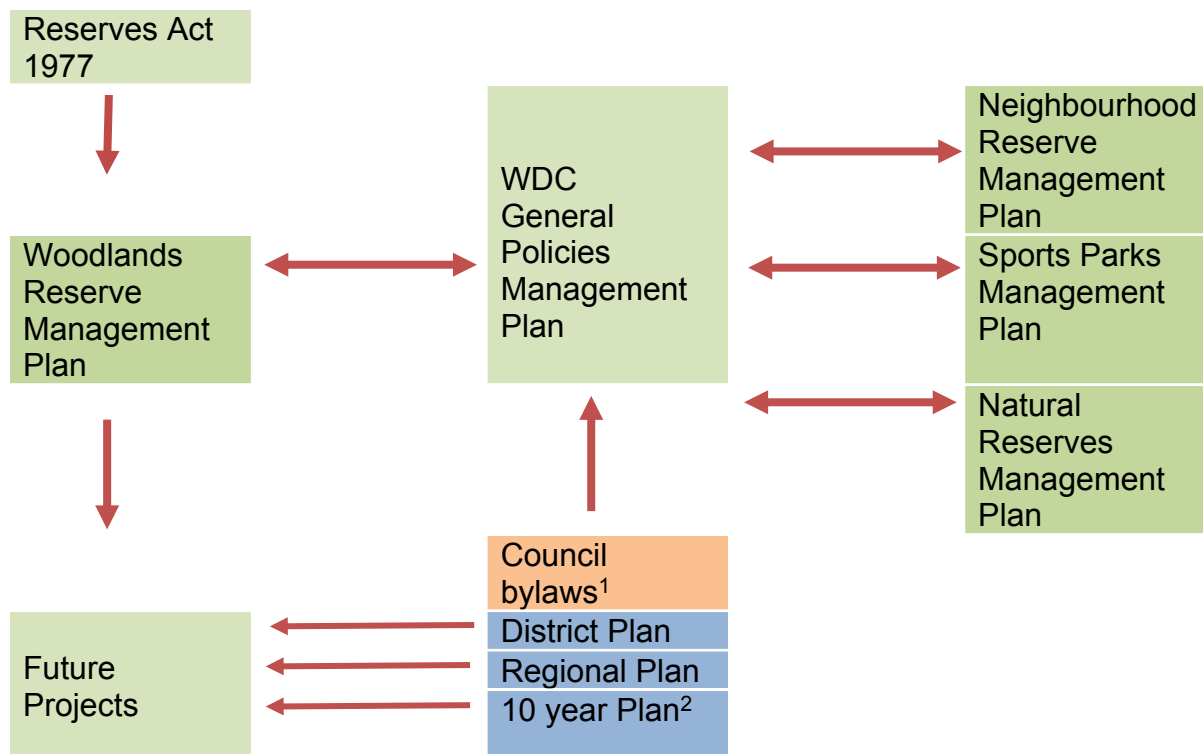
When adopted, this management plan and the Waikato District Council's General Policies Management Plan 2015 will be the guiding policy documents for this reserve.

This management plan will be kept under continuous review to ensure that the policies are appropriate and relevant for Woodland, with a comprehensive review should take place every five years.

1.1 Relationship With Other Council Documents

The plan has been aligned to, and is informed by Councils current plans and policies, including Long Term and District Plans, and Council bylaws.

The General Policies Reserve Management Plan 2015 applies to all reserves within the Waikato district. Where there is a conflict between the general policies contained within the General Policies and the specific policies contained within this plan, the specific policies will take precedence.



This management plan is to be read in conjunction with the Waikato District Council General Policies Reserve Management Plan.

1.2 Waikato-Tainui Joint Management Agreement

Council and Waikato-Tainui have entered into a Joint Management Agreement in accordance with the Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010. The agreement acknowledges that Council has rights and responsibilities with regard to management of reserves under Reserves Act 1977.

The agreement also acknowledges that Council has a requirement to consult to determine appropriate management of Crown land under Council control and to consider how management decisions may impact on any future return of the land to Waikato-Tainui.

In accordance with the Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995, Council has informed the Waikato Raupatu River Trust of its intention to prepare a reserve management plan.

