



**TŌTARA  
RESERVE**

# **Management Plan**

**2025**



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# Executive Summary

Tōtara Reserve is the only regional park in the Horizons region. The purpose of a reserve management plan is to provide for the use, enjoyment, maintenance, protection and appropriate development of the reserve within available resources. This gives the community clarity about the future direction of Tōtara Reserve and enables Horizons Regional Council to manage it effectively.

A periodic review of the reserve management plan is required and provides an opportunity to review the current state of the park and its facilities to identify immediate needs and update long-term aspirations.

This Tōtara Reserve Management Plan 2025 replaces the previous Tōtara Reserve Asset Management Plan 2014. The new

plan was developed, in accordance with requirements in the Act, through a two-step public consultation process that first asked what mattered to people to help shape the new draft plan, and then provided the public with an opportunity to submit on the draft. The final plan includes amendments from this feedback as recommended by a hearings panel and approved in its entirety by Council in April 2025.

## The vision is for Tōtara Reserve to be

*"A highly valued area where indigenous ecosystems are protected, preserved and celebrated; with engaging recreational and educational experiences that foster a deep connection to nature; respect and stewardship for our natural heritage".*

In order to achieve this vision, management planning and decisions for Tōtara Reserve must:

1. Be in harmony with Tōtara Reserve's ecological values and its classification; enabling engagement and enjoyment of the reserve's natural beauty for everyone with the provision of recreational and educational facilities and opportunities.  
and
2. Optimise protection and preservation that enables the natural forest to be resilient and abundant.



In the introduction section of this plan, readers will find background information about Tōtara Reserve, including relevant legislation, governance and history.

To help with clarity and document navigation, the plan is structured into six management areas;

- Administration
- Mātauranga Māori
- Forest Health and River Management
- Tracks and Trails
- Campgrounds and Visitor Facilities
- Community Engagement

The 'Administration' area contains administrative policies that govern all areas. Within each of the other five management area sections are the key objectives, information about current management (2024), and policies that guide the activities that are presented in table form.

Most of the short-term proposed activities can be resourced within existing budgets. Longer-term aspirations can seek allocations through Council's long-term planning and potentially third-party funding and sponsorship.

Broadly, key activities proposed for implementation across the plan are;

- Incorporating principles of mātauranga Māori to foster greater visibility of cultural history, tikanga and connection of mana whenua to the area,
- Ensuring pest management across the reserve is prioritised, maintained, and, where feasible, monitoring forest health,
- Preserving quality camping, recreational and educational facilities and promoting the community's engagement, adapting as environmental conditions and community needs change.





# Tuia te taiao, tuia te tangata

Connecting the earth  
to the people, and  
the people to the earth

## 1

# Introduction

The Tōtara Reserve Management Plan (management plan) establishes a vision for Tōtara Reserve and provides a policy framework for the protection, recreational use, management and development of the reserve. The management plan is created and implemented by Horizons Regional Council (the Council). This management plan incorporates information from the following sources:

- Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Asset Management Plan 2014
- Community engagement undertaken during July and August 2024
- Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Spatial Plan 2022
- Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group
- Iwi representatives' knowledge and research with tangata whenua
- Staff knowledge

## 1.1 Scope

Figures 1 and 2 show the location and land titles of Tōtara Reserve. The reserve is managed as a contiguous ecological unit. It provides complementary recreational opportunities, facilities and amenities. Tōtara Reserve is used by both locals and visitors to the Manawatū for a range of recreational, botanical, educational and leisure opportunities.

The reserve area is 332 ha, and it has been classified for the purpose of a scenic reserve. A summary of the record of title is provided in Appendix 1 and aspects of the land tenure are briefly explained in Appendix 2. This management plan provides for the management of these collective sites.



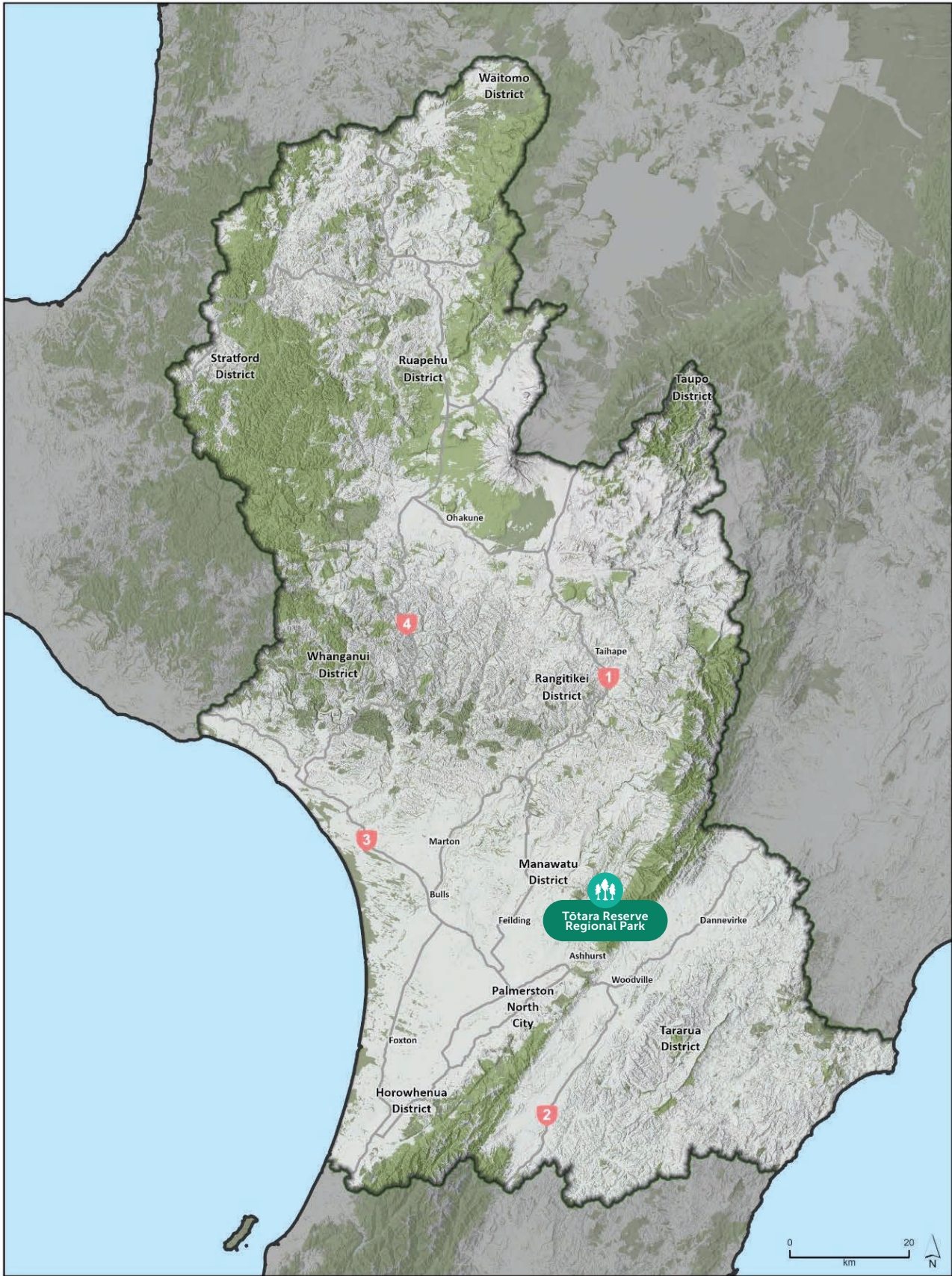


Figure 1: Location of Tōtara Reserve

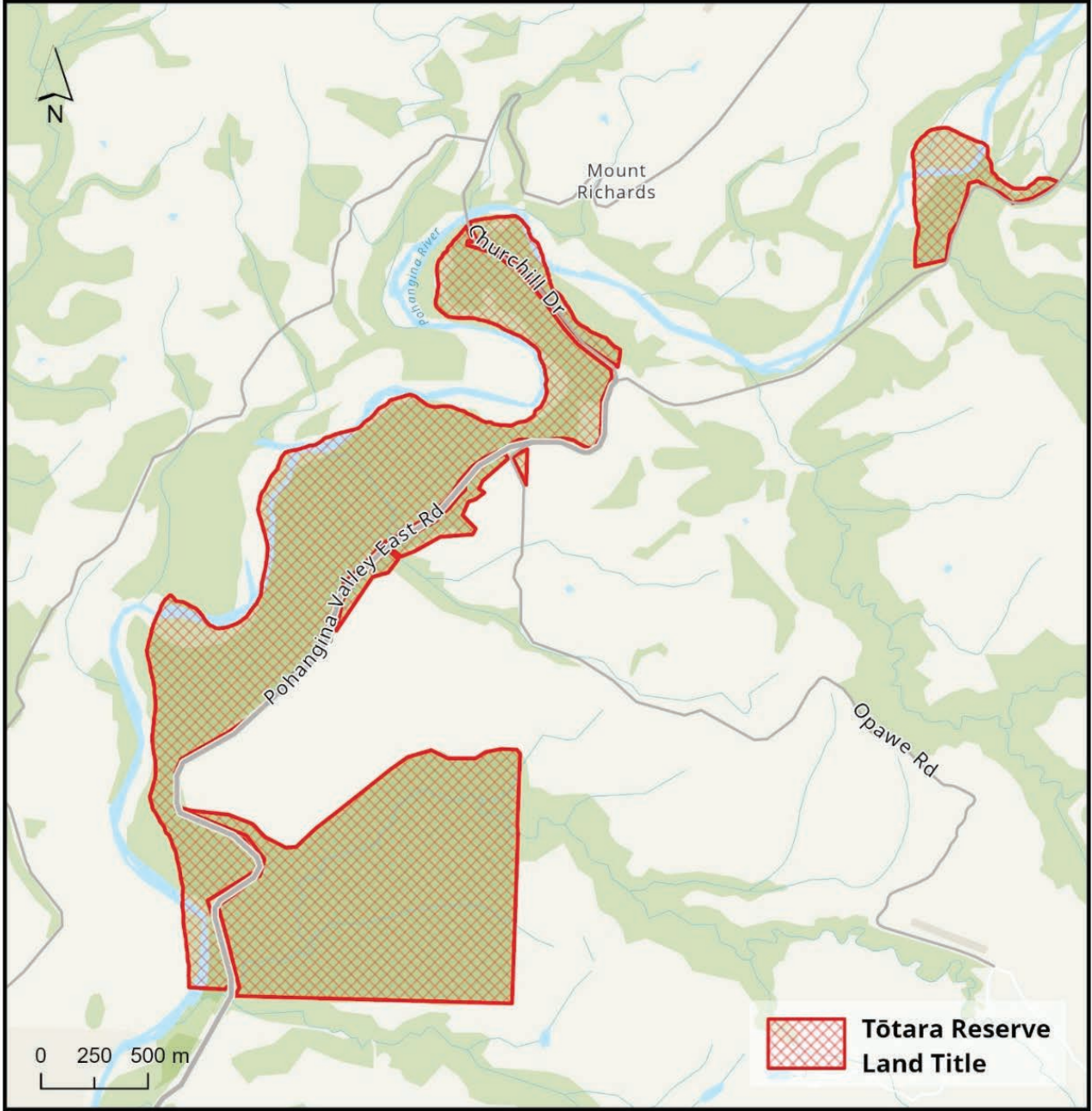


Figure 2: Land titles owned by Manawātū-Whanganui Regional Council



## 1.2 Preparation of the Management Plan

This management plan has been prepared in accordance with Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977 (the Act). Key milestones are outlined in the below table.

Milestone	Date
Council resolution to begin review of 2014 management plan	28 May 2024
Suggestions to assist in drafting the management plan were sought from the advisory group, Iwi, stakeholders and community, including a community survey that received 162 contributions	July–October 2024
Preparation of the draft management plan	August–October 2024
Council approval of the draft management plan for public consultation	November 2024
Public consultation, analysis of submissions and hearing	December 2024–February 2025
Final management plan approved by Council and made publicly available	April 2025

Council intends to undertake a full review of the management plan at 10-yearly intervals<sup>1</sup>. Alterations and additions may also be made from time to time to reflect the changing circumstances of reserve management and development. Any proposed alterations or additions to the management plan will be publicly notified in accordance with Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977.

<sup>1</sup> The previous management plan was approved in 2014.

## 1.3 Legislation

### Reserves Act 1977

Section 3(1) of the Act states that the general purpose of the Act is for:

- a. Providing, for the preservation and management for the benefit and enjoyment of the public, areas of New Zealand possessing -
  - i. Recreational use or potential, whether active or passive; or
  - ii. Wildlife; or
  - iii. Indigenous flora or fauna; or
  - iv. Environmental and landscape amenity or interest; or
  - v. Natural, scenic, historic, cultural, archaeological, biological, geological, scientific, educational, community, or other special features or value:
- b. Ensuring, as far as possible, the survival of all indigenous species of flora and fauna, both rare and commonplace, in their natural communities and habitats, and the preservation of representative samples of all classes of natural ecosystems and landscape which in the aggregate originally gave New Zealand its own recognisable character:
- c. Ensuring, as far as possible, the preservation of access for the public to and along the sea coast, its bays and inlets and offshore islands, lakeshores, and riverbanks, and fostering and promoting the preservation of the natural character of the coastal environment and of the margins of lakes and rivers and the protection of them from unnecessary subdivision and development.





Classification and Management of Reserves

A key requirement of the Act is the classification of reserves and the preparation of management plans that are consistent with the purposes for which the reserves have been classified. This is “to ensure the control, management, development, use, maintenance, and preservation of reserves for their appropriate purposes” (Section 16 (1)). The land parcels that collectively make up Tōtara Reserve are all classified under the Act as scenic reserve<sup>2</sup>.

Scenic Reserves

Section 19(1) (a) of the Act declares that provisions (including within management plans) for scenic reserves shall serve 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.”*

Section 19 of the Act specifies activity that shall be adhered to and prioritised in this plan. Many of the policies support these methods, with examples bracketed for reference.

- Preservation of the indigenous flora and fauna, ecological associations, natural environment and beauty
- Exterminate exotic flora and fauna
- Freedom of public access, controlled with regards to the reserve health and public safety
- Manage and protect historical, archaeological, geological, biological, and other scientific features.

The Reserves Act 1977 also provides the basis under which Council must manage its reserves for the benefit and enjoyment of the public. Sections 55 and 56 of the Act set out the administrative powers of the Council in respect to scenic reserves.

The vision statement, objectives and policies in this management plan are consistent with the purpose for which the reserve is classified.

In addition, the Minister has delegated certain powers under the Act to councils, where they are the administering body of the reserve. Powers under delegation include the power to approve reserve management plans, and the power of giving consent for the cutting or destruction of trees and bush on scenic reserves.

Other Legislation

Council, in providing and managing Tōtara Reserve, is guided by a number of other pieces of legislation in addition to the Reserves Act 1977. These also affect how Council plans and manages its reserves.

Other Acts that Council takes into account include the Building Act 2004, Biosecurity Act 1993, Conservation Act 1987, Crown Minerals Act 1991, Disabled Persons Community Welfare Act 1975, Fencing Act 1978, Freshwater Fisheries Act 1983, Freedom Camping Act 2011, Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996, Health Act 1956, Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992, Historic Places Act 1993, Litter Act 1979, Local Government Act 2002, Māori Fisheries Act 2004, New Zealand Walkways Act 1990, Resource Management Act 1991, Sale of Liquor Act 1989 and the Wildlife Act 1953.

1.4 Relationship with Other Plans and Strategies

The management plan sits within a wide range of Council plans required under some of the legislation identified above; in particular, the Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA) and the Local Government Act 1991 (LGA).

Act 2002 (LGA). The RMA requires the sustainable management of natural and physical resources, including those in parks and reserves. The LGA requires Council to prepare a Long-term Plan (LTP), which sets out Council’s priorities and financial strategy for the next 10 years.

Figure 3 illustrates the relationship the management plan has with other plans prepared by Council under legislative requirements.

