

WAIKATO DISTRICT COUNCIL

PARKS STRATEGY 2014



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Executive Summary

Vision

The needs of the community for parks and recreation opportunities are met through the provision of a network of quality parks based on the following objectives:

Provision of accessible outdoor sports grounds and facilities at major townships throughout the district, to provide for participation in active recreation pursuits

Provision of parks that provide for local play, passive recreation, walking/cycle linkages and general open space and urban beautification within easy access of urban residential properties

Protection and enhancement of the environment which also provides a valuable educational and recreational resource without compromising their conservation value

Value of Parks

Parks and open space improve our physical and psychological health, strengthen our communities, provide refuges and habitat for biodiversity, help create a healthy ecosystem and make our districts and neighborhoods more attractive places to live and work.

Parks are highly valued by the community and many of the District's major parks have significant history associated with them. Many of the parks are protected through legislation, their ownership status and previous Council policies.

The value and benefits can be attributed to five key areas of:

- Health and wellbeing
- Social
- Cultural
- Environmental
- Economic

Current Provision

Waikato District has a comparably high overall provision of park land with 1,996 hectares. This equates to a total park provision of 31.5 hectares per 1,000 residents. The median in New Zealand is 15.7 hectares.¹

This high level of provision is mainly attributable to a very high provision of natural/conservation park.

On a more comparable basis with other councils, the maintained/urban park provision is 9.4ha/1,000 residents. The median in New Zealand is 8.0 hectares.²

Sports and Recreation park provision is comparatively high, however additional land is required in growth areas such as Tuakau, which has an overall low level of parks for its current population.

Neighbourhood park provision is comparatively low, but sports and recreation parks providing local park functions offset this deficiency in most locations.

Distribution of parks and access to areas for active play and recreation is generally very good in the urban areas, other than for a gap in Tuakau.

¹ Area sourced from "WDC parks land areas Master v3" updated August 2014 and compared with national results provided by Yardstick 2014.

² Area sourced from "WDC parks land areas Master v3" updated August 2014 and compared with national results provided by Yardstick 2014.

Overall, the district's parks are relatively undeveloped, and specific actions for improvements will be identified as part of the Parks Strategy Implementation Plan. This will assess existing parks against this Strategy's levels of service for each park category and identify a programme of improvement works.

While the district's population is forecast to grow at approximately 1.3% per annum, the majority of this growth will occur in the northern townships of Tuakau and Pokeno and surrounding areas. Growth in other townships is static or relatively low. This will result in the need to acquire additional parks in these northern areas, with likely little growth demand elsewhere.

Conclusion - Strategic direction

The following are the target levels of service for planning future provision of parks in the Waikato District.

They will provide a base guideline for:

- Calculating and determining park provision in growth areas
- Provide indicators for long term planning purposes
- Support actions to fill significant gaps in levels of service
- Support disposal of surplus land
- Maintain levels of service consistent with national benchmarks

Category	Waikato District Level of Service Target Ha/1,000 residents
Maintained / urban park	
Sports and Recreation Parks	2.6
Neighbourhood Parks	1.5
Public Gardens	0.2
Civic Spaces	0.2
Outdoor Adventure	2.5
Cultural Heritage	1.0
Total	8.0
Nature / conservation park	
Recreation and Ecological Linkage	3.0
Nature Parks	4.0
Total	7.0
Total	15.0

Park acquisition

The following strategies will be applied to the acquisition of new parks as a result of growth

District wide

- ***Acquire additional parks in new subdivisions to ensure good access to Neighbourhood Parks; pedestrian, cycle and ecological linkages; a balanced network of open space; and to maintain the current level of service***

Tuakau and surrounding areas

- ***Identify and acquire a total of approximately 25 hectares of suitable park land to increase neighbourhood and sports park provision to meet level of service targets for the current population***

SECTION 1: CONTEXT



1.0 Context

1.1 Purpose of the Parks Strategy

The Waikato District Council has developed this Parks Strategy as a high level document to identify existing land resources, to identify the need for additional park land to meet future demographic changes, set levels of service, and to support requirements for reserves contributions arising from development.