¹ Current (2019) Bylaws include: Dog Control Bylaw 2015, Freedom Camping Bylaw 2016, Public Places Bylaw 2016, Reserves and Beaches Bylaw 2016.
Current Council Policies include: Activity Management Policy, Bi Lingual Sign Policy, District Tree Policy, Heritage Policy, Plaques, Memorial and Monuments Policy

² Current Council plans/strategies include: Parks Strategy, Playground Strategy, Toilet Strategy

1.2.1 Waikato -Tainui Hapu Agreements

Through the process of consultation, Council acknowledges the relationship between various Waikato-Tainui hapu with Woodlands.

The following hapu and marae have identified their relationship to Woodlands, and may formalise this through a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with a primary goal of ensuring that they and Council will actively engage with each other in good faith on issues affecting this reserve and any outcomes identified through this plan.

- a. Hukanui Marae

1.3 Council and Delegations

The Minister of Conservation has delegated a number of procedural and decision-making responsibilities to Council under the Reserves Act 1977. These delegations are made to “Council as a whole” and cannot be delegated to committees of Council or staff. Such decisions that must be made by a meeting of the full Council (Council as a whole) include adoption of reserve management plans, classification of reserves and granting of leases.

Other decisions, such as approval for events, removal of trees, issuing of permits etc. can be delegated from the Council to the Chief Executive and to the Parks and Facilities staff. As delegations change from time to time, the term Council is used throughout the document. Staff should refer to the Delegations Manual to determine if they have the authority to make decisions in accordance with the policies in this management plan.

1.4 Implementation

This management plan provides objectives and policies that determine the appropriate use, protection and development of Woodlands by Council. Decisions relating to the funding and priority for works described in this plan will be undertaken within Council’s Long Term Plan and Annual Plan. Inclusion of any project within this management plan does not indicate Council funding will be available for such works as works may be funded and delivered by parties other than Council.

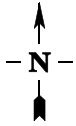
The requirements of the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014, to obtain an archaeological authority to modify recorded and unrecorded archaeological sites may be applicable to works undertaken at Woodlands. The consideration of the potential for the presence of archaeological sites at an early stage enables avoiding modifying any sites through good project planning.

This plan describes how the area is to be managed and developed. The plan does not commit the Council or the Community Board to undertaking any particular works. Instead it will enable the Council and the Community Board to determine what works should be undertaken when funding becomes available.

1.5 Legal Status

Woodlands consists of three separate land titles, which have been vested in Council as historic and local purpose reserve.

Map 1: Woodlands with land legal status.



Map 1 Woodlands Estate



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Projection: New Zealand
Transverse Mercator
Datum: New Zealand
Geodetic Datum 2000

Print Date: 28/02/2019

2.0 Woodlands Estate

The history and background to Woodlands is of significance to European settlers of the Waikato in terms of heritage, natural, and recreation values. Situated near the settlement of Gordonton (Hukanui) Woodlands was a part of the early European settlement and farming of the Waikato district between the Waikato and Piako Rivers.

Heritage values include the historic Woodlands homestead which was originally built and in the 1870's with the surrounding gardens being developed over time.

Alongside the European heritage values are the historic values of how this land was confiscated by the Crown and then sold and developed into what is now productive farmland.

The natural values of this land include the woodland trees, planted displays, magnificent oak trees, and display gardens.

What is left of the former Woodlands estate now forms a public reserve and includes a range of existing and future recreation values for locals and visitors to the reserve. These recreation values include the provision of open space for informal recreation grassed oval area, and social activities / gatherings.

2.1 Historical Significance

Woodlands has a high level of European historical importance, particularly through the establishment of the surrounding peat and swamps into farmland.

Timeline

Approx **1300** AD – Tainui tribes arrived in area and occupied many sites around the Hukunui area and along the Waikato River.

1700's - the Piako Swamp referred to all the wet lands between the Waikato River and the Waihou River at the base of the foothills of the Kaimai Ranges, an enormous area of largely inaccessible swamp broken by small islands of elevated land and intruded upon from the north and south by low ranges of dense bush covered hills. It was a food basket for Māori, intersected by a web of tracks and waterways, full of tuna (eel, *Anguilla* sp.), birdlife, manuka, harakeke (flax, *Phoridium* sp.) and other resources.