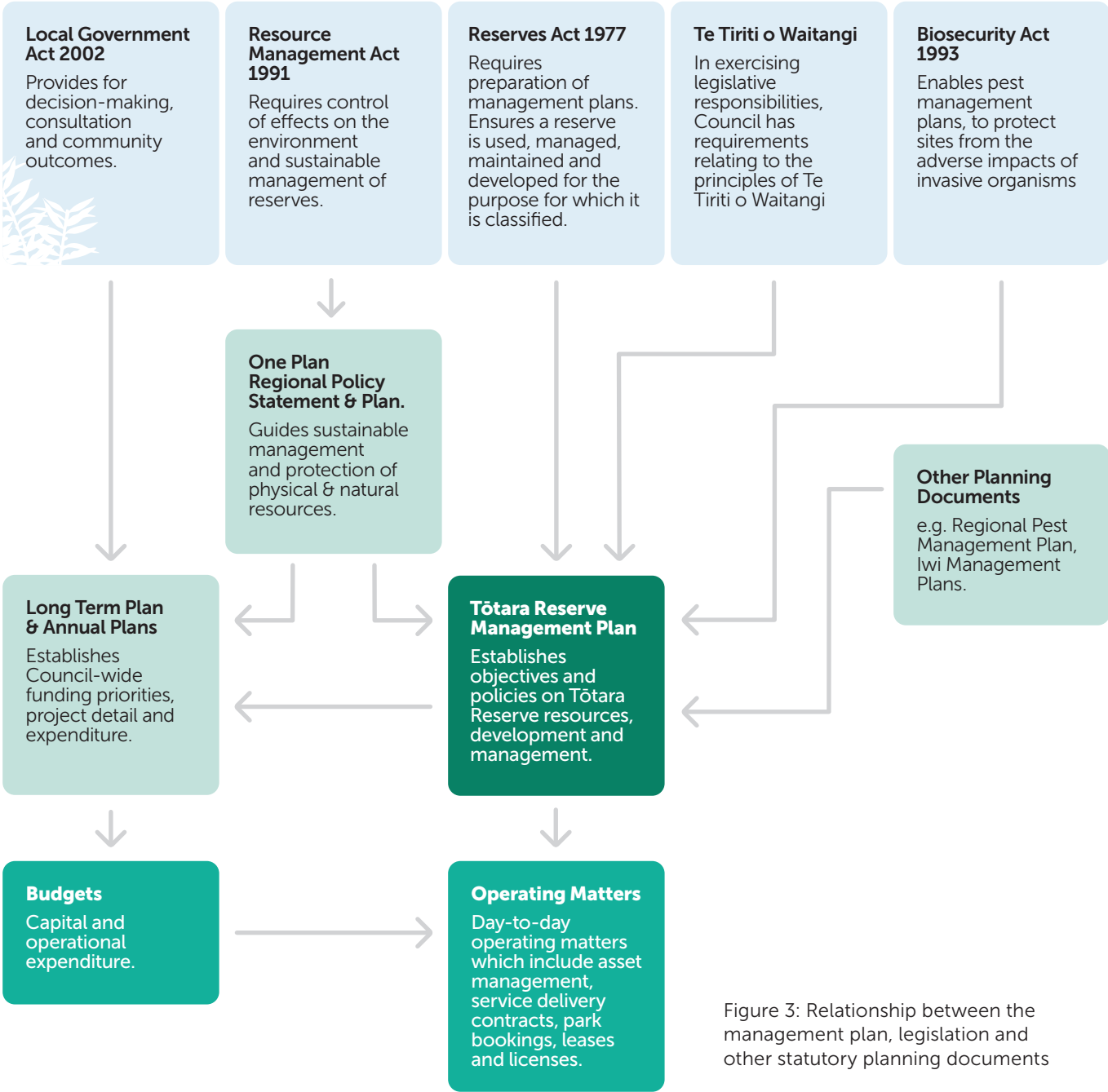


Figure 3: Relationship between the management plan, legislation and other statutory planning documents

<sup>2</sup> Refer to Appendix 1 and Appendix 2.



One Plan

Notified in 2007 and made operative in 2014, the One Plan is the “one stop shop” resource management planning document for the Horizons region. It combines the Regional Policy Statement, Regional Plan and Coastal Plan. The One Plan defines how the natural and physical resources of the region will be cared for and managed by Council in partnership with territorial authorities and the community. One Plan provisions that affect the planning and management of Tōtara Reserve include those relating to ecosystems and indigenous biodiversity, land and freshwater, hazards and risks, historic and cultural values, natural character, and natural features and landscapes.

Long Term Plan (LTP)

The LTP sets out Council’s priorities for the next 10 years and provides information on Council services, budgets and major projects. The plan also sets out strategic priorities and community outcomes and identifies ways that Council will achieve these. The LTP must be updated every three years.

Development and management of Tōtara Reserve contributes to the following strategic priorities and community outcomes in the 2024-2034 LTP.

Community Outcomes

Our region’s communities are vibrant and empowered	✓	Our region’s ecosystems are healthy	✓
Our region’s communities are resilient to the impact of natural hazards and climate change	✓	Our region has effective transport networks	✓
Our region’s economy is thriving and environmentally sustainable	✓	Our region’s relationship with Iwi and hapū is respectful and mana enhancing	✓

Strategic Priorities

Building resilience to the impacts of climate change	✓	Strengthening partnerships with tangata whenua	✓
A holistic approach, from the mountains to the sea (integrated catchment management)	✓	Connecting people and places through effective public transport connections	✓

Methods include the following, with examples of supportive policies bracketed:

- Promoting visitation, interpretation and immersion to enable reconnecting with nature, landscape, and cultural heritage (40a).
- Providing education and storytelling with signage and guided walks and events to enhance reconnection and promote natural character and heritage values (7, 40f-i).
- Providing well-maintained recreational opportunities with walking tracks and open green areas for picnicking and camping (15, 18, 25).
- Build resilience and preserve the natural assets of the region by planting trees, native bush reforestation and biosecurity (10).
- Building strong partnerships by working collaboratively with Iwi, Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group and visitors (6, 7, 40b).

Other Planning Documents

The following plans from Council also guide the management of resources within the region:

Regional Pest Management Plan

The purpose of the plan is to outline the regulatory framework for efficient and effective management or eradication of specified animal and plant organisms in the Manawatū-Whanganui region so as to:

- Prevent, reduce or eliminate the adverse effects of those organisms and their management
- Maximise the effectiveness of individual pest management action by way of a regionally coordinated approach.

The Regional Pest Management Plan 2017-2037 was adopted on 26 September 2017. Under the Biosecurity Act 1993, there is a statutory requirement to initiate a review by November 2027.

Tōtara Reserve Spatial Plan 2022

A spatial plan was developed to help inform the governance and management of Tōtara Reserve to shape the objectives, policies and implementation methods that are included in Section 3 of this management plan.

Iwi and Hapū Management Plans

Iwi and hapū planning documents, taiao strategies and other documents that describe the values and aspirations of those with mana whenua over a rohe can be accessed from Council’s website. These documents can assist readers in understanding the Māori worldview, Māori values, and the importance of the relationship between Māori and the environment.

Planning documents recognised by an Iwi authority are one mechanism by which tangata whenua interests can be considered in Council processes.

New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy

Te Mana o Te Taiao Aotearoa New Zealand Biodiversity Strategy 2020 sets a strategic direction for the protection, restoration and sustainable use of biodiversity, particularly indigenous biodiversity, in Aotearoa, New Zealand, for the next 30 years.<sup>3</sup> It is intended to guide all those who work with or have an impact on biodiversity, including local government.

<sup>3</sup> www.doc.govt.nz/globalassets/documents/conservation/biodiversity/anzbs-2020.pdf



## 1.5 Treaty of Waitangi

The Conservation Act 1987 requires that decision-makers give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi. The management plan aims to interpret and administer the Reserves Act 1977 in a manner that achieves this requirement.

In the context of Tōtara Reserve, these principles are:

- To act reasonably and in good faith
- To make informed decisions
- To consider whether active steps are needed to protect Māori interests
- To avoid actions that would prevent the redress of claims
- To recognise that Government must be able to govern
- To consult with tangata whenua, Iwi and hapū and to take into account issues or concerns raised where activities are likely to disturb or impact sites of cultural significance on the reserve when major developments are proposed
- To recognise and provide for the relationship of Māori when expressing their culture and traditions with respect to their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga in the management of Tōtara Reserve
- To conduct the process of consultation with Māori within the spirit of bicultural partnership that exists between Māori and Council
- To ensure that both parties are satisfied that their rights are upheld.

Council is committed to effective ongoing consultation with Iwi in the management of Tōtara Reserve and when reviewing the Tōtara Reserve Management Plan. Rangitāne o Manawatū has a statutory acknowledgement over the Pohangina River, including Tōtara Reserve. Rangitāne o Wairarapa and Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua operate under the auspices of Rangitāne Tū Mai Ra Trust and recognise Tōtara Reserve as an area of interest.

Refer to Section 3.2 Mātauranga Māori for additional information about how Council will uphold its commitment.

## 1.6 Mana Whenua

There is a long history of Māori occupation in the Manawatū, as outlined in Section 1.8. Tōtara Reserve is included in the rohe of Rangitāne o Manawatū. Ongoing involvement with Rangitāne o Manawatū in the management and development of the lands covered by this management plan is essential and required under a number of statutes, as long as actions are congruent with the purposes of the Reserves Act and the classification of Tōtara Reserve as stated in Section 1.3 and Section 3.2.3 Policy 6 Iwi and hapū.

Mana whenua, as defined in the Resource Management Act 1991, means customary authority exercised by an Iwi or hapū in an identified area. The concept of mana whenua is a key concept for Pākehā understanding when dealing with the appropriate authority over matters relating to environmental management philosophies of te ao Māori (the Māori world). Iwi and hapū have different environmental philosophies in relation to their regional affiliations and may not have mana whenua rights guaranteed under current legislation.

In general, mana whenua is the authority to control and manage a particular area or resource in relation to prescribed customary and cultural practices. The authority is gained through the relationship of the people to the resources of the land. This relationship has developed by an association based on the genealogy or lineage of those people who were the first to occupy the land.

Tōtara Reserve is part of the ancient preserve of Rangitāne. Well-known ancestors were Whatonga and Tamakuku from which Tāne-nui-a-Rangi descends. Details of the whakapapa are complex and described in a report held by Council that was prepared in 2024 by Matua Peter Te Rangi. Extracts from this report provide evidence of Rangitāne around Tōtara Reserve, following:

*Whātonga and his retinue settled first at Rakautatahi, which became their principal settlement. Te Koru, Horehore, Tataiwhetu, Te Katea were the names of their pā.*

*Also living in this region and in the Manawatū were people identified as Ngāti Mamoe, Ngāti Hotu, Ngai Tara and the Ruatamore people.*

*As the tribe of Rangitāne and those who dwelt with them grew, Rangitāne expanded their areas of occupation (NMLCMB 24 pg 222 – Hoani Meihana). As a result, the people of Rangitāne became very familiar with the landscape, using the knowledge of the earlier inhabitants and their own exploratory endeavours.*

Settlements close to Tōtara Reserve include Otutaurangi Pā (overlooking Pohangina River - Makiekie Stream confluence) and Kikitangiao (downstream) as shown in Figures 4 and 5.



The wife of the Chief **Tapui Potaka** of Ngāti Hauiti was a Rangitāne woman by the name of Nihoiti. She hailed from the area we now call Ashhurst, and we believe she was interred there on her passing. Through the association of **Nihoiti** with the region, her son **Utiku Potaka** was able to recount some of the early history relating to the Pohangina Valley.

Evidence (states that) Ngāti Tumokai and Ngāti Marama (Rangitāne hapū) lived in Kikitangiao and also in another pā further downstream from Kikitangiao, at a pā called Pariwharariki. Utiku Potaka's elders lived at Kikitangiao, and his father, Potaka Ahuahu is buried there. This could well have been the location of Nihoiti's (Utiku's mother) people.

Utiku Potaka states that Kikitangiao was a cultivation area, not a pā. He also states that Otutaurangi was a fighting pā. This overlooks what we now call Tōtara Reserve.

It is interesting to note that the name of this area, called Kikitangiao, is also the name of ancestor Rangitāne's granddaughter.

The following have an interest in the lands covered by this management plan:

- Rangitāne o Manawatū Iwi
- Rangitāne Tamaki nui-ā-Rua Iwi

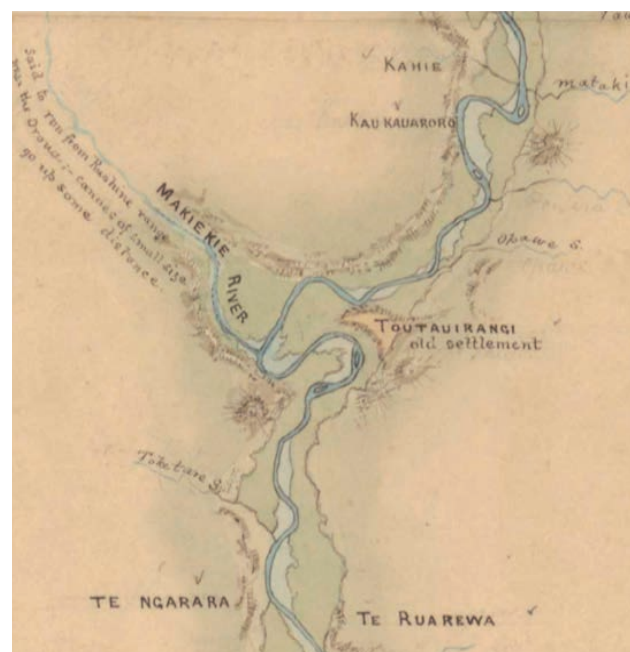


Figure 4: Tautaurangi fighting pā



Figure 5: Kiekietangaiao cultivation site





## 1.7 Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group

The Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group was established in 2013, with the responsibility of guiding and supporting the management and development of Tōtara Reserve Regional Park in alignment with the vision for it and the policies of its management plan. The advisory group provides strategic direction and makes recommendations to Council, which has overall authority. Having Iwi and community representation on the advisory group, and maintaining a small number of members, allows the group to act together and make decisions appropriately and effectively.

The membership in 2024 includes:

- Two Council-appointed Councillors (one as Chair)
- Two representatives of Rangitāne o Manawatū
- Two representatives of Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua
- Two representatives from the local community
- One representative each from Camp Rangi Woods Trust, Pohangina Catchment Care Group, Manawatū District Council and campers.

Iwi representation for Rangitāne o Manawatū was determined via nomination of one person via the Te Rangimarie Marae Trustees in 2013 and one person from Te Mauri O Rangitāne o Manawatū (Council of Elders) Tanenuiarangi Manawatū Incorporated (Mandated Iwi Authority).

The Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group meets at least twice a year.

The terms of reference outline the details of the group’s operation and function – see Appendix 4.

## 1.8 Reserve History

The reserve is located in part of the Ahu a Turanga Block. This 250,000-acre block was acquired for £12,000 by the Crown from Rangitāne o Manawatū chief negotiator Te Hirawanui Kaimokopuna in 1864. It was surveyed in 1858 by John Tiffen Stewart for the Native Land Purchase Department. In pre-European times, the Pohangina Valley was extensively covered in dense bush and provided communicative, cultural and natural resources.

The Pohangina River valley was used extensively as an access way between Manawatū and Hawkes Bay. Its wildlife and native seeds were harvested for food and its timber for waka manufacturing.

Stewart (1859) found 25 sites of pre-European settlements along the Pohangina River, including Toutaurangi on the spur above the confluence of the Pohangina River and Makiekie (Coal) Creek (between Pohangina Valley East Road and the formal camping ground). These would most likely have been Rangitāne o Manawatū sites. The New Zealand Archaeological Association has identified five archaeological sites near Tōtara Reserve, as follows:

- Adze findspot; Pohangina River, north of Takapari Road. Map Grid: T23-617-238
- Adze findspot; Piripiri Road. Map Grid: 637-256
- Adze findspot; Dundas Creek / Pohangina River confluence. Map Grid: 525-127
- Oven; Dundas Creek. Map Grid: 523-123
- Adze findspot; Ohinetapu Stream, Awahou. Map Grid: 547-122

The river valley has defensive significance to Rangitāne o Manawatū. It was used as a seasonal natural resource-gathering area and was defended from invaders. Records exist of a battle close to Tōtara Reserve between Ngāti Apa and Rangitāne o Manawatū (Buick 1903, McEwen 1986). There are a number of Iwi with an interest in the block (see Section 1.6).