The Parks Strategy is not a statutory document, but will be used to advise other plans and strategies that the Council is required to develop such as the Council's Long Term Plan, and through the Parks Activity Management Plan, when adopted. The strategy has also collated information we have available about the quantity of park land.

The Parks Strategy is a vision for parks in the Waikato District that, while not binding, provides guidance for Council's future provision, development and maintenance of park land.

The methodology is based on an analysis of current provision, future population growth needs and the determination of appropriate levels of service for the provision, development and maintenance of the parks network. .

The Parks Strategy will be used to:

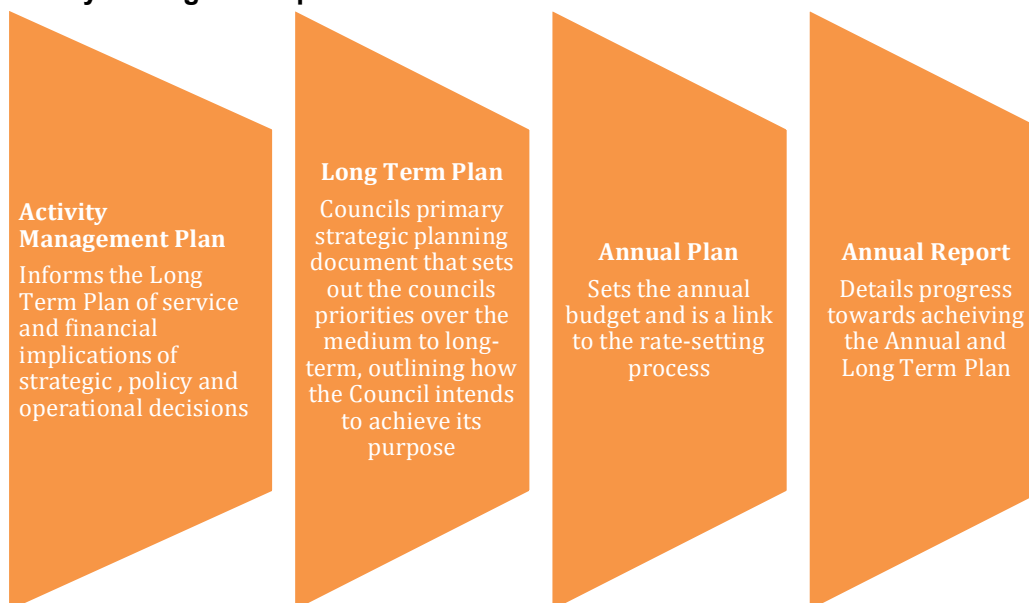
- Provide an overall framework for reserve management plans to be prepared.
- Provide general development standard guidelines for each park category.
- Analyse current and future demand for parks.
- Identify current deficiencies and future needs for each type of park category.
- Provide the context and framework for development contribution requirements.
- Establish levels of service for each park category.

It is intended to cover a planning period of ten years (to 2024), with a review to reflect actual growth and community needs/expectations in five years (2019). The Parks Strategy fits within the following overall parks strategic framework.

Analysis and Strategic Direction



Priority Setting and Implementation



1.2 Methodology

The methodology used to develop the strategy is based on three main components:

i) **Categorisation and levels of service**

Categorising the parks into eight categories and then defining the desired levels of service that the council will aim to deliver in relation to the quantity, distribution and quality of parks and associated services and facilities.

The categories used and levels of service are based on the NZ Recreation Association “National New Zealand Parks Categories and Levels of Service” published 2011.

To effectively define the levels of service to ensure that all aspects are covered, the framework is structured into three areas:

Provision – Deals with the number, location, accessibility, size and type of parks provided. Provision levels of service drive park land acquisition and disposal strategies, as well as inform development guidelines for developers.