1840 – signing of Treaty of Waitangi

1858 - Pootatau Te Wherowhero was crowned the first Maori King

1863 – War declared on Waikato tribes for supporting Taranaki Maori War in 1860

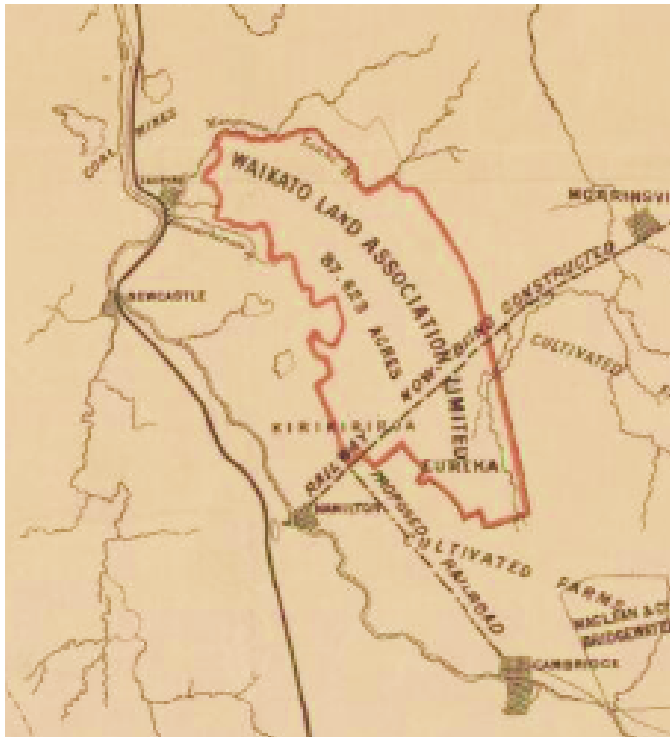
1864 – Conclusion of Waikato Maori Land wars. Waikato lands confiscated by Crown

1865 – The Waikato confiscated lands were surveyed

1870 – Piako Swamp Syndicate formed to purchase and develop vast expanse of swampland in the middle of the Waikato valley.

1870 – Piako Swamp Company established homestead at Eureka, with Henry Reynolds as manager.

1872 – Woodlands Estate including 86,500 acres purchased from the Crown. The Estate extended from the Rototuna area, across to Eureka, just west of Morrinsville and south of Taupiri.



1875 – Woodlands homestead completed

1880– The NZ Land Association (formerly Piako Swamp Company) was shifted to the new Woodlands homestead. Farm buildings established and large paddocks of grass, maize and grain established

1883 – Waikato Times reported on many employees of the Waikato Land Association partaking in a sports day and social function evening.

1885 – John Gordon took over management of the Estate.

1892 – Auckland Star reports 30,000 sheep had been shorn at Woodlands.

1902 – NZ Land Association had 28,000 acres of productive land, with 40,000 sheep, 3,000 cattle and 160 horses. More than half of the estate remained in an untamed state.

The NZ Land Association property was subdivided and sold. The Woodlands homestead was offered for sale with 2,400 acres of land – initially failed to find a buyer.

1903 – John Gordon left Woodlands, relocating to part of the Eureka estate homestead and purchased 1,700 acres.

Thomas Stone, a farmer from Ashburton acquired Woodlands homestead block, which included approximately 600 acres of grass and the remainder in manuka covered peat.

1905 – Woodlands sold to Taranaki farmer James Riddell, who came with 10 children. The Riddell family lived and worked at Woodlands over the coming decades.

1912 – Two eldest Riddell daughters married at Woodlands.

1914-18 – Three Riddell sons fought in the First World War, John Riddell died of wounds on his way home. During the War, Thomas, the fourth son played a major role in running Woodlands estate.

1928 – Don Riddell, youngest son of James and Mary, acquired 300 acres of farm including Woodlands homestead.

1930's – During the Depression, unemployed families were accommodated in huts on Woodlands and then men helped to dig drains in the peatland.

1942 – Fire destroyed the shearing shed and one whole years clip of wool.

1946 – Don Riddell suffered serious ill health, leaving him in a wheelchair

1962 – Don Riddell died.

1976 – With no children of their own Irene Riddell made plans for the future of Woodlands. Property was to bequeathed to Presbyterian Support Services, upon her death.

1983 – Irene Riddell died. Presbyterian Support Services take over management of Woodlands and surrounding farmland.

1983 – NZ Historic Places Trust classified the homestead building as a category 1 historic place.

