

3.0 PART THREE: STRATEGIES FOR RESERVES

3.1 RESERVE ACT OBJECTIVES

The purposes of the Reserves Act 1977 are:

- providing for the preservation and management of areas for the benefit and enjoyment of the public
- ensuring, as far as possible, the survival of all indigenous species of flora and fauna
- ensuring, as far as possible, the preservation of access for the public
- providing for the preservation of representative samples of all classes of natural ecosystems and landscape
- promoting the protection of the natural character of the coastal environment and the margins of lakes and rivers

The objectives of the Act are:

- emphasise retention of open space for outdoor recreation
- maximise freedom of access to reserves for all people, rather than just a few
- encourage multiple use of reserve land and facilities when feasible and appropriate
- facilitate greater involvement of the public in reserves administration and decision-making

Policy:

Council adopts the Reserve Act 1977 objectives as its guiding principles in the management of its reserves.

3.2 HAURAKI DISTRICT OBJECTIVES

The 2006 LTCCP notes that Council's parks and reserve facilities provide opportunities for active and passive recreation, attractive venues for community gatherings, encourage residents' involvement in their communities and encourage the physical and mental well-being of residents and visitors. There is the community expectation that Council will provide these facilities.

Council's overall goal in providing parks and reserves is to:

“ensure a network of parks and reserves are provided for recreation, leisure and aesthetic pursuits...” (Hauraki District Parks Asset Management Plan)

Outcomes (Hauraki District Parks Asset Management Plan)

- Parks & Reserves contribute to the health and wellbeing of the whole community
- Parks & Reserves are provided and managed for future generations
- A range of parks and reserves are available to the whole community
- There is an increased community awareness of Parks & Reserves
- A safe, reliable and good quality experience is provided to all users
- The community is consulted on all significant decisions relating to Parks & Reserves
- The community is satisfied with Parks & Reserves service provided
- Parks and reserves are managed at lowest possible cost

Council's strategies towards achieving these goals are to:

Outcome	Parks Asset Management Plan	2006 LTCCP
Health and wellbeing	Provide parks and reserves which accommodate active and passive recreation pursuits	Provide facilities such as sports fields, reserves, and swimming pools for the community to be active.
	Provide sites for children's playground equipment	Provide activities for youth, sports fields for sport and/or recreation, skate parks and swimming pools
		Provide amenities in rural areas such as reserves and community halls for active and passive recreation.
	Allow and provide buildings and improvements necessary for the enjoyment of the public and for the maintenance of parks and reserves	Develop and improve walking routes around the District.
	Make sites and buildings available to sports organisations, preferable on condition that the community also has access to the facilities	
Increased community awareness		Council will promote existing parks and reserves to enhance their ability to be a 'district attraction'. This includes development of existing reserves and beautification projects.
		Encourage better utilisation of existing infrastructure and resources.
		Promote the Hauraki District as a

Outcome	Parks Asset Management Plan	2006 LTCCP
		business and visitor location and a desirable place to live.
<i>Provided and managed for future generations</i>	Use parks and reserves to create district character and preserve heritage sites	Assist in the coordination of community initiatives to reduce erosion across the sand dunes and foreshore sand dunes at Whiritoa Beach.
		We support planning for our culture and heritage where initiatives can be actively coordinated to ensure sustainability.
<i>Good quality experience</i>	Identify the present and future requirements for sports facilities through meetings with users and analysis of uses	Council parks and reserves provide a good quality experience for all users.
		Recreational, cultural and heritage groups work together to identify issues that lead to better efficiencies, access and sustainable solutions.
<i>Community consultation</i>		Consider identifying matters and areas of interest to Hauraki iwi; consultation, capacity building in regard to taking part in decision-making, provision of information, and a timetable for the development of initiatives.
		Ensure that Tangata Whenua are advised of any activity that may impact on cultural values within the rural communities.
<i>Lowest possible cost</i>	Enable the provision of community parks and reserves facilities at a realistic and affordable level	Access to parks and reserves grounds are free except where some organised events are held.
		Affordable and effective provision of Council parks and reserves.

3.3 RESERVES CLASSIFICATION AND OBJECTIVES

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

The Hauraki District Council besides having Scenic Reserves and one Historic Reserve, a number of Local Purpose Reserves are held for utilities, community use, carparking, access ways, segregation and esplanade reserves. Management Plans have not been prepared for Local Purpose Reserves which do not require them; however they are listed in the Appendices Section for reference.

Council holds no scientific, government or nature (possessing flora/fauna of special public interest in term of rarity, scientific interest or importance, or uniqueness) reserves.