Following European settlement in the late 1860s, much of the forest in the area was felled and farms established. The land that now makes up Tōtara Reserve had escaped clear-felling and was set aside for state forest purposes in 1886. It was gazetted under the provisions of the State Forests Act (1885) as a ‘reserve for growth & preservation of timber and for river conservation purposes’<sup>4</sup>.

State forest status was cancelled under Section 23 of the Reserves and Other Lands

Disposal Act 1946 (ROLD), and the land declared recreation reserve. In 1975, Section 80 (Tōtara Scenic Reserve) was separately defined by survey from Part Section 48 and its status changed from recreation to scenic.

Pohangina Valley Domain Recreation Reserve consisted of seven land parcels, and these were declared reserves at various times between 1946 and 1969 under the Reserves and Domains Act 1953.

Under the ROLD, control of Pohangina Valley Domain was given to Palmerston North City Council, appointed as the Domain Board. When Tōtara Scenic Reserve was gazetted in 1976, Palmerston North City Council was also appointed as the Tōtara Scenic Board. Following local government restructuring in 1989, Manawatū District Council began managing both reserves.

Administration of the reserve was passed from Pohangina County Council (1932) to Palmerston North City Council (1947) and to Manawatū District Council (1989).

In 2012, Tōtara Reserve was vested in Horizons Regional Council's sole stewardship. This resulted in a review and update of the management plan, which was completed in 2014.

Tōtara Reserve continues to have ecological significance and recreational importance. The reserve is identified as a Protected Natural Area by Council via the Reserves Act 1977. Council has responsibility for flood protection, erosion control, animal and pest control management, and biodiversity enhancement under the LGA and its relevant amendments. The 2012 vesting also gave Council the responsibility for the day-to-day management and administration of the reserve, including recreational use under the Reserves Act.

<sup>4</sup> Knight, Catherine. 2014. Ravaged Beauty an environmental history of the Manawatū. Dunmore Publishing.  
Buick, T. L. (1903). Old Manawatu. Palmerston North, N.Z.: Buick and Young  
McEwen, J. M. (1986). Rangitāne : a tribal history. Auckland, N.Z.: Reed Methuen



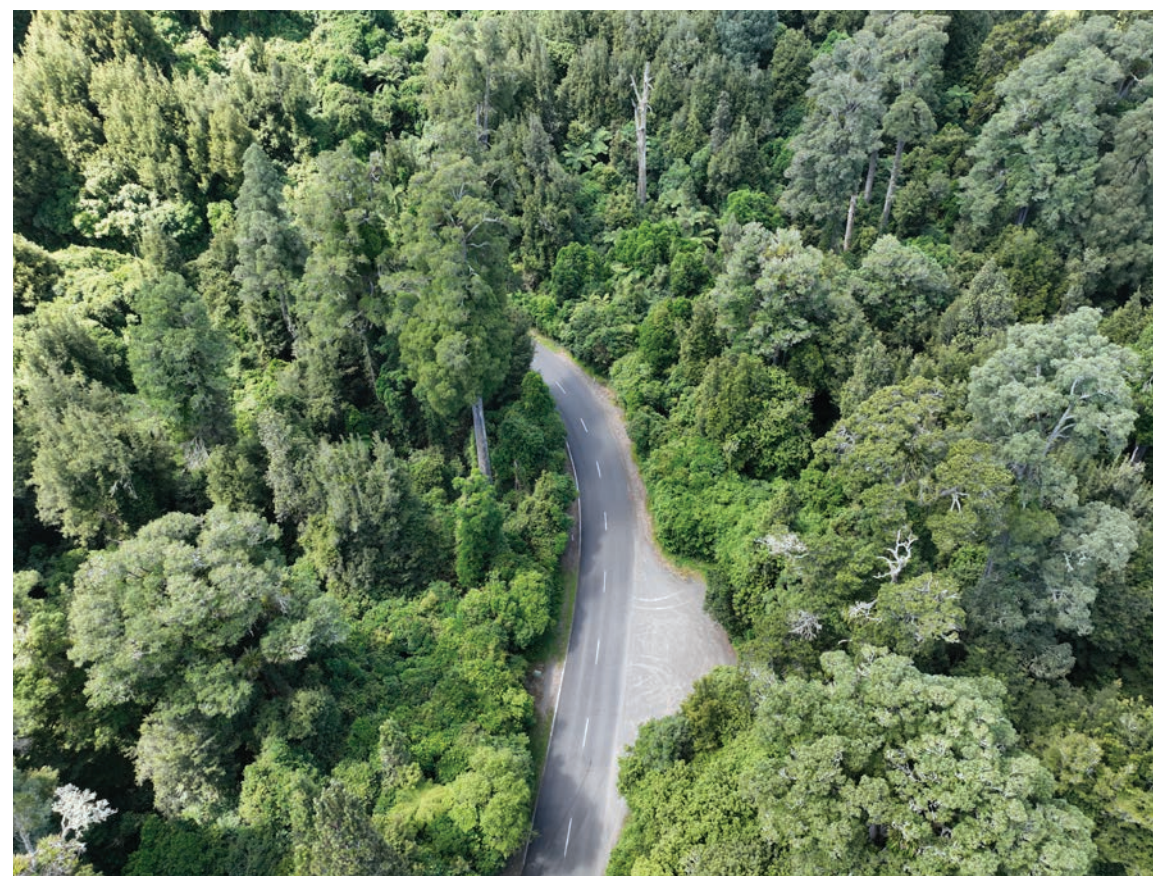
## 1.9 Landscape Characteristics, Recreational Facilities and Amenities

### Landscape Characteristics

The reserve is in the Pohangina Valley, at the foot of the Ruahine Ranges, and is approximately 332 ha, ranging from river flats to hills up to 60 m high. The main part of the reserve lies between Pohangina Valley East Road and the Pohangina River. The upper Pohangina River and Tōtara Reserve are classified as outstanding natural features in the Manawātū District Plan. The river is considered to have a valuable trout fishery resource as well as a number of native fish species, including bullies, kōkopu, brown mudfish and eels. The reserve also provides a valuable food source for tūī, fantails, wax eyes, moreporks, bellbirds, kingfishers, and wood pigeons.

Tōtara Reserve Regional Park is the largest remnant of the last 2% of lowland forest that once covered the Horizons region. The forest is one of the most intact fragments of lowland forest in the region. The results from mapping significant areas in 2023 show that most of Tōtara Reserve is classified as rare, threatened or at-risk habitat as defined in Schedule F of the One Plan<sup>5</sup>.

The Fern Walk area used to be a major kahikatea forest but was decimated by a cyclone in 1936. The walk begins with a steep climb from the road to a plateau, where it levels out. It features a scattering of tawa, tōtara, rimu, pukatea and rātā, with kiekie, astelia, kōwhai and



beech trees prominent on the narrow spur linking the lowland with the high plateau.

The reserve has high ecological and natural values and strong landscape character due to its location, native forest remnants, native flora and fauna, river setting, informal feel and naturalness.

Figure 6: Kereru campground, children's play area, fire pit, picnic and barbeque area



Four landscape character areas make up the area:

1. Mature native forest, including the Fern Walk – this consists of the river flood plain and has kahikatea/pukatea swamp forest and tōtara-dominated mixed podocarp with some exotics. This area is used for formal and informal camping and picnicking
2. River margins – mixed tawa/mahoe podocarp forest and mixed broadleaf forest with a limited track network. This area has walking tracks and river access routes
3. Camping and picnicking
4. Plantations.

The reserve has a number of animal pests and invasive weeds. These include banana passionfruit (*Passiflora molissima*), wandering willy (*Tradescantia fluminensis*), old man's beard (*Clematis vitalba*), possums, deer, mustelids, sulphur-crested cockatoos, rodents and feral cats, all of which require control and management to reduce their impact on vulnerable native species and ecosystem composition. The river is prone to flooding, and in the recent past, the camping and picnic sites along the river flats have been damaged by floods.

Current management includes comprehensive planning and operational programmes that address animal pests and invasive weeds. Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023 prompted Council to initiate river modelling and planning towards improved flood resilience.

### Recreational Facilities and Amenities

The reserve has camping grounds, a children's play area, picnic and barbecue areas (Figure 6), Camp Rangi Woods (an outdoor recreation facility), nature walks and trails, and the river. It is used by a wide range of visitors, including school groups, Scouts, Guides and the New Zealand Defence Force, as well as casual visitors. The reserve provides a variety of recreational opportunities, including bush walks, camping, picnicking, wildlife observation, nature studies and water-based activities such as swimming and fishing.

A list of assets and infrastructure is provided in Appendix 3.

<sup>5</sup> Tōtara Forest Health Assessment 2022



## Camp Rangi Woods

The Camp Rangi Woods site was started as the Pohangina Boys Camp in 1925 by the Palmerston North Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and embraced by then General Secretary Charles "Rangi" Woods. The site is shown in Figures 7 and 8.

Rangi and his wife Jean worked to make the Pohangina Boys Camp an exciting yet homely place and dedicated 43 years of service to children and young people of the Palmerston North area through the YMCA. When Rangi retired in 1966, the camp was renamed Camp Rangi Woods in his honour. The facilities include a large kitchen and hall, along with 70 beds and bunk beds in separate cabins.

The Bush Chapel, located close to Camp Rangi Woods, was where the YMCA held church services. Around 1964, a rough wooden cross was nailed to the tōtara tree at the front of the chapel. These days, the Bush Chapel is a popular spot for weddings.

In 2024 Camp Rangi Woods is managed by the Camp Rangi Woods Trust, which was formed in 1993 and whose membership includes Manawātū District Council and the YMCA. The camp land is owned by Horizons Regional Council and leased by the trust. The camp buildings and fixed assets within them are owned by the YMCA.

The trust manages a wide range of users, including school and community groups, youth groups, churches, clubs, businesses, and people hiring the venue for family reunions and special events. In 2024, the trust is exploring the potential for different representations to continue the management of Camp Rangi Woods.



Figure 7 (Top right): Camp Rangi Woods

Figure 8 (Bottom right): Historical image of Camp Rangi Woods



## 2

## Vision

A highly valued area where indigenous ecosystems are protected, preserved and celebrated; with engaging recreational and educational experiences that foster a deep connection to nature; respect and stewardship for our natural heritage.

He wāhi puiaki e tiaki ana, e whakanui ana hoki i te taiao taketake; e tū nei ngā wheako rēhia, ngā wheako mātauranga hei poipoi i te hononga tangata ki te mauri o te taiao; kia ngākaunui atu, kia āta tiaki i tō tātou taonga pūmau.

Objectives, policies and implementation methods are contained in Section 3 of this management plan. They provide a strategic framework for achieving the vision and, the two overarching management objectives:

**ONE**

In harmony with Tōtara Reserve's ecological values and its classification; enable engagement and enjoyment of the reserve's natural beauty for everyone, with the provision of recreational and educational facilities and opportunities.

**TWO**

Optimise protection and preservation that enables the natural forest to be resilient and abundant.





3

## Objectives, Policies and Implementation



3

# Objectives, Policies and Implementation

This section is comprised of six management areas:

- 1. Administration
- 2. Mātauranga Māori
- 3. Forest health and River Management
- 4. Tracks and trails
- 5. Campground and visitor facilities
- 6. Community engagement.

The provisions included in each of these management areas have been drawn from: the Tōtara Reserve Asset Management Plan 2014; a spatial analysis and planning report commissioned for Tōtara Reserve in 2022; a forest health assessment conducted for Tōtara Reserve in 2023; a 2024 flood resilience investigation, a public survey undertaken in 2024 and submissions on the draft plan. They also incorporate knowledge from the Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group, Iwi representatives and Council staff.

The administration management area (Section 3.1) contains administrative policies that overarch all management areas. The other five management areas each include four components:

- Objectives specific to that activity
- Current status of the activity
- Policy statements
- Proposed activities which could be undertaken. Some of these can happen by prioritising existing budgets and resourcing, while others will be reliant on allocations in future LTPs or Annual Plans.

## 3.1 Administration

The administration of Tōtara Reserve is managed by Horizons Regional Council.

### 3.1.1 Objective

An effective strategic framework will support Council’s authorisation to carry out work and administer the use of the reserve.

### 3.1.2 Policies

#### Policy 1: Delegated Authorities

- a. The reserve will be managed by Horizons Regional Council and within the powers delegated under Sections 55 and 56 of the Reserves Act 1977, as they pertain to the scenic classification of the reserve.
- b. Horizons Regional Council will be responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the reserves, including recreational use, within the powers delegated under Sections 55 and 56 of the Reserves Act 1977.
- c. Horizons Regional Council will be responsible for flood protection, erosion control, animal and pest control management, and biodiversity enhancement under the Local Government Act 2002.
- d. Horizons Regional Council will administer the Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group. The role of the advisory group is to guide and support the management and development of Tōtara Reserve and to provide recommendations to Council.
- e. Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group will adhere to the terms of reference prescribed by the advisory group.

#### Policy 2: Lands Coming Under this Plan

- a. All lands shown in the Land Title Plan in Appendix 1 and Land Tenure Explained in Appendix 2 come under the policies of this management plan, including any accretion to these land parcels.

#### Policy 3: Funding

- a. Funding for maintenance programmes, ongoing protection, development and enhancement programmes, plus river management, will be identified in Council’s LTP and the Annual Plan.
- b. Programmes will be evaluated, prioritised and funded when resources or opportunities allow.
- c. In order to uphold the Reserves Act and the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, Tōtara Reserve will be given high priority by Council, with particular allocation of funds to support active steps to protect tangata whenua needs, preserve and protect biodiversity, the pest management programme and asset maintenance programme, in recognition of the reserve’s regional significance.
- d. Alternative sources of funding (other than rates and camping fees) and other means of implementing programmes, projects and activities will also be options. This may include sponsorship, philanthropic funding and other funding arrangements rights, so long as:
  - Activities show clear net benefit to the community;
  - The integrity of Tōtara Reserve is protected;
  - Agreements will only be undertaken with businesses and other organisations whose values/practices/products are not in conflict with Council objectives and policies; and



- Naming rights or other forms of acknowledgement for the funder may be granted but would be subject to Council and Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group approval, taking into account the contribution’s alignment with council values, historical or cultural relevance, and potential community impact.

**Explanation:** Pest management and public access (within controls to preserve the forest) are paramount areas of investment to adhere to the purpose as a scenic reserve. The levels of service are limited to the level of funding available through rates and other sources. Unnecessary expenditure will occur if assets are left to deteriorate. However, community aspirations are usually higher than the level of funding available. A number of activities are suitable for funding through community grants and sponsorship or can be advanced through volunteer and works scheme programmes. These activities add considerable value to the presentation of reserves. Such programmes also contribute to greater community ownership and pride in the reserve.

**Policy 4: Relationship with Other Reserves and Facilities**

- a. Council will consider any development and use of the reserve and its facilities in the context of existing and proposed reserves and facilities in the region.
- b. Future planning for Tōtara Reserve may also take into account opportunities in neighbouring areas, including private properties and other reserves, and provision of services through commercial recreation groups and other agencies.

**Policy 5: Leases, Licences and Permits**

- a. Recreation groups and community organisations requiring exclusive use of Tōtara Reserve, or part of it, must apply to Council. They may be required to have an agreement.
- b. A formal agreement may be required where there is sole occupation involving a group of people or where an occupation will have a significant impact on the reserve over a defined period.
- c. A licence is required for any commercial activities.
- d. A lease, licence, easement or permit is required for the occupation of any part of the reserve, by a public utility.
- e. Tōtara Reserve will be managed in accordance with regional council and district council by-laws, where they apply. Further information on these by-laws can be viewed on Councils’ websites.

**Explanation:** Tōtara Reserve is available to the community at most times. However, there may be times when application is made for the reserve to be used for other purposes, including commercial recreation activities, filming, weddings and events. Council charges for the use of the reserves for activities other than day-to-day recreational activities as a contribution towards reserve management costs.

Leases and licences are contractual agreements made between Council and groups using facilities or land on reserve vested in Council or on a reserve Council has been appointed to control and manage (Sections 48,55,56 59A and 74 of the Reserves Act). The responsibilities of both Council and the lessee or licensee will be clearly stated in the lease or licensee agreement. A clear statement of responsibilities ensures that the lessee or licensee knows exactly what Council considers to be acceptable use of the reserve and associated facilities and appropriate behaviour on public land.