1988 – Woodlands homestead and surrounding 15 acres offered to Waikato County Council to preserve the historic character of the house, and provide for public access as much as possible and to make it self-sufficient. After public consultation Waikato

County take over control of Woodlands with day to day management administered by the Gordonton Woodlands Trust Board.

1989 – Woodlands homestead and gardens transferred to Waikato District Council

1990 – The Gordonton Woodlands Trust formed in April 1990.

1991 – Major restoration work on the Woodlands homestead began. The gardens were redesigned by Waikato landscape architect Peter Sergel.

April - Woodlands Trust took over day to day management of the property.

November – initial Reserve Management Plan completed for Woodlands Historic Reserve

1994 – Wedding marque installed, kitchen and buffet room were built.

1996 - Old Te Rapa bowling club relocated to property, modified and restored for use as a cricket pavilion.

1999 – New function centre built to replace the wedding marque.

2000 – Land realignment at entrance to park, including park caretaker house.

2000 – Remainder of Woodlands estate farmland sold by Presbyterian Support Services.

2004 – Drive way upgrade, public car park formation and landscaping undertaken.

2016 – Waikato District Council took over maintenance of grounds and gardens.

2.2 Woodlands Uses and Values

What makes Woodlands unique is the heritage values of the house and gardens, to which the public have daily access to. What is now Woodlands homestead and gardens is only a small part of what was originally the Woodlands estate. Visitors driving to this park setting may be able to visualise how the surrounding farmed country now broken up into small run holdings, use to be a part of this larger estate.

With the gifting of Woodlands estate to the Presbyterian Support Services (1976) and subsequent transfer of the homestead and an area encompassing the gardens to the Waikato District Council (1989), the land is now administered by Council as a historic reserve under Section 18 of the Reserves Act 1977.

Woodlands is identified and managed as a premier park by Council. There is a high level of maintenance and servicing of the grounds and gardens to ensure they reflect a heritage inspired design, horticultural expertise and formal and informal elements.

Any current and future development on Woodlands reserve needs to take into account the present use (recreation), and heritage values (cultural and historic) – these are identified in the following Goals and Objectives section.

3.0 Opportunities and Issues

There are a range of important heritage, natural setting and recreation values for Woodlands that creates opportunities in the development and management of the reserve for the future. Identified below are some of the main challenges and opportunities that need to be addressed to realise the long term vision of Woodlands.

3.1 Management of Woodlands

Woodlands is identified in the Councils Parks Strategy as a premier park within the District. The gardens and grounds are maintained to a high level of service, reflecting the importance of the properties heritage and recreation values.

The homestead, functions complex and café, are managed by the Woodlands Trust, with members being representatives from local community, business leaders and Waikato District Council staff on the Trust board. The Trust was initially set up to operate the homestead and gardens as self-funding, although Council does provide an operational grant to the Trust to ensure that the Homestead and Café buildings are maintained.

3.2 Protecting and showcasing heritage values

The significant historic and natural values of Woodlands are evident in the protections placed on the homestead and gardens, with the homestead identified as a Heritage New Zealand Category 1 listing, and the land vested in Council as a historic reserve.

A conservation plan was completed for the homestead in 2013 by Mathews and Mathews Architects, Auckland. This conservation plan focused primarily on the homestead, and included a garden and archaeological reports. Significance is based on the Woodlands homestead and the gardens, with guidelines for current and future uses. The conservation plan details recommendations for many heritage and recent elements of the reserve. Many of the landscape elements, in particular the establishment of some trees date back to the establishment of the homestead, and strengthen the heritage context of the site. Historical and cultural values of the site need to be clearly identified to protect these from inappropriate maintenance regimes and vandalism.

As only a small portion of the original estate now surrounds Woodlands, in its location set back amongst mature exotic trees, the homestead and setting is often overlooked as being open for the public use and enjoyment.

The Woodlands Estate Trust Board have created opportunities for revenue to be earned from the site, that has allowed for re-investment into maintenance and renewals of heritage assets. The development of a function events centre and a café for public use has encouraged visitors and the local community to enjoy and appreciate the heritage features of the site. There is a need to ensure that these

activities do not detract from or alienate community use or public access and enjoyment of the reserve.