Development – The degree to which parks are developed, what facilities and assets are provided and to what standard. Development levels of service drive new capital programmes, depreciation schedules, renewal capital programmes and inform development guidelines for developers.

Operations – The standard to which parks and facilities are maintained and operated e.g. grass mowing, weed control, bin servicing (service standard or specification).

ii) **Assessment of current provision**

An analysis of the districts existing provision is then undertaken and compared against both national benchmarks and also a peer group of similar councils to assess the adequacy of current provision.

This involved identifying the areas of land that Waikato District actually managed as park and compiling a schedule of these areas, together with applying the appropriate category.

The parks are also mapped to enable an analysis of distribution and accessibility to be undertaken.

iii) **Analysis of population growth demand**

An analysis of future population growth predications is undertaken to assess the need for acquisition of parks to meet growth needs to maintain the desired level of service for park provision.

Following the adoption of the Parks Strategy it is intended that the next stage is the development of an Implementation Plan. This will involve the assessment of current parks level of development against the levels of service, and development of a works programme to address any variations from the desired level of service to ensure the standard of parks are consistent across the district and appropriate for the category of park and its purpose.

1.3 **How Parks Contribute to the Delivery of Community Outcomes**

Parks provision is an essential component of achieving the well-being of the community as identified in the Long Term Plan (LTP). Specific outcomes and how parks contribute include:

Sustainable Waikato - A district where growth is managed effectively and natural resources are protected and developed for future generations.

- Parks provide "green lungs" and help protect waterways and indigenous flora and fauna.
- Parks contribute to the district's landscape, mitigating the adverse visual effects of urban development.

Thriving Waikato - The council's processes encourage the continuity of existing businesses and the establishment of new businesses and industry

- Parks, lakes and rivers margins and sports facilities are an important component in enhancing property values and attracting residents, businesses and visitors to the district
- Quality sports and recreation venues attract visitors to the district to participate in sports and recreation events

Healthy Waikato - A district with services and activities that promote a healthy community.

- Parks, sports fields, playgrounds and walkways are important venues for encouraging healthy living and recreation pursuits.

Safe Waikato - A district where people feel safe and supported within their communities.

- Parks provide spaces for young people and families to recreate and for neighbours to congregate, increasing social cohesion and support within communities.

1.4 Vision and Planning Principals

The following specific vision for parks provision in Waikato District has been developed for this strategy.

The needs of the community for parks and recreation opportunities are met through the provision of a network of quality parks based on the following objectives:

- Provision of accessible outdoor sports grounds and facilities at major townships throughout the district, to provide for participation in active recreation pursuits
- Provision of parks that provide for local play, passive recreation, walking/cycle linkages and general open space and urban beautification within easy access of urban residential properties
- Protection and enhancement of the environment, which also provide a valuable educational and recreational resource without compromising their conservation value.

1.5 Partnerships

The Strategy aims to make the most of Council's relationships with other providers and managers of open spaces (such as the Department of Conservation and Ministry of Education), and the many volunteer agencies that work to protect and enhance our natural resources and improve access to recreation settings.

Key Community partners include:

- Community based reserve management committees including the lakes, Raglan Coastal Reserves Committee and river restoration trusts
- Woodlands Trust (Woodlands Reserve)

1.6 Parks Purpose

Parks, recreational facilities and open space improve our physical and psychological health, strengthen our communities, provide refuges and habitat for biodiversity, help create a healthy ecosystem and make our districts and neighborhoods more attractive places to live and work.

Parks are highly valued by the community and many of the District's major parks have significant history associated with them. Many of the parks are protected through legislation, their ownership status and previous Council policies.

The value and benefits can be attributed to five key areas of:

- Health and wellbeing
- Social
- Cultural
- Environmental
- Economic

1.6.1 Health and Wellbeing

Access to parks, recreational facilities and open space increases frequency of exercise. Strong evidence shows that when people have access to parks, they exercise more. Regular physical activity has been shown to increase health and reduce the risk of a wide range of diseases, including heart disease, hypertension, colon cancer, and diabetes.