- f. In conjunction with the Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group, Council will formalise the working relationship with the governing body of Camp Rangi Woods.
- g. The governing body of Camp Rangi Woods will uphold the policies in this management plan and provide the necessary provisions for the land use identified as Camp Rangi Woods. This provision and the management plan policies will be included in any lease agreement with the governing body of Camp Rangi Woods.





### 3.2 Mātauranga Māori

Tōtara Reserve has associations with local Iwi and hapū, as described in Section 1.6, as well as connections with European history and settlement of the area. It is unquestionable that mana whenua have opportunities at Tōtara Reserve to maintain connection to this area. For everyone, history fosters engagement and respect; therefore, this activity is critical to support the vision for Tōtara Reserve.

#### 3.2.1 Objective

To explore and embrace the reserve’s cultural heritage in partnership with mana whenua, looking for opportunities to incorporate traditional knowledge, practices and spiritual connection into people’s interactions with the reserve.

#### 3.2.2 Current Situation (2024)

Currently, for visitors to Tōtara Reserve, there is no obvious visual identity of the Māori relationship to the reserve and its surrounds. Activities that have begun to rectify this include:

- Active representation by Rangitāne o Manawatū and Rangitāne Tamaki nui-ā-Rua on the Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group,
- Development of a cultural framework that will improve understanding of te ao Māori so that mātauranga Māori is



Figure 9: Rongoa: kawakawa (above) and pikopiko (right)

a fundamental part of processes carried out at Tōtara Reserve,

- Exploration of Māori history relevant to Tōtara Reserve with the intention of supporting the mātauranga Māori objective. A report capturing initial findings was received in 2024.
- An investigation exploring what Māori wish to participate in and support at Tōtara Reserve, with particular interest in rongoa (Figure 9).



#### 3.2.3 Policies

##### Policy 6: Iwi and Hapū

- a. Council will give effect to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi in the management of Tōtara Reserve (refer to Section 1.5 Treaty of Waitangi for these principles).
- b. Council and Iwi and hapū with an interest in the reserve area (refer Section 1.6 Mana Whenua) will take opportunities to work together and utilise expertise and experience from all parties to optimise outcomes for the betterment of Tōtara Reserve.
- c. Council will recognise the relationship of Māori and their culture and traditions with their ancestral lands, water, sites, waahi tapu and other taonga in the management of the reserve.

##### Policy 7: Cultural Sites

- a. Council will identify, protect and conserve cultural heritage sites on the reserve.
- b. Council will consult with Iwi and hapū on any activities that are likely to disturb or impact sites of cultural significance.
- c. Research will be undertaken on the historical and cultural use of the reserve and Iwi and hapū association with them.
- d. Further research will be undertaken on the historical and cultural significance of the reserve for conservation, interpretation, management, promotion and education purposes.
- e. If any archaeological sites (including oven stones, charcoal, shell middens, ditches, banks, pits, building foundations, artefacts of Māori and European origin, or human burials) are uncovered during physical works in the reserve, Council will require the manager of the operation to adopt the following protocol:



Accidental Discovery Protocol

- Work shall cease immediately at that place.
- The contractor must secure the area and advise the contract manager.
- The contract manager shall notify the central region archaeologist at Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, and, if necessary, the appropriate consent process shall be initiated.
- The contract manager shall notify appropriate Iwi groups (refer Section 1.6) to determine what further actions are appropriate to safeguard the site or its contents.
- If skeletal remains are uncovered the contract manager shall advise the Police.
- Works on the site shall not resume until Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, the Police (if skeletal remains are involved) and appropriate Iwi groups have each given approval for work to continue.

Policy 8: Traditional Land Use

- a. Discussions will be held to establish whether there is any historical and cultural use of the reserve that needs to be taken into account in the future management of the reserve.
- b. Mechanisms for managing Māori custodial rights on the reserve will be explored, where this affects reserve management and use.
- c. Where required and appropriate, authorisation may be sought for the collection of native specimens or rock minerals for essential management purposes, Iwi cultural purposes, or for approved scientific or educational study, which will contribute to the general knowledge available on the reserve.

3.2.4 Proposed Activities for Mātauranga Māori

**Objective:** To explore and embrace the reserve’s cultural heritage in partnership with mana whenua, looking for opportunities to incorporate traditional knowledge, practices, and spiritual connection into people’s interactions with the reserve.

Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
ACTIVITY: MM1 POLICY: 6b	Development of a cultural framework that aims to improve understanding of te ao Māori so mātauranga Māori is part of the management processes at Tōtara Reserve. This will include determination of what Treaty partnership looks like for ecology, rongoa management, biodiversity, pest and weed control and maintenance	The cultural framework describes the approach that will honour the Treaty.	Cultural framework upheld.	Mātauranga Māori is considered in all aspects of Tōtara Reserve’s management
ACTIVITY: MM2 POLICY: 7c	Determine with mana whenua the response(s) to historical research and information captured about Tōtara Reserve and environs, such as protection protocol of waahi tapu sites.	Actions are identified.	Responses to identified actions are carried out.	
ACTIVITY: MM3 POLICY: 8c	Determine protocol and procedure with mana whenua on the optimal approach to manage rongoa collection in accordance with legislated requirements.	Rongoa protocol is captured in the cultural framework.	Cultural framework upheld.	
ACTIVITY: MM4 POLICY: 6	Consider an exclusive use time period for mana whenua groups who wish to gather on-site for cultural harvest or to exercise kaitiakitanga responsibilities. This could be pre-booked before general bookings are opened to the public or could be provided for outside the main camping season.	Wananga events are scheduled in the annual calendar.	Annual wananga held.	
ACTIVITY: MM5 POLICY: 6	Develop cultural education within and about the reserve, such as “walk and talks” with experts; wananga; mana whenua - history, rongoa, weaving, mātauranga Māori, etc; river monitoring to restore mauri; signage and artworks.	Events, signage, artwork incorporating and celebrating Māori culture and history are developed.	Cultural expressions through events, signage and artwork are well represented at Tōtara Reserve.	

Table 1: Mātauranga Māori Proposed Activities



## 3.3 Forest Health and River Management

As a remnant of rare and threatened indigenous forest (figure 10) comprised of many rare and threatened ecosystem types (Figure 12), Tōtara Reserve supports many endangered species. Forest health must be the priority of all work at Tōtara Reserve. Managing introduced pests that threaten this indigenous ecology is critical to the survival of these ecosystems into the future. While the Reserves Act 1977 states that 'the exotic flora and fauna shall as far as possible be exterminated,' due to the extent of exotic species, limited methods, finite resources, and the high costs involved in extermination, introduced pests within Tōtara Reserve will be controlled on a priority basis, to realistically achievable levels that can still ensure a healthy and sustainable forest environment.

Experiencing the birdlife is highly valued by people of all ages using the walking track network through the reserve. The size of the reserve and its proximity to the Ruahine Ranges suggests that increasing the presence of native birds within the reserve should be an aspiration for the future, benefiting both park users and the biodiversity of the reserve.

Pest animal and pest plant control at Tōtara Reserve must continue to be vigilant. This is because the reserve is long and narrow, with a large boundary shared with the river, the road and farms, all of which provide easy entry for pests.

In addition to existing river level warning systems and evacuation protocol (covered in Campground hazard management policies), in 2024, Horizons conducted an investigation into the flood risk posed by the Pohangina River to Tōtara Reserve campgrounds. Hydraulic modelling determined that peak flood events have the capacity to inundate the whole low-lying area from both upriver and downriver of Kererū and Camp Rangi Woods. Stopbank solutions that could withstand floodwater conditions to provide protection to assets in the area were scoped, but their high cost and ecological impact of construction significantly outweighed the cost of periodic repairs.

### 3.3.1 Objective

To protect and enhance indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems in recognition of the significant ecological values of Tōtara Reserve.



Figure 10 (above): The complex and ecologically rare forest remnant around the Fern Walk

Figure 11 (right): Piwakawaka photographed in the Fern Walk

### 3.3.2 Current Situation (2024)

A forest health assessment report was produced in 2023 by Council, taking into consideration current operations, other evaluations (including a rapid ecological assessment 2023), legal matters, cultural considerations, pros and cons of management techniques, recommended activities, costs and time frames.

The report concluded that while fauna abundance is high and the forest structure is intact, the current levels of pest management need to be increased within the reserve as pests pressure seedling recruitment and retention of significant forest species. Increasing knowledge and understanding of the reserve's flora and fauna will facilitate more informed management decisions.

#### Pest animal control

Significant amounts of forest monitoring and research around New Zealand have determined that reduction of possum populations to below 10% residual trap catch index (RTCI) provides substantial collateral benefits for forest canopy condition. There is also substantial research to indicate that reducing possum abundance below 5% RTCI and rat populations below 5% tracking tunnel index (TTI) over the bird breeding season has significant benefits for supporting vulnerable native bird populations and reducing predation of native invertebrates.

Current operations in Tōtara Reserve include a comprehensive pest animal control programme captured in the Tōtara Reserve Predator Control Operational Plan. The aim of this programme is to reduce animal pest numbers to levels that enable the successful breeding of birds (Figure 11) and reduce predation of *Powelliphanta* snails, native insects, reptiles, flowers, seedlings and seeds to support forest replacement. Possum, rat, mustelid and cat numbers are controlled via a network of bait stations and traps, and the effectiveness of these is monitored via RTCI and TTI. Bait types and trap check frequency are adjusted to ensure the target of <2% RTCI for possums and <10% TTI for rats is being consistently achieved (with <5% rat TTI over bird breeding season).

The increasing fallow and red deer populations in the region have been observed as having a negative impact on the regeneration of the forest understory of Tōtara Reserve. A nationally consistent deer population monitoring methodology has yet to be developed and the intensity of localised culling required to effect a significant improvement in forest regeneration has yet to be determined nationally.



Therefore, an adaptive management approach to deer control is being implemented at Tōtara Reserve. Periodic culling is being trialled, and vegetation monitoring will be implemented to assess the impact of this over time. Deer control methods will be adapted as further information comes to hand and in accordance with industry best practices and what is practicable in the Tōtara Reserve environment.

#### Pest plant control

Contractors are employed annually to address pest plants in and near the reserve. The aim of this investment is to limit the transformative impacts of pest plant populations on the healthy functioning and long-term survival of the reserve ecosystems. Climbers are the highest priority for control, as they are capable of smothering the forest canopy, resulting in the death of plants. See Figure 13 for before and after weed control. After securing the integrity of the canopy, ground cover pest plants should be addressed, as these prevent seedling recruitment, which impacts the natural succession process within the reserve.

With the current level of funding, some of the ground cover species may be able to be controlled within the next six years. The health of the forest should improve steadily as smothering plants are removed and their seedlings controlled.



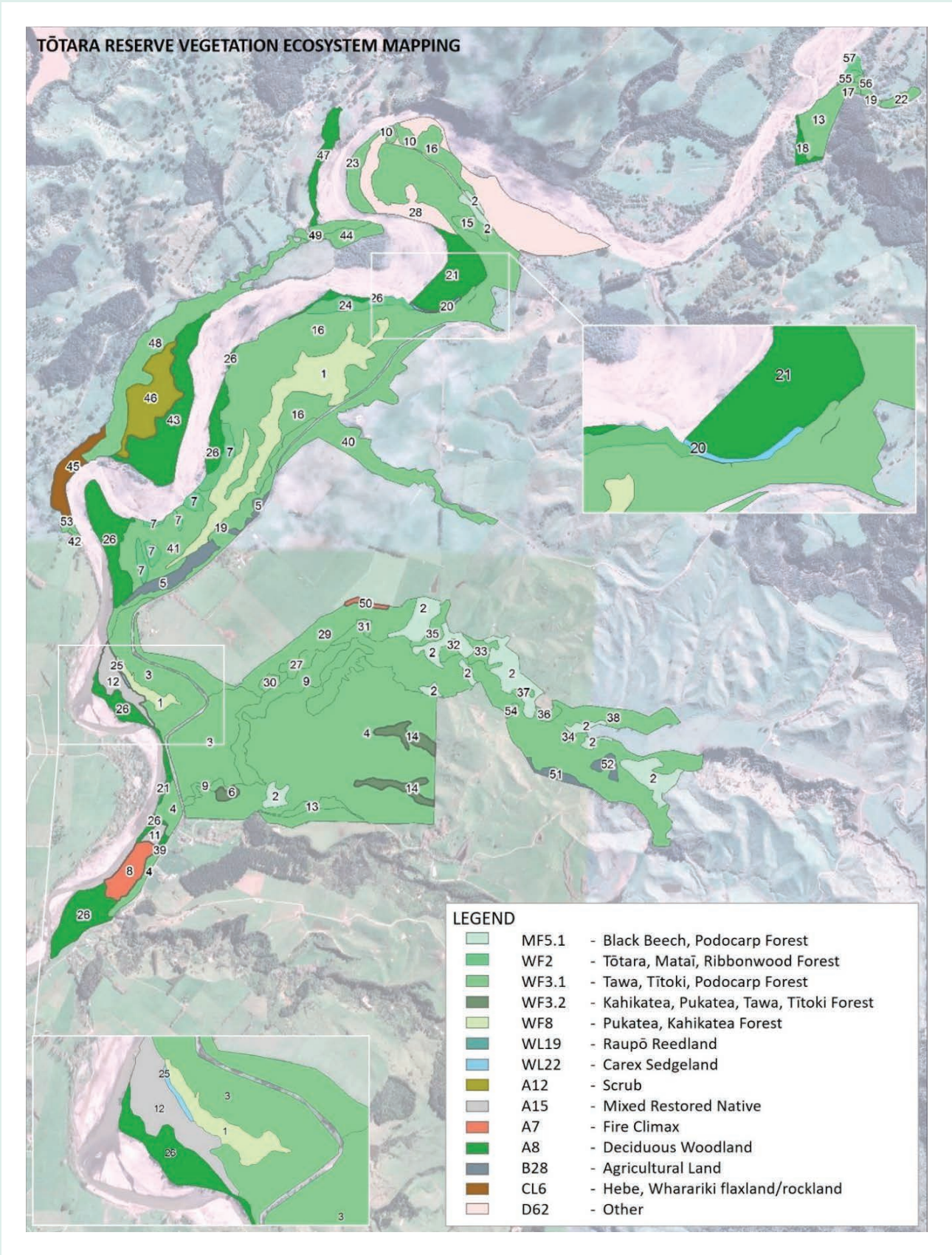


Figure 12: Tōtara Reserve vegetation ecosystem mapping from rapid ecological assessment 2023

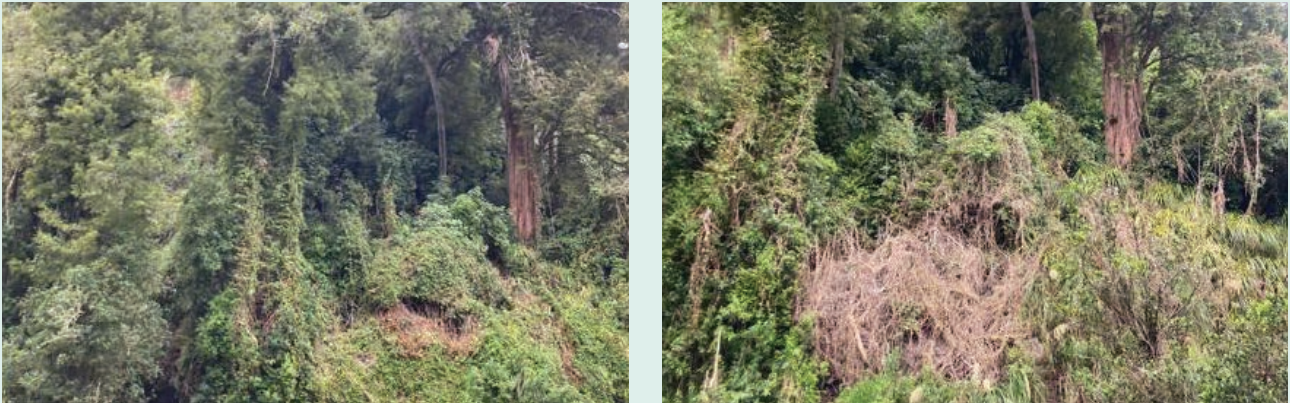


Figure 13: Pest plant control work, before and after photos taken in 2022

### 3.2.3 Policies

#### Policy 9: Ecological Databases

- a. Databases cataloguing species present within Tōtara Reserve will continue to be updated by Council and maintained as part of the ongoing management of the reserve.
- b. Databases that catalogue and identify any significant areas of rare habitats under Schedule F of the One Plan and wilderness areas under Section 47 of the Reserves Act will continue to be updated and maintained.