3.3 Managing use of the site

Groups and individuals are drawn to Woodlands to enjoy the historic and beauty of the setting, with many people coming for a mix of relaxation, socialising, organised activities and events. Because of the small size of the site care needs to be undertaken to ensure that the heritage values are not compromised by type and scale of any activities that can occur. With this space restriction, there is limited ability to cater for large or multiple events needing separate spaces without compromising further heritage values of the reserve.

3.4 Location and access

Woodlands is located in a rural setting being approximately 19 km north east of Hamilton City central, and 12 km south east of Taupiri. The homestead located on Whitikahu Road just off Gordonton Road (State highway 1B) with Gordonton (3km) being the nearest settlement.

Access to Woodlands is predominantly via private vehicle, with no current public transport or footpath access provision to this reserve. The Waikato Regional Council does not currently have a bus route that runs from Hamilton to Gordonton to Taupiri.

4.0 Management Objectives and Policies

A vision for Woodlands is:

To maintain a garden of significance that brings meaning and beauty, invites community engagement and is accessible to all

The following objectives and policies will be used to guide management, development, protection and maintenance of Woodlands. This section should be read in conjunction and cross referenced with the General Policies Reserve Management Plan.

Objective 1 – Historical Significance

To preserve and maintain the historical significance of the park.

Policies

Heritage Features

1. Protect and enhance the heritage values of the site through:
 - 1.1. Ensuring all structures and buildings are in keeping with the heritage values of the park and are consistent with an updated conservation plan.
 - 1.2. Ensuring new structures are in keeping with the heritage values of the site.
2. Maintain the gardens to ensure their continued recognition as a “Garden of National Significance” through the New Zealand Gardens Trust.
3. Ensure renewal and/or maintenance works is consistent with the historic values of the reserve.

Conservation Plan

4. Update the conservation plan to address the whole of the reserve, recognising the heritage values of the location, including recommendations for;
 - 4.1. Maintaining viewshafts to and from the homestead
 - 4.2. Keeping development of any buildings along a similar style to the homestead.
 - 4.3. Maintaining garden as heritage attraction in line with the homestead

Historic Trees

5. All historic and notable trees shall be protected and the management of them recognise their role as historic and landscape features.
6. Historic trees will only be removed where they pose a danger to public safety, harbouring disease, or require removal due to damage or old age.

Water Features

7. Manage water quality through a range of strategies and measures including but not restricted to; minimising sediment deposition, silt traps, riparian lake edge planting, small scale artificial wetlands, or water stirring devices.

Explanation:

Features of the homestead and site need to be protected for an understanding of the past use of the homestead for visitors appreciation of the historic and cultural values associated with the site. The garden has continued to evolve over time and has changed from what was originally planted in the 1880's. The major trees and shrubs will be protected and incorporated into aspects of any interpretive (explanation) of past use of the site.

The homestead should not become a museum for historic artefacts due to difficulties with security and surveillance. Historic information relating to Woodlands and the wider Gordonton area will continue to be displayed within the house.

Management of the homestead and grounds also needs to take into account the wider impacts of the reserve, including water quality of the feature lakes of the gardens. The waterway that feeds these lakes comes from adjacent farmland, through the lakes and then onto Komakorau Stream. Council and the Woodlands Trust will continue to ensure that a high level of water quality is maintained through different measures and activities including water run-off control and other possible mechanical activities.

Objective 2 – Access and Activities.

To provide for events and activities that raise the profile of the reserve in a way that does not compromise its heritage values.

This section should be read in conjunction with the General Policies Reserve Management Plan.

Policies

Public Access and Use

8. Encourage public use of consistent with the objective of preserving the historic and scenic values of the reserve
9. Encourage public access to, and enjoyment of, the homestead and surrounding site;
 - 9.1. Allow and facilitate controlled public access and use within a level that does not detract from the historic character of the property
 - 9.2. Provide for recreation opportunities which do not conflict with the historic values or developed features and attractions of the reserve
10. Promote an awareness and appreciation of the cultural values and history of the reserve through interpretation and signage
11. Allow for pedestrian only access through the garden area of the reserve.
12. Control the access road so that public access and use is managed to best meet all objectives of the reserve.

Events and Temporary Activities

13. Promote events and activities especially with a heritage, botanical or community focus that;
 - 13.1. Focus on the heritage values of the homestead
 - 13.2. Are at a scale appropriate to the reserve and heritage setting
14. Provide for temporary structures associated with events and temporary activities including but not restricted to mobile food units, stages, marquees.
15. Allow for sections of the reserve to be closed off for private events and/or functions, or for the development and maintenance without impinging public use and enjoyment of other parts of the reserve.