Under the Reserves Act 1977, the sole Historic Reserve is held by Council;

“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

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))

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.

A number of reserves still require Council to pass a resolution to complete the classification procedure. These reserves are identified in the individual sections which follow. This resolution can be made at the time of approving the Reserve Management Plan, following formal public consultation.

3.4 RESERVES PORTFOLIO

Portfolio planning for reserves aims to assist in ensuring that the mix of reserves held by each local authority best meets the present and future needs of communities for open space, community services, and conservation values.

Council holds different reserves for different reasons. Some are for aesthetic values, others are for varying kinds of recreational activities, and many are for both. Whether planning for the future, or existing open space, it is important to assess whether there is an appropriate mix, the right number of reserves, and whether they are at the desired standard.

In deciding use, it is important to think of them as part of an overall system. They may have visual and practical use for scenic variety, for families to use as recreation, or for people to use passively. No one reserve will be expected to provide all the desired facilities, but together they can fulfil a wide range of needs.

Demand for reserves from future growth is anticipated to be for the development of new community recreational facilities on existing reserve land or the further development of existing recreational facilities. Council considers that there will be little need or demand for land acquisition for reserves except in the case of the eastern coastline and some identified waterways, and aims to maintain the existing number of principal parks and reserves at the current number. Council has no plans to acquire new parks and reserves during the next 10-20 years unless they are publicly demanded and economically viable.

3.4.1 RESERVE ACQUISITION

Council has acquired parks and reserves areas mainly by purchase, through reserve contributions at the time of subdivision, or has rights over Crown land delegated by the Minister of Conservation.

Acquisition of Esplanade reserves

Council has a number of esplanade reserves which it acquires through subdivision development. Its current criteria and approach are described in the Hauraki District Plan, Section 10.3.4 Objective 3 aims to:

“make provision for public recreation on esplanade reserves, where this is compatible with the maintenance of conservation values”

Hauraki District Council is currently developing a further detailed strategy which will determine where, in what circumstances and what order of priority reserves and strips will be taken and/or negotiated. Conservation as well as recreation values are being considered.

Acquisition of reserves for conservation reasons

A number of unprotected conservation sites within the Hauraki District were identified by Kessels and Stanway in a Department of Conservation report completed in 1993. If the opportunity arose, Council could consider how these sites might be protected and what Council's role would be in their protection. In the report, sites of conservation significance were rated as 'Outstanding', 'High', 'Medium' and 'Low'. Those of outstanding and high value are:

Sites of Outstanding and High Conservation Value in the Hauraki District

Site	Description	Ranking	On Council reserve
Staigers Kowhai Stand	Extremely rare to see kowhai trees in this density on the Hauraki Plains	Outstanding	
Speedy's Cabbage Tree	Appears to be the last significant stand of cabbage trees remaining on the Plains	Outstanding	
Otahu Estuary (Whangamata)	Largest most intact area of estuarine vegetation in the Waihi Ecological District	Outstanding	
Ramarama Estuary	Part of the largest and most natural sand dune and estuarine system in the Waihi Ecological District	Outstanding	
Whiritoa Lagoon	Part of the largest and most natural sand dune and estuarine system in the Waihi Ecological District	Outstanding	
Mataora	Large area of regenerating coastal forest adjacent to coastal wetlands	Outstanding	
Waitekauri Valley Forest Remnants	Several stand of alluvial terrace forest – now very rare in the Waihi Ecological District	Outstanding	
Upstream of Dickey's Flat, Waitawheta	Tawa, podocarp and kauri forest	High	
Dickey's Flat (Waitawheta Valley)	Modified tawa and alluvial podocarp forest	High	
Karangahake Gorge	Large area of regenerating forest with frequent exotic species	High	
Parakahari Valley	Mosaic of regenerating scrub and tree ferns with modified tawa forest. Part of an outstanding wildlife habitat supporting several threatened fauna species	High	
Speedy's Reserve	Well fenced healthy Kahikatea stand with high landscape and recreational values	High	√
Torehape Peat Dome	Partly modified retired peat dome	High	
Waitakaruru Stream Kahikatea Bush	Kahikatea dominated swamp forest – good representative area of original forest type	High	
Kaihere Bush	Secondary and unmodified puriri dominated forest	High	

Policy statement

If the opportunity arises, Council will consider acquisition or protection as reserves, sites represented in the 'Outstanding' and 'High' categories proposed by the report "An outline of the Unprotected Conservation Values within the Hauraki District Council"