#### Policy 10: Identification, Protection, Restoration, Enhancement and Management of Indigenous Ecosystems

- a. Indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems within the reserve have been identified, and they will be maintained and enhanced to ensure the long-term ecological sustainability of the reserve.
- b. Existing pest animal and pest plant control plans will continue to be implemented and updated, prioritising the control of major pest animal and pest plant species.
- c. Native revegetation plans for the reserve will take into consideration appropriate species and placement that are consistent with the ecosystem types in the area.

- d. Where appropriate, indigenous plants propagated from sources that support the reserve’s ecosystem resilience will be used in revegetation programmes.
- e. Monitoring to measure the presence, extent and state of indigenous species and ecosystems within, and adjacent to the reserve will be carried out where appropriate and as resources permit.
- f. The reserve will be monitored for the impact of activities on native flora and fauna, such as wandering stock, domestic animals, dumping of garden waste and other uses arising from general activities on or adjacent to the reserve. Appropriate responses to limit the impacts will be carried out.
- g. Emphasis will be placed on the control or eradication of invasive pest plants that have the potential to dominate and transform indigenous ecosystem types in the reserve. These include banana passionfruit (*Passiflora molissima*), wandering willy (*Tradescantia fluminensis*), old man’s beard (*Clematis vitalba*) and other highly invasive species.
- h. Emphasis will be placed on the reduction and control of invasive pest animals that have the potential to dominate and transform indigenous ecosystem types and threaten native fauna in the reserve to at or below target abundance thresholds. These include possums, rats, mustelids, deer and goats, plus any new invasive pest species.



- i.

Council will explore ways of improving the ecological sustainability of the reserve by improving linkages with other forest remnants in the area, promoting pest and weed eradication programmes on adjacent land, and encouraging native plantings on private land and along rivers and waterways.
- j.

Opportunities for targeted native species recovery or reintroduction will be explored, and reintroduction plans developed in conjunction with Iwi and relevant agencies.
- k.

Result monitoring and outcome monitoring will be carried out where appropriate, and as resources permit, to determine if the pest control work being carried out is achieving objectives.
- c.

River management will provide space for the natural movement of the river as much as practicable. These practices are determined by the River Management group.
- d.

The consequences of natural hazards, such as flooding and slips, are accepted with minimal intervention, except to enhance the resilience of hazard recovery, such as pest removal.
- e.

The Tōtara Reserve Flood Risk Management Plan will be maintained, focussing on the safety of people using the facilities in flood-prone areas.
- NOTE: Policies in this management plan are in addition to requirements under the RMA 1991.

Policy 11: Landscape Features

- a.

The natural character and landscape features of Tōtara Reserve will be protected and enhanced.
- b.

Landscape enhancement, the design of new facilities and landscape development may be carried out, provided it is in keeping with the character of the reserve.

Policy 12: Protection and Enhancement of Waterways, Land Stability, River Management and Flood Mitigation

- a.

Modification to native flora and fauna, habitats and landforms by the construction of access routes and easements may be permitted for emergency river management.
- b.

Assessment criteria to guide decision-making on modifying the reserve for emergency river management will be developed by Council in consultation with the Manawātū District Council and the Department of Conservation.

Policy 13: Damage to or Removal of Plant Material and Wildlife

- a.

Unauthorised damage to, or removal of, plant material or wildlife is prohibited.
- b.

Collection of native specimens, including fallen trees, may be authorised for essential management purposes, Iwi cultural purposes or for approved scientific or educational study, which will contribute to the general knowledge available on the reserve (refer Policy 8 Traditional Land Use).
- c.

No felling or clearing of native vegetation will be permitted except with written consent from the Minister of Conservation (Reserves Act 1977). No felling or clearing of native vegetation within the lands classified as Scenic Reserve will be permitted except with written consent from the Minister of Conservation (delegated to the Department of Conservation, Head Office). NOTE: The Minister of Conservation in 2013 provided a written Instrument of Delegation that authorised Horizons Regional Council as the Administering body to give this written consent on his behalf.

3.3.4 Proposed Activities for Forest Health and River Management

**Objective:** To protect, preserve and enhance indigenous biodiversity and ecosystems in recognition of the significant ecological values of Tōtara Reserve.

Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
Pest Animal and Pest Plants				
ACTIVITY: FH 1 10h	Implement an adaptive management approach to deer control with outcome monitoring and reporting	Deer culling is consistently carried out at least 4 times per year. See FH9	Deer culling is consistently carried out at minimum of 4 times per year. See FH9	Tōtara Reserve is a noisy bush, alive with birdsong  The most damaging exotic pest animals and pest plants are reduced and maintained at or below target thresholds to support forest health
ACTIVITY: FH 2 10b, 10h	Maintain existing pest animal abundance targets with current level of control work (2024) and continue to prioritise pest animal control based on risk to ecosystem and vulnerable native species  High-impact pest animals include deer, cats, mustelids, rats and possums	Comprehensive bait station and trap network is in place, maintained and increased	Bait station and trap infrastructure is maintained  Pest animal abundances are below thresholds identified in planning documents, including <2% RTCI for possums and <10% TTI for rats	Forest canopy is intact with no detrimental impact from transformer weed species. Active and stable seedling recruitment evident in forest, not detrimentally impacted by invasive ground cover species
ACTIVITY: FH 3 10g	Maintain current pest plant control levels (2024) and continue to prioritise pest plant control based on risk to ecosystem. High-risk plants include banana passionfruit, cathedral bells and old man’s beard. Secondary to this are ground cover plants such as African clubmoss, blackberry and tradescantia	No priority 1 species impact on forest canopy by end of 3 yearly pest plant control cycle	Maintain seedbank control work in all control areas post initial control. Start initial work on priority 2 species. Resurvey reserve	
Monitoring				
ACTIVITY: FH 4 9a, 10e	Plan for monitoring indigenous species and updating species database every five years	Up-to-date species database and reporting in place	Species database is updated and reported on in 2028 and 2032	Up-to-date species database and reporting available to inform preservation and protection activity
ACTIVITY: FH 5 10e	Establish a monitoring programme for the species most vulnerable to myrtle rust, such as ramarama. Begin monitoring programme for any new pest plant threats. Adhere to MPI process and any other pest plant threat responses.	Vulnerable species pathogen threats are known  Monitoring schedule is in place	Monitoring programme scheduled, carried out, and responded to per national guidance	Vulnerable species are protected



Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
<b>ACTIVITY: FH 6</b> 10e	Continue to conduct annual bird counts	Bird population data is collected, analysed, and reported on	10 years of bird count data available and shows no loss of bird species	Bird song is loud, bird numbers are increasing
<b>ACTIVITY: FH 7</b> 10e	Conduct additional surveys to increase understanding of species present. This could include bat and lizard monitoring	Target species survey data is collected and reported on	Selected non-bird species populations are monitored and show growth	There is abundant evidence of non-bird species such as bats, lizards and snails
<b>ACTIVITY: FH 8</b> 10e	Conduct a <i>Powelliphanta</i> spp. survey to determine the population's location and size. Following the survey, develop and implement an appropriate management plan	Powelliphanta populations are known	Powelliphanta populations are protected and increasing	Powelliphanta populations are abundant
<b>ACTIVITY: FH 9</b> 10e	Implement vegetation monitoring and repeat periodically to track change over time. Methodology used will be national best practice appropriate for the size and variability of Tōtara Reserve.	Regeneration of deer-palatable plant species	Changes in forest composition can be identified and tracked over time in response to pest control	State of forest regeneration over time is evident
<b>ACTIVITY: FH 10</b> 10i	Produce a Fauna management plan	Fauna management plan produced	Fauna management plan actions are integrated into species-specific management programmes	Populations of endemic species are well protected and enhanced
Planting				
<b>ACTIVITY: FH 11</b> 10c, 10d, 10i	Plant forest emergent species such as tōtara and northern rātā in the appropriate ecosystem to assist forest recovery	Emergent tree species are planted to accelerate recovery of the forest	Emergent tree species have established and are thriving	Emergent tree species are abundant
<b>ACTIVITY: FH 12</b> 10c, 10d, 11	Infill planting in open areas and reserve borders – including the wetland area in the paddock along Pohangina Valley East Road – to reduce flood flow impacts and to assist reduction of weed invasion	Planting is carried out and maintained	Proposed planting areas are scheduled, planted, and maintained. Possibly supported by an onsite propagation nursery (see 3.6.4)	All edges have dense native flora, creating resistance to pest-plant incursions and slowing flood flows
<b>REF: FH 13</b> 4, 10e, 10h, 11	Explore linkages with other forest remnants in the area, promoting pest and weed eradication programmes on adjacent land and encouraging native plantings on private land and along rivers and waterways	Potential land for linkages is identified and planning for potential planting established	Planting programme established with support of the landowners	Abundant native growth links Tōtara Reserve to all other nearby reserves

Table 2: Forest Health Proposed Activities





## 3.4 Tracks and Trails

Tōtara Reserve has an established number of popular walking tracks, ranging from gentle short walks amongst the giant tōtara trees on the Nature Trail around the campground to the largely flat two-hour riverside Pettifar Track loop, through to the more challenging three-hour Fern Walk (Figure 14) that offers wide views across the river valley.

The tracks encompass a variety of quite distinct vegetation, ecology and landscape outlooks. Maintaining these biodiverse landscapes and communicating their key points of interest and variation will encourage people to further explore the range of experiences on offer within the wider regional park.

### 3.4.1 Objective

To improve and maintain accessible tracks that invite people of all abilities to engage with the diverse environments of the reserve while minimising environmental impacts.



Figure 14: Fern walk

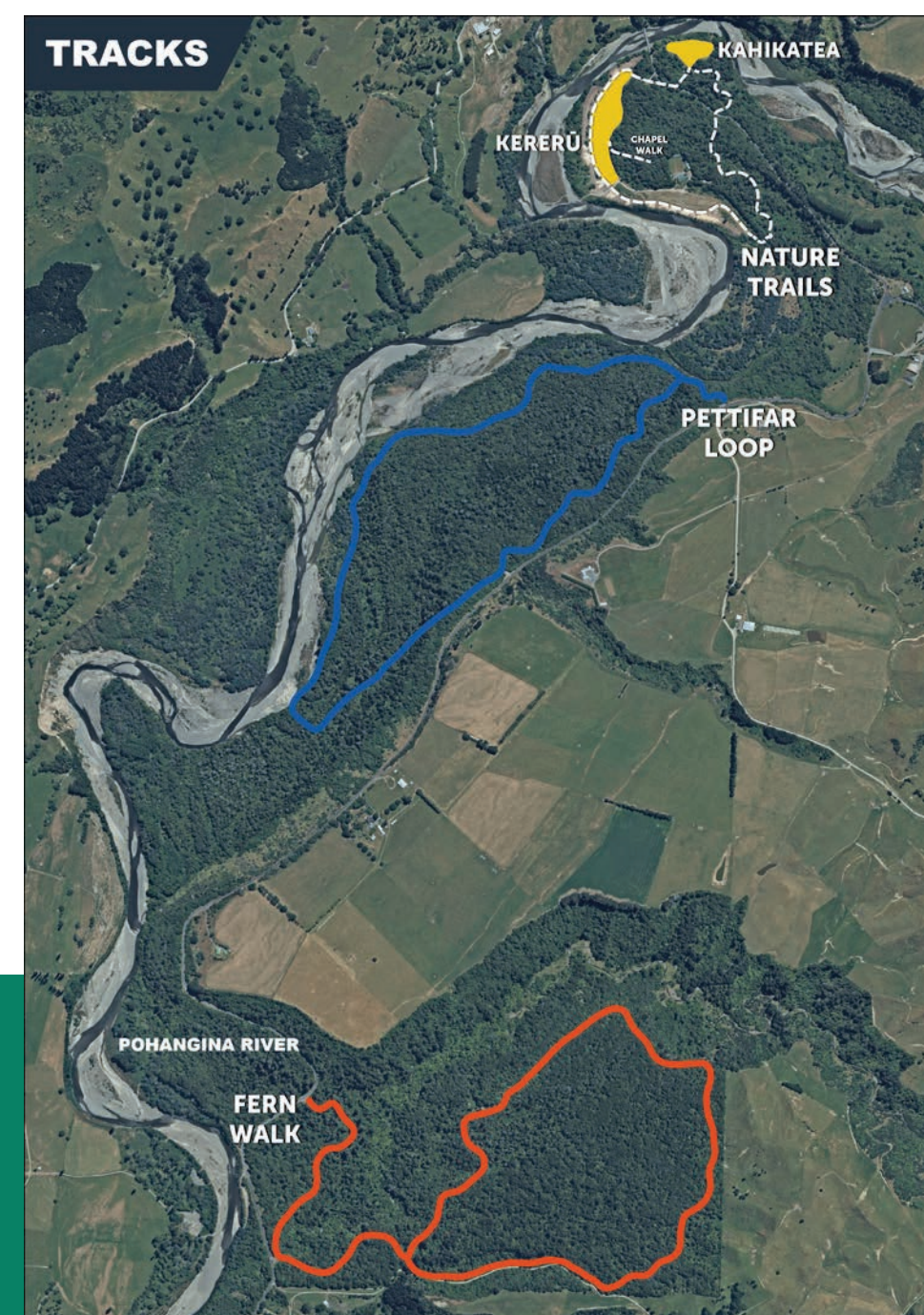


Figure 15: Track network



## 3.4.2 Current Situation (2024)

Currently the walking tracks in Tōtara Reserve are three separate routes (Figure 15):

- Nature Trail
- Pettifar Track
- Fern Walk

A fourth popular route, the Gilchrist Track, was closed after Cyclone Gabrielle in February 2023. A large section of riverbank was completely washed out, taking with it a significant section of the track loop. The surrounding forest experienced significant damage from silt build-up after flood waters came through the area. Due to the extensive damage, predicted future flood risk and the significant investment required to ensure public safety, the Tōtara Reserve Advisory Group passed a resolution to permanently close the Gilchrist Track in December 2023. River modelling of flood impacts and flood mitigation options were assessed in 2024 as described in S3.3.

The tracks and trails are maintained, and any improvements made, in accordance with the Department of Conservation guidelines<sup>6</sup>.

The Pettifar Track and the Fern Walk have been recently improved with orange triangles to clearly mark the trail route, and a number of track rafts (light timber walkways see Figure 16) installed along the Fern Walk to protect wet areas and encourage walkers to stay on the track. More rafts are planned for wet areas along the Pettifar Track.

The Pettifar Track loop includes a section that utilises the Old Coach Road, the original horse and cart track which ran along the Pohangina Valley. The gradient of this section is gentle, but the surface has degraded over time and is not currently suitable for wheelchairs and prams. This section could potentially be re-graded to provide greater accessibility but would need to be costed.



Figure 16: Track rafts at the Fern Walk.

The Nature Trail around the campgrounds is the most used track. The trail's condition is regularly checked. The trail was a series of short tracks through the forest. This main circuit, and the short route from the playground to the bush chapel, are maintained to enable the widest demographic of users. There are also many side routes that have been established over time. These are not marked and are maintained less frequently, except for the links to Camp Rangī Woods that have signage to indicate their use for camp guests only.

The feasibility of developing link tracks between the three main track loops was begun in 2024, with the aspiration to one day create a complete network.



## 3.4.3 Policies

### Policy 14: Activities – General

- Council will promote and encourage use and enjoyment of the reserve through a range of informal, low-impact recreation, leisure and educational activities such as picnicking, walking, observing nature and camping.
- More active pursuits, such as mountain biking, will not be considered.