Exposure to nature and greenery makes people healthier. Physical activity also relieves symptoms of depression and anxiety, improves mood, and enhances psychological wellbeing. Beyond the benefits of exercise, a growing body of research shows that contact with the natural world improves physical and psychological health. Trees and parks are linked to improved childhood development, improved hospital recovery rates, workplace productivity and enhance social cohesion.

In Australia and New Zealand today, one in five people will experience depression. Regular exercise

in green spaces has many mental health benefits. *In a study of people suffering from mental illness, 90% or more of them indicated that green exercise activities had benefited their mental health, they had greater self esteem, focus of mind, were more relaxed, more motivated, enjoyed an improved quality of life, and felt 'refreshed and alive'*³.

1.6.2 Social

Parks, recreational facilities and open space also produce important social and community development benefits. They make inner-city neighborhoods more livable; they offer recreational opportunities for at-risk youth, low-income children, and low-income families; and they provide places in low-income neighbourhood's where people can feel a sense of community. Access to public parks and recreational facilities has been strongly linked to reductions in crime and in particular to reduced juvenile delinquency.

Parks, recreational facilities and open space provide the opportunity for social interaction – both at the local level, at neighbourhood playgrounds, and as venues for larger community events. Parks, recreational facilities and open spaces are used by local communities for recreational activities and as places to meet, gather and socialise. They contribute to the development of cohesive and vibrant societies. Creating stable neighborhoods with strong community ties, where families and friends can come together to have fun, celebrate important occasions or just relax and take time out. This immense social value is part of the 'glue' of a healthy society.

Interconnected parks can help create a sense of connected communities contributing to social harmony and connection.

1.6.3 Cultural

Parks, recreational facilities and open space are a vital part of our cultural well being. The unrestricted access to the coast and waterways which is one of New Zealand's most highly rated cultural values, both to Pakeha and Maori.

Parks also provide the mechanism for the protection of heritage values based around specific sites and events. Cultural and historic sites that reflect the rich and exciting history of European settlement in their buildings and landscapes are the focus of some parks.

For Maori, the natural and spiritual worlds are closely intertwined. The health of landscapes, plants and animals is integral to cultural wellbeing and, in some areas, livelihood. Some parks are truly 'cultural landscapes'.

Of all the benefits our network of parks provide, it is their capacity to inspire us that may be the most important. At mountains, waterfalls, gorges, forests, and wetlands we can lose ourselves in nature, and find tranquility, enjoyment or adventure.

1.6.4 Environmental

Green space in urban areas provides substantial environmental benefits. Trees reduce air pollution and water pollution, they help keep urban environments cooler, and they are a more effective and less expensive way to manage storm water runoff than building systems of concrete sewers and drainage ditches. Trees also provide shade and shelter, provide windbreaks, absorb radiant energy from the sun, help to conserve water and add texture and colour to surroundings.

Parks are significant assets in the fight against climate change. They contain large areas of trees and woodlands, which remove carbon dioxide (the most abundant greenhouse gas) from the atmosphere and store it for generations.

Parks also protect and enhance the environment in the following ways:

- Permanent conservation of valuable natural ecosystems
- Opportunities to protect, enhance and restore biodiversity
- Protection of the coastal environment and waterway margins to protect ecological, cultural, historical, open space and public access values

³ Parks Forum – Value of Parks. Mind. 2007. Go green to beat the blues. Press release. National Association for Mental Health.

- An effective network of interlinking reserves create connections throughout the natural environment and community that enable active transport, and enhance the concept of a sustainable liveable community that isn't reliant on motor vehicle transport
- The location of parks and recreation opportunities within close proximity of all residential properties enables people to recreate close to home without the need for vehicular travel
- Vegetation cleans and filters water, traps sediment, recycles nutrients, stabilises slopes and slows runoff to improve the quality of water for human consumption, agriculture and power generation.

1.6.5 Economic

Urban parks also have clear economic values. Numerous studies have shown that parks and open space increase the value of neighboring residential property. Proximity and park views add to the residential value of a home.