16. All events larger than 500 people will require notification to Council as an event to ensure public notification and rules are applied (Refer “General Policies Reserve Management Plan” document section on Events).

Prohibited Activities

17. The following activities are not seen as consistent with Woodlands use and values and are therefore not allowed, unless part of a permitted event:

- 17.1. Overnight camping
- 17.2. Horse riding

18. The following activities are not seen as consistent with Woodlands use and values and are therefore not permitted:

- 18.1. Freedom camping
- 18.2. Scattering of ashes

Explanation:

Activities and events on the grounds of Woodlands need to be managed to ensure that users appreciate and protect the historic and cultural values of the homestead and gardens.

It is noted that all visitors come to Woodlands via private vehicle. There is currently no public transport available to, or footpaths giving access to Woodlands. These alternative access options are outside of the plan scope, whilst Council can review these in future planning with other activities, including roading upgrades and public transport reviews.

There is limited 24 hour surveillance of the reserve, therefore any activities that occur outside of normal open hours, required additional staffing to manage. Where temporary events are proposed, or the use of temporary structures is only permitted where prior permission from Council has been obtained with written permission. For example marquees bigger than 99m² require a temporary building consent from Council. Events with large numbers of people will also require additional toilet facilities.

Some activities are not seen as being consistent with the heritage values of the homestead and gardens, and these are identified. With reference to other activities, reference needs to be made to the General Policies Reserve Management Plan document.

Objective 3 – Community and Commercial Involvement

To provide opportunities for community involvement in the reserve and for social or commercial enterprise to return value to the reserve.

This section should be read in conjunction with the General Policies Reserve Management Plan.

Policies

Community Activities

19. Enable opportunities for the local community to become engaged in developing, conserving and maintaining the gardens and bush area of the park through volunteer programmes, a friend's group and/or other similar support networks.
20. Allow for the opportunity of sponsorship and donations to the reserve where these benefit the reserve.

Commercial Activities

21. Enable opportunities for social and commercial enterprise including a café where the enterprise:
 - 21.1. supports and respects the heritage, ecological and community values of the park;
 - 21.2. enables the enjoyment of the public of the reserve; and
 - 21.3. aligns with the vision for the park.
22. Individual commercial operations including leases and licenses must be approved by the Trust and be pursuant to Section 58A, with all leases and sub leases to have final written approval from Council.
(Refer to General Policies – Section 7 Occupation of Reserves)

Use of Cricket Oval

23. The cricket oval will be the only permitted sporting facility on the reserve, where;
 - 23.1. Cricket practice and games will be subject to a booking process through the Trust
 - 23.2. Any cricket games of a district wide level will require approval by the Trust Board
24. That, where possible any proposed uses of the cricket oval is organized so that the public may still gain access to the homestead and garden complex

25. That any proposed use of the oval will not detrimentally affect the long-term public use of the reserve or the physical resources of the reserve

Explanation

Woodlands was initially set up to be self supporting, with the Woodlands Trust seeking financial and practical assistance in order to maintain and develop the Reserve. The Trust continues to seek funding support to maintain the homestead and other heritage development, with the Council managing the gardens and grounds. Any support to the future development of Woodlands is most welcome by the Trust.

The acknowledgment of sponsorship and donations shall be discreet and in keeping with the historic and cultural setting of the reserve.

Objective 4 – Woodlands Trust

To ensure the Woodlands Trust develop maintain and manage Woodlands in such a manner that the historic and aesthetic values of the house and site be preserved, public access and enjoyment encouraged and that any development is financially self-supporting.

This section should be read in conjunction with the General Policies Reserve Management Plan.

Policies

Woodlands Trust Role

26. Ensure the maintenance and management of the buildings is in keeping with the Heritage New Zealand specifications
27. Raise money by any financial means, including the soliciting, receive and list financial or other aid from individuals and organisations to further Woodlands and the Trusts objectives and future development.
28. Manage any investments that provide for the future enhancement of Woodlands; including the investment of monies, purchase or improvement of land.
29. Ensure the ongoing improvement, repair, maintenance and insure any contents against loss or damage by fire or any other means.
30. Discharge out of income or capital all outgoings properly payable by the property in respect of buildings.
31. Report yearly as required to the Council as to the conduct, funds raised, funds spent and any other matters as required in the Trusts management of the property.