**Explanation:** Forest health integrity is the primary activity at Tōtara Reserve, as described in Section 3.3

### Policy 15: Access – Pedestrian and Vehicle

- The public is generally permitted unrestricted foot access to the reserve unless there is a notice to say otherwise for reasons such as pest control, weed spraying operations, track damage and special events. Restrictions will be in accordance with the Reserves Act 1977, and managed by Council or other agencies as required under the Act.
- Vehicle access to campgrounds may be prohibited between sunset and 8.00 am or other times as required for reserve security and visitor safety. This will be controlled by gates.
- Vehicle access within the reserve is restricted to formed roads and parking areas and on designated unformed roads.
- Vehicle access will be controlled to avoid impacting natural and cultural features, sensitive habitats and recreation activities.
- Vehicle access points and articulation within the reserve will be clearly defined and conveniently located.
- Trail bikes and other motorised off-road vehicles will be restricted to formed roads, vehicle access routes and designated areas.
- Motorised scooters for the elderly and disabled may be permitted on designated paths.
- Special access arrangements may be made for events. Events involving the use of vehicles (motorised or otherwise) may be considered on application. Approval will be subject to an assessment of impacts and effects and the ability to mitigate any adverse effects.

<sup>6</sup> Department of Conservation. Track Construction and Maintenance Guidelines, July 2008. Guidelines VC1672.



Policy 16: Providing for Special Needs

- a. As far as possible, access to recreational opportunities and facilities will be provided in the reserve for people with disabilities and other members of the community with special needs.

Policy 17: Dogs and Horses

- a. Dogs are prohibited in all areas of Tōtara Reserve under the Manawatū District Council Dog Control Bylaw
- b. Horses are prohibited in the reserve except for special events. Consent must be obtained from Council.

Policy 18: Tracks, Paths and Boardwalks

- a. Existing tracks will be maintained according to the level of use and desired experience for track users in general alignment with the Department of Conservation guidelines<sup>7</sup>.
- b. Tracks, paths, boardwalks, lookouts and handrails will be maintained and their condition regularly assessed as part of the asset management programme.
- c. The design and construction of new tracks, paths and boardwalks will take into account the sensitivity of the environment, likely impacts from levels of use and people with special needs. They will be appropriate to the experience the visitor is seeking.
- d. Entrances to tracks will be clearly defined from carparks and main access points, e.g. Fern Walk.
- e. Tracks will be upgraded where damage is being caused to the environment from ill-defined track entrances and routes.



3.4.4 Proposed Activities for Tracks and Trails

**Objective:** To improve and maintain accessible tracks that invite people of all abilities to engage with the diverse environments of the reserve while minimising environmental impacts.

Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
ACTIVITY: TT 1 POLICY: 14, 16, 18	Maintain tracks to Department of Conservation guidelines. Pettifar Track and Fern Walk are designated "Easy: walking track" The Nature Trail will be a mix of "Easiest: Easy access short walk" and "Easiest: Short Walk"	Track check report is done every year	Annual track report identifies that the tracks are well maintained to support the user groups they are intended for	Interconnected track network is created and maintained following Department of Conservation guidelines, catering for all abilities. Forest impacts are minimised and forest experience is optimised with environmental and cultural education signage
ACTIVITY: TT 2 POLICY: 14, 18c	Plan a multi-year tracks work programme that includes any new public routes	Schedule of track works has been developed	As per years 1-3	
ACTIVITY: TT 3 POLICY: 14, 18c	Investigate feasibility of a fully interconnected track network, with options for all levels of fitness and abilities, including a stairwell and track that connects the Nature Trail and Pettifar Track	Work to create new routes to connect up existing tracks has begun	Link tracks are established between the three main routes	
ACTIVITY: TT 4 POLICY: 14	Maintain up-to-date website information on track conditions	Website track condition information is current	Track condition advice is referenced by the public	
ACTIVITY: TT 5 POLICY: 14	Develop a downloadable track map for the regional park	Downloadable track map is available	As per years 1-3	
ACTIVITY: TT 6 POLICY: 14, 43	Evaluate and optimise track signage to include environmental and cultural education	Signage evaluation is carried out and plan prepared	Signage is minimised and optimised to deliver environmental and cultural education	

<sup>7</sup> Department of Conservation. Track Construction and Maintenance Guidelines, July 2008. Guidelines VC1672.



Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
<div>ACTIVITY: TT 7</div> <div>POLICY: 10e</div>	Explore value of installing boot-washing stations at all entrance/exit points	Boot wash is installed - or decision made not to	Boot washes installed at each track entrance - or decision made not to	Interconnected track network is created and maintained following Department of Conservation guidelines, catering for all abilities. Forest impacts are minimised and forest experience is optimised with environmental and cultural education signage
<div>ACTIVITY: TT 8</div> <div>POLICY: 43h</div>	Explore value of installing track counters	Track counter costing done	Track counters installed - or decision made not to	
<div>ACTIVITY: TT 9</div> <div>POLICY: 14, 27</div>	Investigate feasibility of installing toilets (vault, composting or similar) at the Pettifar Track carpark, and other appropriate locations	Additional toilets are costed	If affordable - additional toilets installed and maintained if affordable	
Pettifar Track				
<div>ACTIVITY: TT 10</div> <div>POLICY: 14, 15, 16</div>	Consider re-grading the Old Coach Road section of track to be accessible by wheelchairs, families and prams	Re-grading of this section of track surface is costed	If affordable - old Coach Road section is well graded and maintained	
<div>ACTIVITY: TT 11</div> <div>POLICY: 14</div>	Investigate value of installing bridges over stream crossings	Bridge installation cost/benefit analysis done	If advisable and affordable - Bridges installed	
Fern Walk				
<div>ACTIVITY: TT 12</div> <div>POLICY: 14, 34</div>	Create viewpoints and seating to enjoy the views	Defined viewpoints and seating are planned	Defined viewpoints and seating are established	

Table 3: Tracks and Trails Proposed Activities





## 3.5 Campground and Visitor Facilities

Tōtara Reserve has been hosting summer campers for almost 100 years; first at the YMCA Pohangina Boys Camp (now Camp Rangi Woods) then at Kahikatea Campground and more recently at Kererū Campground (Figure 17).

Camping in the reserve is a much-loved activity that has been enjoyed by generations of families and friends every summer, and there is significant demand to see this continue.

The campgrounds are located beside the Pohangina River, and the river's popular swimming spots have been the main focal point for a large number of people visiting the reserve. These swimming spots provide opportunities to engage with the public about the wider values of the reserve, particularly its ecological and cultural significance.

These facilities have been subject to multiple flooding events due to the highly variable nature of the river. Keeping people safe and maintaining visitor assets and facilities through these environmental challenges have been important facets of reserve management. Flood mitigation options were assessed in 2024 as described in S3.3.

### 3.5.1 Objective

Enhance visitor experience by providing quality, hygienic visitor facilities that promote enjoyment of the reserve's natural features while encouraging respect and care for its ecological values.



Figure 17: Kereru campground and the Pohangina River taken 2024

### 3.5.2 Current Situation (2024)

The two campgrounds, Kererū and Kahikatea, have provided a good standard of service over many years. The campgrounds are maintained for Council by a contractor who manages the visitors, the infrastructure (Figure 18a), and mowing and spraying. Water is treated (Figure 18b) to drinking standard and monitored during the camping season.

Cyclone Gabrielle, in February 2023, had significant impacts on Kahikatea Campground, and considerable investment was needed to reinstate it to a useable standard. The Churchill Bridge was lost, and a new bridge build is planned for 2025.

Kahikatea Campground is located on a natural floodplain. One outcome of river modelling and mitigation option assessments as introduced in S3.3 was the identification of kahikatea campground as a critical hydrological buffer when the river is in flood. To better enable this buffer function for floods, it is proposed that this campground be disestablished, most likely following the next significant flooding event, with trees planted in its place to expand the native forest. This change would take place over an extended period of time, which is yet to be determined. Any retreat from Kahikatea needs to consider the existing aging infrastructure possibly reaching end of life prior to a large flood event.



Figure 18a (top) Campground BBQs, Figure 18b (middle) water treatment plant, Figure 18c (bottom) swim safety sign



In response to the vulnerability of Kahikatea Campground, a preliminary feasibility study was carried out on the paddock area opposite Highland Homes to determine the practicality of an alternate visitor area, with the potential for camping, outside the flood zone. The initial concept indicates a wide range of possibilities for the site that could be investigated for development over the long term.

Day visitor areas are proposed to draw people away from the camping areas to safer swim spots, to encourage greater exploration of Tōtara Reserve and reduce people numbers and vehicles at the campgrounds. A general review of day visitor areas throughout Tōtara Reserve is underway, considering if existing spaces meet current needs or could be improved and what other areas could be made available to broaden the experience for day visitors to the reserve. The entrance to Kererū Campground is the first area being considered. Additional sites, including the

grazed paddocks opposite Highland Homes and the riverside south of the Fern Walk, could also be investigated. The intention could be to offer parking and picnic areas, with potential for further improvements if they proved popular.

Ensuring safety for all visitors to the reserve is a priority. Road safety and river safety specialists were engaged (2023) to evaluate the reserve and propose improvements. The outcomes included:

- Signage was installed to make both pedestrians and drivers more aware of each other;
- Vegetation around the playground was reduced to improve visibility of children crossing the internal road;
- National standard river safety signage (Figure 18c) and rescue throw bags were added to locations along the river to optimise engagement with the sign information.

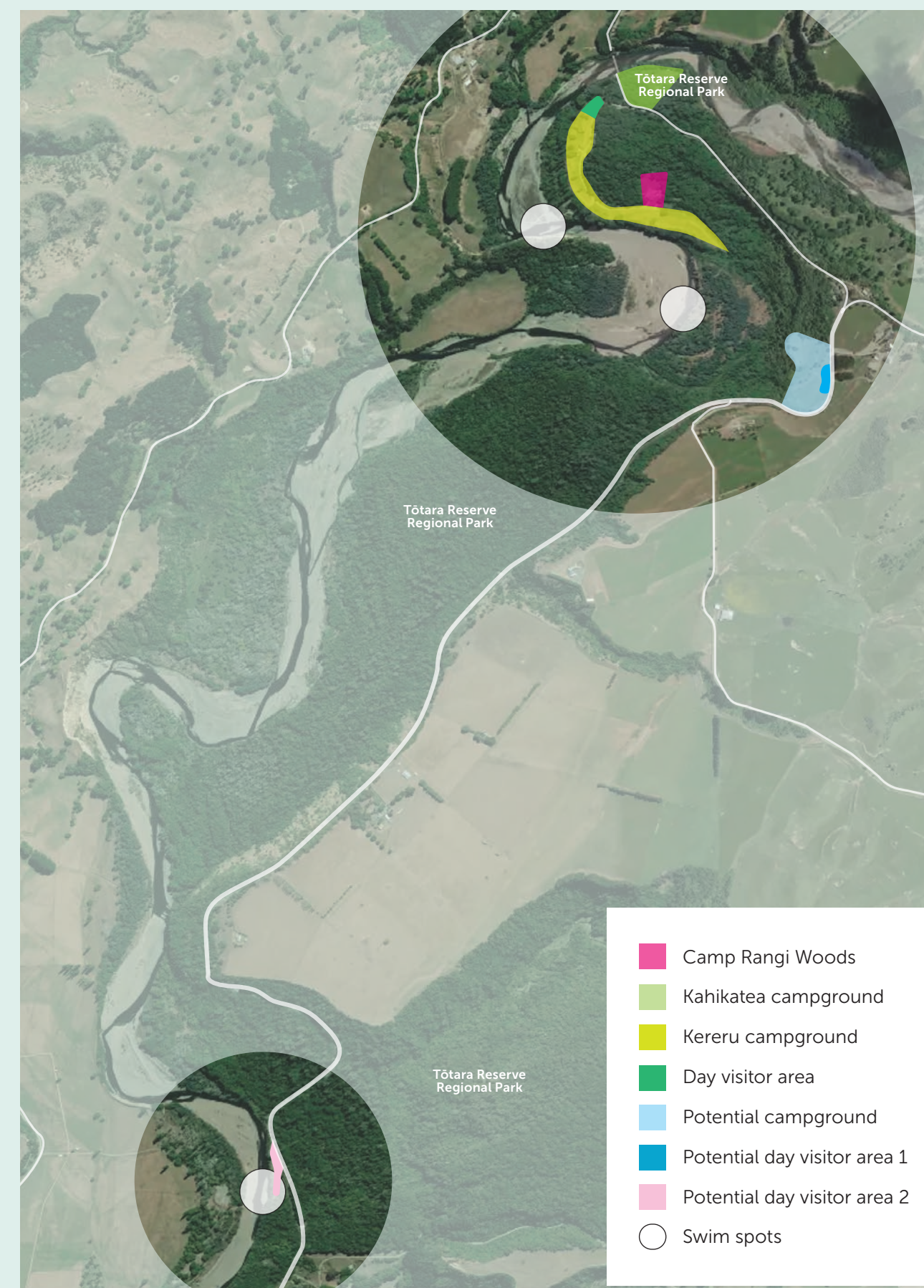


Figure 19: Tōtara Reserve campgrounds and visitor areas



3.5.3 Policies

The campground and visitor facilities policies have been arranged into five sections as shown in the following table:

Campground Section	Policy	Category Subsection
Safety	19	Visitor safety
	20	Civil defence / emergency management
	21	Hazards
	22	Firearms and hunting
	23	Fire
	24	Sale of liquor
Camping	25	Camping, campervans and motorhomes
	26	Fees and charges
Health	27	Toilets and showers
	28	Sanitary
	29	Water
	30	Rubbish
Facilities and maintenance	31	Caretaker
	32	Maintenance of facilities, services and amenities
	33	Facilities, buildings and structures
	34	Reserve furniture
	35	Design
	36	Road and carpark development
	37	Utilities
	38	Pesticides and hazardous chemicals
	39	Recreation monitoring

Safety

Policy 19: Visitor Safety

- a. Council will encourage wider use of the reserve by school groups, educational institutions and walking groups to raise the profile of the reserve. It will also encourage more community participation in weed control and planting programmes. This will maintain a public presence on the reserve.
- b. Council will continue to assist and cooperate with authorities that have responsibilities for public health and safety.
- c. A visitor health and safety plan will be developed, which will identify situations that may require access for emergency services. Event organisers and other groups, such as sports groups, will be made aware of their responsibilities for maintaining access.

Policy 20: Civil Defence

- a. Council will continue to assist and cooperate with search and rescue organisations and other authorities that have responsibilities for public health and safety.
- b. Council will cooperate in using reserve areas for civil defence purposes which may be required under some emergency situations.

Policy 21: Hazards

- a. Council will identify natural and other hazards affecting Tōtara Reserve and take appropriate precautions to minimise risks by cordoning off hazardous areas and placing notices in appropriate places.

- b. Council will maintain a flood warning system, a flood evacuation plan, and provide information to reserve visitors about threats and hazards of flooding.
- c. A visitor health and safety plan will be developed. This plan will include identifying the types of conditions under which potential hazards are likely to arise and the checks required to prevent and/or manage such conditions. Development of preventative interventions and appropriate interpretation signs and warnings will be incorporated into reserve infrastructure along with information for visitors.

Policy 22: Firearms and Hunting

- a. Hunting will be prohibited in Tōtara Reserve in accordance with the Reserves Act.
- b. The use of firearms in the reserve will be prohibited, with the exception of pest control operations authorised by Council and conducted by approved staff and contractors.

Policy 23: Fire

- a. Open fires will only be permitted in purpose-built fireplaces on the reserve. Any other fires will be prohibited in the reserve.
- b. Portable gas barbecues will be permitted at any time.

Policy 24: Sale of Liquor

- a. There is to be no sale of liquor on the reserve.



## Camping

### Policy 25: Camping, Campervans and Motorhomes

- a. Camping, campervans and motorhomes will be permitted at the formal campground for a maximum of three weeks.
- b. Limited facility camping, campervans and motorhomes will be allowed in designated areas to accommodate overflow from the campground for a maximum of two weeks.
- c. Campers, campervans and motorhomes are prohibited from providing their own latrines and long drops. The only toilets that can be used are those fixed within a vehicle, chemical toilets or campground toilets. Chemical toilets must be emptied into local waste disposal points.
- d. Council will provide information on the nearest point for emptying chemical toilets.
- e. Council will work with the New Zealand Motor Caravan Association to develop waste disposal points and services for campervans.
- f. Caravans, tents, campervans and motorhomes shall remain clear of any tree, shrub or protection screen around seedlings.
- g. Charges for camping will be as set out in the Council Annual Plan.
- h. During periods of heavy use, camping, campervan and motorhome numbers are restricted to 500 campers.