Growing evidence points to a similar benefit on commercial property value. The availability of park and recreation facilities is an important quality-of-life factor for businesses choosing where to locate facilities and for well-educated individuals choosing a place to live.

Parks are the central focus for our tourism industries, which are significant contributors to local and national economies.

Parks and recreation activities promote the district as an attractive place to live and visit. As a result they generate significant financial revenue to the district and enhance property values. In addition parks and recreational facilities generate significant community and social wellbeing benefits.

Urban parks are of huge economic value to their respective communities and are often the feature of local promotions and events aimed at encouraging local, regional and international visitors.

Parks supporting primary industry through protect important native habitat for many bird and other animal species that provide significant economic benefits to farmers. Bees, moths, butterflies and other insects play a crucial role in the pollination of many food crops.

1.7 Statutory Requirements for Parks

There are three key statutes relating to the management and provision of parks:

- Reserves Act 1977
- Local Government Act 2002
- Resource Management Act 1991
- Waikato Raupatu Claims Settlement Act 1995
- Waikato-Tainui Raupatu Claims (Waikato River) Settlement Act 2010
- Nga Wai o Maniapoto (Waipa River) Act 2012

The Waikato-Tainui Environmental Management Plan has several purposes including to “provide guidance to external agencies regarding Waikato-Tainui values, principles, knowledge and perspectives on, relationship with, and objectives for natural resources and the environment”. The Plan includes a process for resource developers and users to consult and engage with Waikato-Tainui about proposed resource use or activities. Waikato District Council and Waikato-Tainui entered into a Joint Management Agreement (JMA) on March 23, 2010. Schedules D and E of the JMA set out the process to be followed when Council is working on property and management matters in respect of reserves, and our interaction with Waikato-Tainui.

1.7.1 Reserves Act 1977

The Reserves Act 1977 applies to all public land that has been vested or gazetted under the Act. As a mandatory requirement of this Act, management plans should be prepared for all recreation

reserves to provide a framework for future management decisions relating to their maintenance, use and development. Ideally reserve management plans should be developed grouping reserves under the park categories used in this Parks Strategy.

The Reserves Act specifies in general terms the purpose of each class of reserve and requires that each reserve be managed in accordance with this purpose. The Act also requires that Council complete a process of public notification for the leasing of areas of reserve (covered by the Act) where it is not in accordance with the management plan.

There are a number of areas of open space land which do not hold formal Reserve Act status. This land is generally fee simple awaiting Council completion of the formal process of declaring the land as reserve and classification as considered appropriate. Council does have a responsibility, where it uses funds set aside for reserve purchase or accepts land in lieu of a reserve contribution, to retain the land for the long term enjoyment of the community. Usually this land is vested formally as reserve.

1.7.2 Local Government Act 2002 (LGA)

The LGA includes a wide range of provisions relating to the operation of local government, many of which impact directly or indirectly on the management and operation of parks.

The LGA includes a provision for the levying of development contributions as a result of land development. Contributions from development either as land or monetary, or a combination of both, are intended to ensure that provision of parks continues to be provided on a similar basis as to the historical provision and in keeping with planned or identified needs. Monetary contributions are to be used to enhance existing parks or purchase appropriately located land.

A specific policy needs to be developed by each authority to implement development contributions.

This Parks Strategy is intended to support a development contribution policy through the identification of a desired level of park land provision resulting from growth and to provide guidelines as to the types, purpose and development standards required for park provision.

1.7.3 Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA)

Waikato District Council is required to prepare a District Plan under the Resource Management Act 1991. The purpose of the District Plan is “to promote the sustainable management of natural and physical resources” which links clearly into this Parks Strategy.

The Waikato District Plan sets objectives policies and rules pertaining to land use, subdivision and development of land including reserves”. The parks strategy will be one of many documents which will inform the district plan review process.’

The current expectation in the district plan is that land zoned reserve will have a reserve management plan. If it doesn't then projects often need land use consent.