Explanation

The Woodlands Trust was set up after public consultation to support the maintenance and development of Woodlands. Their role has been to develop, maintain, promote and encourage interest in the ongoing future of Woodlands.

The Trust also has the objective to raise money to further develop the property in line with its heritage features and setting. Any funds raised by the Trust can be used in furthering and carrying out the objectives of the Trust, including investment of any money, or in the purchase or improvement of land or property to enhance the public use experience of the reserve.

The Woodlands Trust is made up of representatives of local community members. Refer to Appendix 3 for details of roles and responsibilities of Council and Trust.

Objective 5 – Partnership and Development:

To work in partnership in ensuring the ongoing development of Woodlands, whilst maintaining its heritage values and providing a safe and enjoyable recreation space for people of the Waikato.

This section should be read in conjunction with the General Policies Reserve Management Plan.

Concept Plan

32. Prepare a concept plan (refer Appendix 4) for the development of the site with input from mana whenua, trust board, communities of interest and heritage landscape professionals including consideration of:
 - 32.1. Improved public access, including layout of paths and tracks
 - 32.2. Review existing parking layout options
 - 32.3. Consideration of additional land purchase for parking and access
 - 32.4. Development of additional parking and open space
33. Develop improved access through the park from carpark to homestead
34. Develop provision of additional public toilets away from homestead and café precincts (ideally in NE area)
35. Development of a destination children's playground that enhances family use of Woodlands
36. Investigate relocation of the workshop and storage areas
37. Development of garden plant collections that provide public interest
38. Development of garden features that provide reflect heritage values and have public appeal
39. Enhancement of the surrounds of the Café area
40. Investigate the feasibility and development of a heritage archive centre to be developed alongside the homestead.

Partnerships

41. Council will work collaboratively with Waikato-Tainui, Woodlands Trust and the community to achieve the ambitions of this plan. This may include planning, funding and development of areas within Woodlands, including garden and building development, cultural locations, and/or park development.

42. Work alongside Tangata Whenua/Mana Whenua to understand their desires for Woodlands
43. Engage with stakeholders to ensure any proposed development will meet the needs of the community and visitors.
44. Work with stakeholders to ensure Woodlands is a user-friendly venue for events.

Explanation

Woodlands is a key historical site of European significance, particularly of the homestead. To continue to attract people to this location, the Woodlands Trust and Council need to be able to plan ahead to continue to develop the gardens as a key heritage site of interest and importance to the wider region. This may include development of features or displays that attract a wider range of people to visit.

In 1991, a concept plan outlined the future proposed development of the reserve, based on a 'Turn of the Century' theme. This was aimed at not to re-create a historical theme, but to reflect the ambiance of this particular age through the reconstruction of the homestead and interpretive garden themes. In reviewing the existing plan, it was identified that a new updated concept plan based on this theme was needed to identify proposed new developments to Woodlands that would attract a wider range of visitors to this heritage setting.

Many of the proposed developments enhance the existing features of Woodlands. It is noted that when events such as weddings or funerals are held at Woodlands, that there is often limited parking for both attendees and the general public. A review of the parking and layout of the carpark/s is required to better accommodate vehicles. This may include the purchase of additional adjacent land to allow for overflow parking and the future establishment of new features that are in keeping with the heritage values of Woodlands.

The existing workshop and storage area restricts public flow from the carpark and into the gardens, a relocation of this to an alternative location would encourage more people to explore more of the gardens from the café or homestead. The Café has become a major drawcard for many visitors, and to maintain this as a drawcard for Woodlands, further development / upgrades of the café facilities, surrounds, and underground services is required.

A proposed children's playground with a nature / garden theme has been identified as an option to provide for additional enjoyment. This may be located in a central area of the gardens or along a linear path encouraging children and families to explore and discover each site.

For some visitors, the many different paths may cause some confusion as to what route to follow, whilst other paths restrict the passage of wheelchairs and push chairs. The development of an all-weather circuit path would encourage wider use and enjoyment of the gardens.

Discussion has been undertaken around the development of a heritage archive centre to hold and maintain early records of the development of Woodlands and the wider district.