### Policy 26: Fees and Charges

- a. Entry to the reserve is free.
- b. Charges **will** be made for the following (except for Camp Rangi Woods which is charged according to the lease agreement):
  - Use of reserve and facilities for regular or one-off events
  - Casual hire
  - Camping, campervans and motorhomes
  - Commercial activities, recreation operations and concessions
  - Rights of way, other easements, utilities and communication stations.
- c. Charges **may** be made for the following (except for Camp Rangi Woods, which is charged according to the lease agreement):
  - Scientific research programmes carried out for commercial purposes
  - Use of the reserve for community events
  - Bookings for club and group activities
  - Weddings and other private events
- d. Council will set its charges for use of the reserve and its facilities for events, functions and other activities through the Annual Plan process, where issues of fairness and equity are given full consideration.
- e. The charges for campers will adhere to Council Revenue and Finance Policy.

## Health

### Policy 27: Toilets and Showers

- a. If new toilets are installed, they will be built and operated to recognise environmental standards, provide for disabled access where appropriate and be visitor-friendly.
- b. Toilets will be assessed against design guidelines and current building and sewage treatment practices as part of a condition assessment for asset management.
- c. Toilets will be placed sensitively to ensure they sit comfortably within the reserve environment, are noticeable, and easily accessible.
- d. The organisers of large group events will supply portable toilet facilities where these are required to supplement permanent toilet facilities.

### Policy 28: Sanitary

- a. Appropriate sewage and grey-water disposal will be provided at Tōtara Reserve with toilet and water facilities. They will be designed and sited to protect waterways and fisheries.
- b. Toilets will be maintained to ensure there is no leachate into water tables.
- c. Toilet facilities will be provided in areas of the reserve where there is concentrated use and hygiene is likely to be an issue.

### Policy 29: Water

- a. Council will adhere to the Tōtara Reserve Water Safety Plan (TRWSP) that has been prepared to inform, manage and minimise the risk to public health associated with the Tōtara Reserve water supply.
- b. The TRWSP will be kept up to date in accordance with the Water Services (Drinking Water Standards for New Zealand) Regulations 2022 (DWSNZ), the Drinking Water Quality Assurance Rules 2022 and the Taumata Arowai Guidance on Drinking Water Safety Planning.
- c. The TRWSP will adhere to compliance criteria set out in Chapter 10 of the DWSNZ.
- d. Management of the water supply will be adjusted to align with new legislature requirements as they become operative.

### Policy 30: Rubbish

- a. A general “take home” policy for rubbish will be adopted.
- b. Rubbish removal for events and organised activities will be the responsibility of the event organisers.
- c. Litter will be monitored and responded to accordingly.
- d. A limited rubbish removal programme will be provided for in the campground.



Facilities and Maintenance

Policy 31: Caretaker

- a. The role of the caretaker will be regularly reviewed to establish appropriate levels of service and consider the best way of delivering caretaker services.  
  
**Explanation:** Currently, this is carried out on a three-yearly basis using a public tender for an external contractor.

Policy 32: Maintenance of Facilities, Services and Amenity

- a. Tōtara Reserve will be given high priority by Council in its maintenance programme in recognition of its regional significance.
- b. The reserve asset renewal schedule will be maintained to keep an update of the reserve’s hard and soft assets.

Policy 33: Facilities, Buildings and Structures

- a. Managed retreat of Kahikatea Campground facilities will be undertaken to establish a buffer area for flood waters. Managed retreat will be carried out in a stepwise approach to allow time for users to become familiar with the changes unless flood damage forces a faster retreat. A retreat plan will include a planting schedule to re-wild Kahikatea campground per policy 10c.
- b. Alternative campground facilities to accommodate the loss of the camping area will be investigated and implemented as practicable.
- c. Water source and the water treatment plant will be maintained at Kahikatea Campground and protected as much as practicable.
- d. The design of new buildings and facilities will reflect the reserve’s natural character and setting and will be appropriate to its classification, primary use and location.

- e. Development of facilities will take into account both the current and projected levels of use and visitor needs to ensure facilities are developed appropriately.
- f. Facilities, tracks and trails will be reviewed to identify where provision can be made for people with special needs.
- g. Development and landscape plans will be required for new facilities, which will include an assessment of the effects on the reserve’s environment and its use.
- h. A development plan will be established for any new areas added to Tōtara Reserve prior to any construction work or planting.
- i. A lease agreement will be required for any reserve building used solely by another party.
- j. Maintenance requirements for new facilities that are owned and operated by Council will be incorporated into the reserve’s asset management programme.

Policy 34: Reserve Furniture

- a. Reserve furniture design will be functional and visually appropriate to the natural reserve character.
- b. Existing furniture, e.g. seating, picnic tables, shelters, signs and information boards will be upgraded as necessary and as resources allow.
- c. Fences and barriers may be erected where appropriate for the control and management of the reserve. The design will be sensitive to the natural character of the reserve.
- d. The design of new facilities and upgrade of existing facilities will give consideration to the requirements of people with special needs.

Policy 35: Design

- a. Design guidelines will be prepared in consultation with tangata whenua for new buildings, facilities and structures, as well as for signs, fences and barriers. They will include form, location, colour, visual and aesthetic impact, and impact on natural and cultural features, recreational activities and disturbance to wildlife.

Policy 36: Road and Carpark Development

- a. Roads and carparks will be defined to assist traffic flow and articulate appropriate use of the different activity areas.
- b. The location and construction of carriageways, carparks and control barriers will be designed to ensure harmony with the landscape and ecologically sensitive areas.

Policy 37: Utilities (Rights of Way, Other Easements and Communication Stations)

- a. The placement of utilities and the establishment of rights of way, other easements or communication stations will generally not be allowed within the reserve unless exceptional circumstances<sup>8</sup> apply.
- b. With the prior consent of the administering body, network utility operators with existing works on the reserve will be permitted conditional access to the reserve to inspect, maintain, operate or carry out minor upgrade or replacement of these works subject to the provisions of the relevant empowering Acts and Regulations<sup>9</sup>.
- c. The administering body will comply with national standards regulating safe separation distances between reserve activities and development and network utilities.

<sup>8</sup> “Exceptional circumstances” allows for the placement of a utility on a reserve to be considered (rights of way, other easements or communication stations) when the reserve affords the only site available, all other sites or options are proven to be unsuitable and the utility is an essential service for wider community benefit. Impacts will be taken into account, and the normal notification and consultation process will apply prior to making a decision for approval or otherwise. This does not preclude requirements under both the RMA resource consent process and delegated authority required by the Minister of Conservation. Section 48, 48A and 59A of the Reserves Act 1977 set out the types of rights of way, other easements or communication stations permitted on reserves and the processes required to be undertaken including the consent of the Minister.

<sup>9</sup> Empowering Acts and Regulations are the Electricity Act 1992, the Electricity (Safety) Regulations 2010, NZECP 34:2001 New Zealand Electrical Code of Practice for Electrical Safe Distances, and Electricity Engineers Association Safety Manual – Electricity Industry.

Policy 38: Pesticides and Hazardous Chemicals

- a. Council will provide for the safe use of pesticides and other chemicals used in its management operations. e.g. pest control.
- b. Council will minimise the use of hazardous chemicals in Tōtara Reserve.
- c. Where hazardous chemicals are to be used, consideration shall be given to the times and methods of application to ensure minimum risks to visitors to the reserve and neighbouring properties.
- d. Adequate warning signs and public notification shall be given prior to and during the period in which the hazardous chemicals are used.
- e. Hazardous chemicals will be applied in accordance with the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996.

Policy 39: Recreation Monitoring

- a. The impact from recreation activities will be monitored to ensure there are no adverse effects on the reserve.
- b. Council may modify or stop activities that cause environmental degradation or nuisance, including nuisance to adjoining properties.
- c. Council may appoint rangers to assist enjoyment of recreational activities and monitor any impacts on the reserve (Section 8(9) of the Reserves Act 1977). If needed, the rangers will also have the power to implement policies and by-laws and issue offence notices, as set out in Sections 93-105 of the Reserves Act 1977.
- d. A large central open space for games and visual separation between the various user groups will be maintained.



3.5.4 Proposed Activity for Campground and Visitor Facilities

**Objective:** Enhance visitor experience by providing quality, hygienic visitor facilities that promote enjoyment of the reserve’s natural features, while encouraging respect and care for its ecological values.

Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
<b>ACTIVITY: CV1</b> <b>POLICY: 19-23</b>	Develop a visitor health and safety plan	Health and safety plan developed	Plan regularly reviewed	Quality, hygienic visitor facilities promote enjoyment, respect and care for Tōtara Reserve
<b>ACTIVITY: CV2</b>	Consider the need for a certificate of exemption from the Camping Ground Regulations 1985 Schedule 1 standards	Health and safety plan developed	Obtain Certificate of exception - if considered appropriate and approved by Council	
<b>ACTIVITY: CV3</b> <b>POLICY: 20,21</b>	Develop a flood evacuation plan	Flood evacuation plan developed	Plan regularly reviewed	
<b>ACTIVITY: CV4</b> <b>POLICY: 32b, 33j</b>	Maintain a reserve asset renewal system	Assets renewed in a timely, cost appropriate manner	-	
<b>ACTIVITY: CV5</b> <b>POLICY: 25, 26b, 26</b>	-	-	Consider self-contained certification for campground area to allow for bookable year-round camping outside the gates	
Kahikatea Campground				
<b>ACTIVITY: CV6</b> <b>POLICY: 33a</b>	Retreat from campground following a significant flood event.	No new infrastructure built	Disestablishment of camping facilities	Quality, hygienic visitor facilities promote enjoyment, respect and care for Tōtara Reserve
<b>ACTIVITY: CV7</b> <b>POLICY: 10a, 10c, 10d</b>	-	-	Increase indigenous forest area, refer to Planting subsection in Section 3.2.4	

Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
<b>Potential New Campground</b>				
<b>ACTIVITY: CV8</b> <b>POLICY: 33b, 33d, 33g, 33h, 35-37</b>	Conduct detailed feasibility investigation of the former deer paddock to assess suitability and affordability of future public access and enjoyment, including a campground site and walking track link hub	If approved by Council - Feasibility of access and development determined, costed detailed plans, long-term development plan created	If accepted, develop area in a prioritised manner relative to financial and social appetite for their installation	Quality, hygienic visitor facilities promote enjoyment, respect and care for Tōtara Reserve
<b>Day Visitor Areas</b>				
<b>ACTIVITY: CV9</b> <b>POLICY: 33h, 35-37, 40, 41</b>	Develop day visitor areas with parking and picnicking	Easy parking and grassed areas for picnicking developed	If areas are well used, install toilet facilities and potential shelters to maintain health and safety	Quality, hygienic visitor facilities promote enjoyment, respect and care for Tōtara Reserve

Table 4: Campground and Visitor Facilities Proposed Activities





## 3.6 Community Engagement

Tōtara Reserve supports a diverse range of visitors. These include Iwi members who have a historical relationship with the area; a dedicated community of campground visitors; day visitors, including the local Pohangina community, who use the walking tracks, picnic and swim in the river; and users of Camp Rangī Woods who have used this facility since 1925. Demand for additional and broader range of engagement opportunities may require increased or expanded facilities.

### 3.6.1 Objective

To provide a mix of complementary recreational and educational opportunities that are compatible with the conservation objectives of this management plan.

To actively promote the reserve as a local, district and regional resource for recreational and educational purposes.



Figure 20 (above): Educational forest walk

Figure 21 (right): Tōtara Reserve Open Day



### 3.6.2 Current Situation (2024)

Engagement with different target audiences is needed to manage the reserve and increase its use. Some of the activities that have already been implemented to support public use of the reserve are:

- An advisory group was established in 2013 when Council took over the reserve management. This allowed for inclusion of representatives from the Pohangina community and the campground users to help shape future opportunities for the reserve.
- The campground and its facilities attract many people to stay at the reserve during the summer camping season.
- A dedicated Tōtara Reserve webpage and Facebook page are kept up to date with regular content.
- Interactive educational events are held, including guided forest walks (Figure 20) and support for school group visits (Figure 22).
- Reserve signage has been updated, providing information on a range of themes, including safety messaging for swimming and road safety, wayfinding directing users to swim spots and tracks, camping instructions, and information on native flora and fauna that can be found around the reserve.
- The inaugural Tōtara Reserve open day (Figure 21) was held in 2023 at the beginning of the campground season in October. The second open day in 2024 successfully improved on this, with more than 350 people attending. The open day is an opportunity to promote the reserve and inform users of the activities Council carries out to support forest health. The provision of free transport from Palmerston North allowed a number of first-time visitors to Tōtara Reserve to attend.
- In 2024, an initial engagement survey was conducted to inform this management plan.



New entranceway structures at the start of the Fern Walk and the Pettifar Track have been designed to increase the visibility of the tracks and display information. Signage will be developed that introduces cultural, educational, and wayfinding information for each track.



Figure 22: Education days about the river and the forest

### 3.6.3 Policies

#### Policy 40: Public Participation

- a. Council will encourage public participation in the planning, management and development of Tōtara Reserve.
- b. Council will consult with the public and affected parties when major works are proposed for the reserve.
- c. Where public programmes are in place, Council will establish agreements identifying roles and responsibilities to support effective management and development of such programmes.

#### Policy 41: Adjacent Landowners

- a. Council will work with private landowners to maintain stock-proof fencing on reserve boundaries and address other issues of common interest, such as pest and weed control programmes.
- b. The nature and proximity of neighbouring properties will be taken into account when the location of parking areas, entrances, and facilities are being determined.

#### Policy 42: Marketing

- a. Reserve branding will be maintained to identify and promote Tōtara Reserve and its unique qualities.
- b. Care for the natural environment will be promoted for all reserve users.
- c. Educational opportunities will be explored for Tōtara Reserve to be used for a wide range of interest groups.
- d. Promotional opportunities will be investigated for Tōtara Reserve to be used for events and other appropriate occasions which do not impact on the ecological and tranquil values of the reserve and its setting.

#### Policy 43: Signs, Information and Interpretation

- a. Consistent signage will continue to be developed and installed throughout the reserve.
- b. The use of signs will be kept to a minimum and should strike a balance between providing information without detracting from the natural setting.
- c. All entrances to Tōtara Reserve will be clearly marked and signposted from the main roads.
- d. On-site interpretation of the reserve’s natural, cultural, historical, landscape and amenity features will be developed over time as part of visitor information and development of the reserve as an education resource.
- e. Information on access, use, visitor facilities and opportunities, and natural and cultural resources will be progressively improved and extended as necessary.
- f. Council will liaise with Rangitāne o Manawatū and Rangitāne Tamaki nui-ā-Rua on sign content, information and interpretation information used in the reserve where relevant.
- g. Interpretative material will represent both European/Pākehā and Māori in interpretations of the features and values of the area.
- h. A database will be maintained of reserve resources, features, facilities and uses, and to record information as it becomes available.
- i. Use of the reserve as an educational facility for public participation will be encouraged.



3.6.4 Proposed Activity for Community Engagement

**Objective:** To provide a mix of complementary recreational and educational opportunities that is compatible with the conservation objectives of this management plan.

To actively promote the reserve as a local, district and regional resource for recreational and educational purposes. abilities to engage with the diverse environments of the reserve while minimising environmental impacts.