1.8 Other Linkages

1.8.1 New Zealand Recreation Association – 2011 Parks Categories and Levels of Service

The NZRA Parks Categories and Levels of Service framework (NZRA Parks Categories 2011) has been developed, in consultation with the parks sector, to provide relevant industry guidelines for parks classification.

The NZRA parks categories have been implemented by the Waikato District to classify their parks for management and planning purposes.

1.8.2 Activity Management Plan

The parks land asset is the fundamental building block for the delivery of parks and recreation services. Therefore, an accurate knowledge of the land asset, organised into practical groupings, is essential to enable good asset management planning and provision.

The Parks Strategy provides a structure for grouping of parks into various categories and updates the land ownership knowledge to provide an accurate land asset register which can be more easily kept up to date in the future. This exercise enables easier and more consistent reporting on the land provided.

The categories provide a basis for developing clear levels of service associated with the purpose of the park land. The Parks Strategy provides an outline of the levels of service to be provided with each land category adopted. Financial budgets are structured to match the categories in this strategy, so that any changes to budget or levels of service can enable costs to be directly linked.

The strategy identifies future likely park requirements (surplus/additions), which can be used in turn to identify new capital programmes, depreciation schedules and to project changes in operating costs associated with additional park land acquisition.

The Parks and Reserves Activity Management Plan is based on and directly linked to the parks Strategy.

1.9 Parks Covered by Strategy

The Parks Strategy covers all land that is owned or administered by the Waikato District Council as a part of their parks network.

The definition of parks land for the purpose of this strategy only includes land that is publicly accessible for general recreation use and natural/conservation areas. It excludes areas leased or used for specific purposes such as golf courses and campgrounds as these areas are unlikely to ever be available for general parks use. Also, inclusion of large areas such as golf courses distorts park provision comparison analysis. It also does not include areas that may be maintained as part of the parks activity, that are not required as park. Such areas include roadsides, grass verges, utility sites and drainage areas.

Other land, e.g. schools, may provide some open space values and public recreation access, but access to and provision of these areas is not guaranteed and these areas are not included in park provision calculations.

Historically, parks have been acquired in a variety of ways for a wide range of purposes. Much of it was originally acquired by government as “reserve” and has been vested in council (therefore underlying ownership often rests with the crown). In more recent times, parks are most commonly provided through subdivisional development. In some cases, council will buy land directly for specific purposes. Parks are also occasionally acquired through gifting by private owners wishing to protect valued ecological areas or for other altruistic reasons.

1.10 Structure of Strategy

The strategy undertakes an analysis at the District level and establishment of a parks category and network structure based on the NZRA Parks Categories 2011. All parks in the District have been placed into one of the following categories:

- Sport and Recreation Parks
- Neighbourhood Parks
- Public Garden Parks
- Recreation and Ecological Linkage Parks
- Natural Parks
- Cultural Heritage Parks (including cemeteries)
- Outdoor Adventure Parks

In addition to the parks categories, tree levels of service are also identified.

1.11 Future Provision and Development

The location and development of future parks as a result of growth will be identified through future structure planning work in line with the framework and standards identified in this strategy. In the absence of structure maps, assessments of individual subdivision proposals will be assessed in line with this strategy and taking into account the existing provision of parks in the surrounding area.

The development of individual parks will be identified through Reserve Management Plans or other planning processes specifically relating to each park.

1.12 District Maps

Included as part of the Parks Strategy are maps of the towns showing all existing Council parks. The maps can be found in Appendix 6.3 towards the end of this document.

SECTION 2: PARK CATEGORIES AND LEVELS OF SERVICE



2.0 Parks Categories and Levels of Service

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of levels of service is to define what it is that Waikato District Council are striving to deliver for its park visitors and wider community. For example:

- How accessible will parks be?
- What standard of park is to be provided?
- What service can a park visitor expect?
- What will it cost for this service?

From these levels of service, we then have the ability to objectively and effectively measure our performance.