A copy of a proposed development plan is included with this draft Reserve Management Plan for public comment and review. Refer to Appendix 4

Partnerships with hapu, iwi, park users, and the wider community is essential to ensure that the needs of these groups of people are represented and understood in any future development and use of Woodlands.

5.0 Implementation

Council will seek to implement this management plan through working with local community groups to develop and maintain the area. Funding from external sources will be sought for capital development works.

The policies list developments that may occur but they do not commit Council to undertake any specific works.

Council will allocate funds as it considers appropriate through the Annual Plan process, which involves public submissions, and in consultation with the Gordonton Community Board.

Funding from external sources for specific projects may influence the order in which works are undertaken.

The following development options summarise actions that will require capital expenditure, prioritised over the short, medium and long terms.

The following caveats apply:

- A. The costings provided are indicative as of 2019
- B. Over the life of this plan new priorities for capital developments may emerge. Where these have not been identified, the General Reserve Management Policies will be used to assess any new developments.

Table 1 Indicative costs for various capital development options proposed for the next 10 years

Development Option	Indicative Cost
Car park re-alignment	\$400,000
Playground development	\$200,000
Additional public toilets in Oak area	\$250,000
Purchase of additional land for garden extension, access and parking	
Footpath upgrades	\$185,000
Archive building extension development	\$650,000

Appendix 1 – Legal Descriptions

Woodlands

LOT 1 DPS 62416

LOT 1 DPS 48035

Vested as HISTORICAL RES

LOT 1 DPS 85485

Vested as Local Purpose Reserve - Historical

Appendix 2 - Heritage New Zealand Historic Place Listings

Woodlands Homestead - HNZPT Listing 155, Category 1

Appendix 3 – Roles and Responsibilities of Council and Woodlands Trust

Waikato District Council

Owner of historic property known as Woodlands homestead and gardens

Work in partnership with Woodlands Trust to develop objectives and future development options

Responsible for major capex items to homestead e.g. painting, roof repairs

Maintenance of Woodlands grounds: including gardens staff and gardens maintenance and development

Maintain landscaped areas, carparks, paths, service areas, gates and fences.

Preparation of reserve management plan to provide current and future direction and development of Woodlands

Note: The Council provides annual funding to the Woodlands Trust to support the public use and enjoyment of Woodlands.

Woodlands Trust

Lessee of historic property known as Woodlands homestead and gardens

Maintain a Trust board to develop, maintain and manage Woodlands

Where possible to undertake activities to ensure Woodlands is self supporting

Raise funds to further Woodlands objectives and development

Manage any investments that provide for future developments

Maintain homestead building with a minimum of \$2m insurance public risk policy.

Insure all fixtures, fittings, plant, equipment and chattels in the building against loss, damage or destruction.

Day to day maintenance of homestead and subsidiary buildings, including minor repairs, glass replacement, plumbing and electrical in good condition, maintain storm and wastewater systems (including downpipes and gutters).

Removal of all rubbish generated through activities in the buildings

Replacement of carpets / floor coverings

Pay all outgoings for telephone, gas, power charges, water sanitation including sewerage, rates in respect of building premises

Report yearly to Council on the activities, conduct and any other matters as required in the Trusts management of the property

Appendix 4 - Concept plan for future development of Woodlands

Council and the Woodlands Trust are seeking public feedback and input into the draft concept plan that has been developed for Woodlands.

The following features have identified to provide for better access and public utilisation of Woodlands.

Please refer to the concept plan for full details.

Homestead and function centre.

Additional development to provide an information, archival storage and office / reception areas.

Car park redesign

Accommodate more vehicle parking, including better access for buses, and better path access into the Homestead and function centre.

Prof Café area

Removal of pavilion and new covered outdoor dining on northern side of café. Develop junior playground adjacent to café.

Children's playground

Relocate depot and buildings, develop new children's playground on site, including summer ice cream kiosk.

Gardeners Depot

Relocate gardeners depot and buildings and storage areas to north-eastern part of site, with new access road.

Village green area

Develop band rotunda for performances and ceremonies

The Oaks

Thin and crown lift trees to allow more light, level ground and re-sow with shade tolerant grass, develop all weather walking path and build new public toilet facility.

Lake and ponds

Replant lake and pond margins, build new jetty on lake edge.

Carriage House

Develop new function facility for events, provide accommodation for guests, develop parking for 20 guest vehicles.

Signage

Implement wayfinding and information signage around the reserve to assist and inform visitors.