Reference and Policy	Proposed Activities Years 1 to 3	Outcomes	Activity Outcomes Years 4 to 10	Long-Term Aspirations
<b>ACTIVITY: CE 1</b> <b>POLICY: 19b, 42</b>	Continue a minimum of one annual event that increases the visibility of Tōtara Reserve and promotes the maintenance and care of it	A fun family event with biosecurity/ biodiversity education about the reserve is held annually	As per years 1 to 3	There are inspiring cultural and environmental activities, events, signage, and promotion that encourages the public to visit and connect with the reserve
<b>ACTIVITY: CE 2</b> <b>POLICY: 19b, 42, 43</b>	Create a central education hub	A venue that includes cultural and environmental education resources is available within the reserve	-	
<b>ACTIVITY: CE 3</b> <b>POLICY: 19b, 35, 42, 43</b>	Develop and install signage that supports cultural and environmental education and promotes care and respect for the forest	Where appropriate, increased signage is in place, adding value to visitor experience	-	
<b>ACTIVITY: CE 4</b> <b>POLICY: 19b, 40a, 42b-d, 43i</b>	Explore establishment of a Friends of Tōtara Reserve group to promote education, guardianship, and connections and increase the time more people are present at the reserve	Friends of Tōtara Reserve is established with regular activities - or identified as low interest and not pursued	Examine the practicality of an on-site plant nursery to supply native plants to fill all weedy locations and edges	
<b>ACTIVITY: CE 5</b> <b>POLICY: 19b, 39c</b>	-	-	Explore the provision of an on-site ranger available, providing visitors with information on the reserve and running local events and education activities	
<b>ACTIVITY: CE 5</b> <b>POLICY: 3d, 19b, 40a</b>	Encourage and explore opportunities for external funders to support the implementation of projects and activities at Tōtara Reserve	-	-	

Table 5: Community Engagement Proposed Activities





## 4 Appendix



# Appendix 1: Land Title

New Record of Title 1113842 (Gazette Notice 12577597.1)

Date Registered: 6 December 2022

Registered Owner: Manawatū-Whanganui Regional Council

Purpose: Scenic Reserve

Area: 331.8260 ha more or less

Legal Description: Part Section 4A Block VII Pohangina Survey District and Part Section 48 Block VII Pohangina Survey District and Part Section 48 Block VII Pohangina Survey District and Part Section 48 Block VII Pohangina Survey District and Part Section 48 Block VII Pohangina Survey District and Part Section 48, 62, 62 Block VII Pohangina Survey District and Section 61, 65, 76-80 Block VII Pohangina Survey District

For map see Figure 2.

# Appendix 2: Land Tenure Explained

In 2022, land tenure was investigated. The outcomes from this investigation, with the details of the titles, are available through Council. The important outcomes from this investigation area are:

### Land Titles

- The reserve was vested in Horizons as scenic reserve by way of gazette notice dated 23 December 2011. Horizons is the legal owner and administering body of the reserve. The titles are shown in Appendix 1.

### River Margin

- The river margin is also vested in Horizons pursuant to the Reserves Act. Any specific claims to the contrary by users of the reserve can be reviewed as they arise. Under Section 26 of the Conservation Act 1987, marginal strips of 20 m on the landward margin of any river or stream are reserved to the Crown wherever the Crown disposes of land. However, Section 26 of the Conservation Act 1987 does not apply where the land is vested in another body under the Reserves Act (as it has been here).

### Scenic Reserve

- Historically, the lots comprising the reserve were acquired by the Crown for various purposes, including scenic reserve, recreation reserve and local purpose reserve. These classifications reflected the primary purpose of the land at the time, with the intention of directing its management, usage and development. The acquisition of land and the purpose for which it was held is recorded in a number of historic gazette notices Council has obtained.
- In December 2011, all the land contained in the titles was vested in Council for scenic reserve under Section 19(1)(a) of the Reserves Act 1977.

### Horizons Regional Council as Administrator

- Council is the administering body of the reserve under the Reserves Act and is given the powers and responsibilities in relation to the administration, management, maintenance and control of the reserve. Classification binds Council and limits (to a greater or lesser extent) how the land can be used, with the intent of protecting the land and providing the community with certainty as to the types of activities that can take place on the reserve.



# Appendix 3: List of Assets

Location	Item	Replacement years	Last renewal (estimated)	Next renewal
Fern Walk	boardwalks	25	2018	2043
Fern Walk	track rafts		2024	2034
Fern Walk	fern walk toilet	25	2000	2025
Kahikatea	stopbanks (earth)	50	2018	2068
Kahikatea	roadways	50	2018	2068
Kahikatea ablution	water cylinders	15.5	1970	1986
Kahikatea ablution	3x basins	20	1970	1990
Kahikatea ablution	6x toilets	25	1970	1995
Kahikatea ablution	3x showers	25	1970	1995
Kahikatea ablution	septic tank	40	1970	2010
Kahikatea ablution	ablution block building	50	1970	2020
Kahikatea Campground	rubbish bins	3	2021	2024
Kahikatea Campground	shelter	50	1980	2030
Kahikatea Campground	2x barbecue shelter	50	1980	2030
Kahikatea Campground	5x power boxes	25	2015	2040
Kahikatea Campground	2x barbecue	25	2020	2045
Kahikatea office	Kahikatea office	50	2010	2060
Kahikatea source water	source water pump	10	2023	2033
Kahikatea/Kererū	pipework	25	2015	2040
Kererū	stopbanks (earth)	50	2018	2068
Kererū	roadways	50	2018	2068
Kererū ablution	water cylinders	15.5	2008	2024
Kererū ablution	5x basins	20	2008	2028
Kererū ablution	5x toilets	25	2008	2033
Kererū ablution	3x showers	25	2008	2033
Kererū ablution	ablution block building	50	2008	2058
Kererū Campground	rubbish bins	3	2021	2024
Kererū Campground	2x barbecue	25	2014	2039
Kererū Campground	12x power boxes	25	2015	2040
Kererū Campground	2x barbecue shelter	50	2014	2064
Kererū Campground	1x firepit	50	2021	2071
Kererū office	camp sign	7	2020	2027
Kererū office	3x track closed signs	7	2020	2027
Kererū office	computer equipment	4	2023	2027
Kererū office	phone	4	2023	2027
Kererū office	eftpos machine	4	2023	2027
Kererū office	non-potable water signs	7	2020	2027
Kererū office	2 whiteboard	10	2023	2033

Kererū office	2x bird pictures	10	2023	2033
Kererū office	computer chair	10	2023	2033
Kererū office	desk	20	2023	2043
Kererū office	round table	20	2023	2043
Kererū office	couch	20	2023	2043
Kererū playground	basket swing	11	2016	2027
Kererū playground	balance disc	11	2016	2027
Kererū playground	low rope balance bridge	11	2016	2027
Kererū playground	mounded log climb	11	2016	2027
Kererū playground	4x log bridge	11	2016	2027
Kererū playground	2x log seats	11	2016	2027
Roadway	road signs	7	2018	2025
Tracks	tracks	25	2018	2043
Wastewater treatment plant	tank 20,000 L recirculation tank concrete	20	1995	2015
Wastewater treatment plant	pump OSI suspended pump vault and OSI high turbine pump	10	2012	2022
Wastewater treatment plant	pump OSI P 3005 high turbine pump	10	2012	2022
Wastewater treatment plant	control panel	20-25	2007	2027
Wastewater treatment plant	12 x floats – change 2 at once at \$200 each	15	2012	2027
Wastewater treatment plant	pump Kererū ablution block	10	2021	2031
Wastewater treatment plant	pump submersible pump	10	2021	2031
Wastewater treatment plant	tanks 3x 30,000 L storage tanks	20	2012	2032
Wastewater treatment plant	tank 30000 L treated WW storage tank	20	2012	2032
Wastewater treatment plant	flushing valve	20	2012	2032
Wastewater treatment plant	tank 22,500 L septic tank buried existing concrete	40	1995	2035
Wastewater treatment plant	AdvanTex AX-100 wastewater treatment plant	25	2012	2037
Wastewater treatment plant	pipe 3750m drip line	25	2012	2037
Wastewater treatment plant	flow meter	30	2012	2042
Wastewater treatment plant	pipe Camp Rangī Woods to tanks	25	2023	2048
Wastewater treatment plant	pipes WWTP to distribution area	25	2023	2048
Wastewater treatment plant	pipes Kererū ablution to WWTP	25	2023	2048
Wastewater treatment plant	Inflow meter (Mag meter)	30	2023	2053
Water treatment plant	2x booster pumps	12.5	2023	2036
Water treatment plant	storage tanks 10,000 L & 500 L	20	2021	2041
Water treatment plant	plumbing	20	2021	2041
Water treatment plant	electricals	25	2021	2046
Water treatment plant	UV treatment	25	2021	2046
Water treatment plant	bore	50	2021	2071
Water treatment plant	shed	50	2021	2071



# Appendix 4: Advisory Group Terms of Reference

## Terms of reference

### Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Advisory Group

#### Purpose

1. This document describes the terms of reference for the Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Advisory Group (advisory group) including the background to the Tōtara Reserve Regional Park (the park) the role of the advisory group, membership and meeting procedures.

5. Horizons Regional Council is charged with the duty of administering, managing and controlling Tōtara Reserve Regional Park<sup>12</sup>. These duties are described in more detail in the management plan<sup>13</sup>. Governance of the park rests with Horizons Regional Council (Councillors) who set budgets via the Lon-term Plan and Annual Plan process and receive regular reporting via the Environment Committee and Audit and Risk Committee.

#### Background

2. Tōtara Reserve Regional Park<sup>10</sup> is an approximately 340 ha scenic reserve located about 50 km from Palmerston North. The majority of the area is in native bush alongside the Pohangina River. The area includes two campgrounds run by Horizons Regional Council and the Camp Rangi Woods<sup>11</sup> facility operated by Camp Rangi Woods Trust, which can accommodate up to 70 people. It is popular as a wedding facility.

6. The vision for the park is to: “Protect ecological values of the podocarp forest and develop quality recreational and educational facilities that are compatible with the scenic values of the reserve and are accessible to the community for their enjoyment and well-being.”<sup>14</sup>
3. The reserve is the only regional park in the Horizons Regional Council region.

7. The Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Advisory Group was formally established in September 2013. The membership included two Council-appointed Councillors (one as Chair) and representatives from the local community, Iwi, Manawatū District Council and Camp Rangi Woods. Iwi representation for Rangitāne o Manawatū was determined via nomination of one person via the Te Rangimarie Marae Trustees in 2013 and one person from Te Mauri O Rangitāne o Manawatū (Council of Elders) Tanenuiarangi Manawatū Incorporated (Mandated Iwi Authority). The advisory group also included one Council staff member. There are no known formal terms of reference for that group, and these terms of reference propose some changes to the membership.
4. The area’s history as a reserve began in 1886, when it was gazetted under the provisions of the State Forests Act (1885) as a “reserve for growth & preservation of timber and for river conservation purposes”. The regional park status was established in 2006 in partnership between Horizons Regional Council and Manawatū District Council. The Tōtara Reserve Regional Park was vested in the Horizons Regional Council in trust for scenic purposes on 19 January 2012.

8. The Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Advisory Group may include up to a maximum of 11 members comprised as follows:  
Two Horizons Regional Council Councillors (one as Chair of the advisory group)
- Two representatives of Rangitāne o Manawatū
  - Two representatives of Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua
  - Two community representatives
  - A representative from Camp Rangi Woods Trust
  - A representative of the Pohangina Catchment Care Group
  - A camper representative.

9. Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Advisory Group membership as at December 2023 is:

Organisation	Lead	Proxy
Horizons Regional Council	Cr Fiona Gordon (Chair)	
Horizons Regional Council	Cr Allan Benbow	
Rangitāne o Manawatū	Terry Hapi	
Rangitāne o Manawatū	Nuwyne Te Awe Awe-Mohi	
Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua	Sarah Stephenson	
Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua	[Currently vacant]	
Community representative	Liz Besley	
Community representative	Kerry Hilliard	
Camp Rangi Woods Trust	Vaughan Dennison	
Pohangina Catchment Care Group	Stuart Campbell	
Camper representative	Jason Carter	
Manawatū District Council	Stuart Campbell	

10. Members are deemed to have accepted these terms of reference by attending in person or having a nominated delegate attend the advisory group meetings (regardless of their duration of attendance). Records of members and proxies will be recorded at each meeting via the minutes.
11. Members are required to declare any actual or perceived conflicts of interest. The advisory group will then determine whether the interest represents an actual or perceived conflict and, if so, what action will be taken.



12. The advisory group, at their discretion, will also invite others in an advisory capacity to support the advisory group.
13. Horizons Tōtara Reserve Regional Park project management team will engage with the advisory group. The project management team includes:
- Project Sponsor:
    - Group Manager Catchment Operations - Jon Roygard
  - Project Lead:
    - Biodiversity Biosecurity Manager – Craig Davey
  - Project Coordinators:
    - Biodiversity Team Leader - Anna Mackintosh
    - Biodiversity (Community) Senior Advisor – Sian Cass
    - Biodiversity Advisor (Community) - Martin Steer
    - Advisor, Iwi and hapū relationships – Oriana Paewai

Role of the Advisory Group

14. The role of the advisory group is to guide and support the management and development of Tōtara Reserve Regional Park in alignment with the vision by:
- Providing strategic vision for the park
  - Overseeing and reviewing the Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Asset Management Plan
  - Overseeing the operational budgets and activities
  - Securing funding and support for activities
  - Ensuring community engagement in the success of the park
  - Making recommendations to Council, including on matters relating to the strategic vision, management, and development of the park.

Meeting Procedures

15. The advisory group will meet approximately twice a year. The meeting schedule will be booked in advance, and efforts made to accommodate maximum attendance of the advisory group. Advisory group members have a responsibility to make themselves available for the meetings where possible and to read the meeting material prior to the meetings.
16. The decisions of the advisory group shall be made on a majority basis by those present at each meeting. Where voting is required, each advisory group member will have one vote. Members of the advisory group may appoint a proxy to attend the meeting on their behalf. Proxy members are welcome to attend all meetings; however, they will only have voting rights when their representative is not present.

17. The quorum for the group will be six, with at least one Horizons councillor.
18. All advisory group meetings and discussions shall be held on a “without prejudice” basis.
19. Enquiries from the media regarding the work or position of the advisory group shall be referred to the Chair or activity sponsor in the first instance. The Chair is the official spokesperson for the advisory group.
20. Any statement made to the media pertaining to work being undertaken by the advisory group shall be discussed with the advisory group Chair on a case-by-case basis, and an approach agreed prior to the release of the information.
21. Information discussed with and presented to the advisory group shall be considered public unless confidentiality is agreed and imposed by the advisory group.

Review of Terms of Reference and Membership

22. The advisory group membership (and this terms of reference) may be updated at any meeting of the advisory group provided notification is provided three working days prior to the meeting or by agreement of the advisory group at an advisory group meeting.
23. The terms of reference shall be reviewed every three years following the three-yearly local government elections. Local government representatives will be updated/reconfirmed by Council following the three-yearly local government elections. At the first meeting of the advisory group at the start of each triennium, Council will update/reconfirm membership. At this time, Iwi/hapū and Camp Rangi Woods representatives will update/reconfirm their representatives in accordance with their own voting processes; and the landowner/ stakeholder representative will be ratified by the advisory group.
24. Since the time of the original formation of the advisory group in 2013, two Treaty settlements that include the Tōtara Reserve area have been signed with the Crown. These are the Rangitāne o Manawātū Treaty Settlement<sup>15</sup> and the Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua Deed of Settlement<sup>16</sup>. Rangitāne o Tamaki nui-ā-Rua had not been involved in the Advisory Group before this, and they now have two representatives on the advisory group. Other Iwi were approached in the original formation of the group, including Ngāti Hineaute Hapū Authority, Ngāti Kauwhata and Te Kāuru.

<sup>10</sup> [www.horizons.govt.nz/managing-natural-resources/parks-projects/Tōtara-reserve-regional-park](http://www.horizons.govt.nz/managing-natural-resources/parks-projects/Tōtara-reserve-regional-park)

<sup>11</sup> [www.totarareserveregionalpark.co.nz/facilities/](http://www.totarareserveregionalpark.co.nz/facilities/)

<sup>12</sup> New Zealand Gazette, No 3. 19 January 2012.

<sup>13</sup> Horizons Regional Council is responsible for the day-to-day management and administration of the reserves, including recreational use within the powers delegated under Sections 55, 56 and 61 of the Reserves Act 1977. Council is also responsible for flood protection, erosion control, animal pest and weed control management, and biodiversity enhancement under the Local Government Act 2002.

<sup>14</sup> Tōtara Reserve Regional Park Asset Management Plan August 2014, prepared in accordance with Section 41 of the Reserves Act 1977.

<sup>15</sup> [www.govt.nz/assets/Documents/OTS/Rangitane-o-Manawatu/Rangitane-o-Manawatu-Settlement-Summary-Nov-2015.pdf](http://www.govt.nz/assets/Documents/OTS/Rangitane-o-Manawatu/Rangitane-o-Manawatu-Settlement-Summary-Nov-2015.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> [www.horizons.govt.nz/HRC/media/Media/Iwi%20and%20Hapu/Statutory-Acknowledgements-FINAL.pdf](http://www.horizons.govt.nz/HRC/media/Media/Iwi%20and%20Hapu/Statutory-Acknowledgements-FINAL.pdf)



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