3.4.2 SALE OF RESERVES

In general terms the sale of reserve land requires a separate public consultation process. Council would consider divestment of three reserves if the opportunity arose because of the low level of value they add to the community. These reserves have been acquired as a result of development contributions:

- Kinsella Place Recreation Reserve
- Shaw Avenue Recreation Reserve
- Taniwha Street Reserve

3.5 RESERVE CATEGORIES

It is proposed to group reserves according to use. This will streamline planning, management, setting of standards and ultimately help to minimise the cost of operation. The proposed groups are:

- Principal reserves
- Neighbourhood parks
- Community parks
- Sports fields
- Scenic or amenity reserves

1) Principal reserves

There are a small number of high quality, high use reserves under Council ownership or administration. The Reserves Act Guide encourages Councils to give preference to reserves that are receiving the highest pressure in terms of public use, or conflicts of use, or which are biologically or culturally at risk. As well, the Local Government Act 2002 requires Council to identify the key assets that it believes it needs to be able to provide for the current or future well-being of the community.

The following are considered to be amongst Council's strategic assets and are categorised as principal reserves:

- Hugh Hayward Domain, Ngatea
- Paeroa Domain, Paeroa
- Morgan Park, Waihi
- Karangahake Reserve, Karangahake
- Gilmour Reserve, Waihi

Policy statement

Council will continue to focus development on its principal reserves to ensure they maximise their contribution to the wellbeing of the community.

2) Neighbourhood reserves

These are typically small, local parks or reserves located in residential areas. Designed for use by local residents, particularly children, they are used for relaxation and play, and are valued for providing visual relief. Research shows that children are the most frequent users of neighbourhood parks and so ideally they should be designed with them in mind. They need to be safe and provide interest with natural features such as trees, long grass, slopes, paved areas, climbing structures.

Policy statement

Neighbourhood parks will reflect the needs of their local communities. They will focus on providing facilities for families and encouraging a wide range of activities.

3) Community Parks

Community Parks are well-developed multi-purpose parks in central or urban areas. They usually have very basic facilities and are sometimes no more than open areas of ground. They are important for the quality of urban life, providing opportunities for community activities which reduce isolation and help to build community cohesion. This kind of open public space serves to break up the built environment and offer enjoyment from visually attractive surroundings. They provide areas of interest and activity, are intimate, and reflect their local surroundings. They are easily accessible by the whole community, and are used for relaxation, events, displays, and as a meeting place. This group includes small parks in CBD areas, centrally-located suburban parks, and can include playing fields.

Policy statement

It is acknowledged that community parks contribute to the social and cultural wellbeing of the community in general. They will continue to be developed and maintained as a focus for community activity.

4) Sports fields

These are mostly designed for organised, outdoor, active recreation. Often areas of open green space are provided as well, offering opportunities for a variety of enjoyable outdoor active and passive recreation such as communal games. The competitive nature of traditional team sports requires teams to be mobile, while at the same time participation in casual active recreation has grown. These can have different requirements.

Policy statement

Council will continue to encourage multi-use and sharing of resources on sports fields to maximise efficiency, and work in partnership with user groups to provide facilities.

5) Scenic or amenity reserves

These areas are provided mainly for their contribution to the physical form and appearance of towns and rural areas. They serve to:

- protect features of interest or natural beauty
- provide scenic variety
- screen different land uses from each other (e.g. residential areas from highways)
- provide walkways linking recreation facilities
- offer educational opportunities
- provide run-off and prevent corrosion

Policy statement

Council will manage scenic reserves balancing use and conservation values, for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

Compatible activities for reserve categories

The following are proposed to be compatible activities for each category of reserve:

Compatible activities	Principal reserves	Neighbourhood	Community	Sports	Scenic/amenity
Playgrounds/climbing structures	■	■	■	■	
Seating	■	■	■	■	■
Rubbish bins	■	■	■		■
Paved paths	■		■		
Unpaved walkways	■				■
Lighting	■		■	■	
Picnic tables	■		■		■
Toilets	■		■	■	■
Signage/interpretative	■		■		■

Compatible activities	Principal reserves	Neighbourhood	Community	Sports	Scenic/a menity
displays					
Plantings which are varied and attractive	■	■	■		■
Shade trees	■	■	■	■	■
Minimal planting		■			
Gardens	■		■		
Planting/native planting	■		■	■	■
Open green space	■		■	■	■
variety of contour	■	■			■
Some allowance for commercial activity			■		
Changing facilities				■	
Sports fields				■	
Clubrooms				■	
Sporting facilities				■	
Educational facilities					
Car parking	■		■	■	■
Grazing				■	■
Granting of access easements			■		