Levels of service drive everything we do as an organisation: planning, development and delivery. We have therefore applied a framework that comprehensively covers the range of tasks and services involved, from planning through to delivery.

The Parks Levels of Service (LoS) framework covers the three areas that impact on the service delivered and the customer's experience. These are:

- **Provision** – Deals with the number, location, accessibility, size and type of parks provided. Provision levels of service drive park land acquisition and disposal strategies, as well as inform development guidelines for developers.
- **Development** – The degree to which parks are developed, what facilities and assets are provided and to what standard. Development levels of service drive new capital programmes, depreciation schedules, renewal capital programmes and inform development guidelines for developers.
- **Operation** – The standard to which parks and facilities are maintained and operated e.g. grass mowing, weed control, bin servicing (service standard or specification).

For the effective implementation of levels of service for parks we use park categories to organise and manage parks services. Due to the diverse range and type of parks and recreation services provided it is difficult to comprehensively describe the services in simple terms.

The parks category structure provides the framework to describe our levels of service and provide the link for all the functions and tasks involved in the delivery of a parks service.

2.2 Application

The parks categories and levels of service will be used in the following ways:

Function	Purpose
Set minimum standards for parks provided as part of subdivisional development.	To ensure park land and assets are provided to meet a standard that is fit for the intended purpose.
Set maximum standards for parks provided as part of subdivisional development.	To ensure assets are not provided at a significantly higher standard or quantity than has been agreed as appropriate and sustainable (affordable).
Plan future park land requirements in terms of purpose, location, distribution and size.	To provide a planning tool to calculate and identify future park land requirements, and possible disposals.
Guides the preparation of reserve management plans, based on park categories.	To provide a consistent framework for the development and management of parks across the district.

Function	Purpose
Informs the community about the standard of park development and service they can expect.	To provide a consistent guide on facility and asset development and the maintenance standards for parks service delivery.
Informs the community and council about what developments and assets are appropriate for a given park category.	To provide a consistent guide to manage responses for development of individual services and facilities.
Key performance indicators.	To provide a framework upon which to monitor and report on the success of council in delivering the agreed levels of service.
Standardise and rationalise the quality and provision of assets and services across the parks network.	To provide equity of development and servicing across the community, and to assist with making decisions about increasing or decreasing levels of service in response to financial changes.

2.1 Sports and Recreation Parks

2.1.1 Description

A sports and recreation park is designed and used for both organised sport and informal recreation, and is often-multi use, providing for a range of community activities and facilities.

It is likely to have formally maintained sports turf for a mixture of winter and/or summer sport. The sports turf areas are maintained to an appropriate standard for the sports code use. It may accommodate hard court and built recreation facilities.

Toilets, sports training lights, changing facilities and car parking are likely to be available and some may have resident club facilities.

Some parks may have recreation facilities such as playgrounds, and other facilities serving a local neighbourhood and community function creating a multi function park with a wide range of activities occurring. Some parks may be entirely leased for sports or recreation activity.

Examples include Dr John Lightbody Reserve, Tuakau; Paterson Park, Ngaruawahia.



Huntly West Sports Park

2.1.2 Provision

Sports and recreation parks are predominantly located throughout the district, based on both small communities that have a domain as their hub e.g. Ohinewai, Onewhero, Te Akau, and also at the larger towns of Tuakau, Huntly, Ngaruawahia (Taupiri) and Raglan. They are designed to meet local community needs for sports fields and facilities. Access to more specialised facilities and higher levels of competition are generally provided in Hamilton and South Auckland such as Hockey.

Sports parks should be of a size that accommodate at least two full size winter fields (approximate dimension 130m x 80m each, equal to approximately one hectare per winter field) and also provide suitable land for on-site car parking, facility development and an off-field training ground.

This equates to a minimum parcel of land of five hectares and up to 15 hectares to cater for multi-use activities. The relatively large areas of land for future Sports and Recreation parks will enable multi-use activity to cater for a number of sports and recreation activity.

Land provided will need to be flat, with well-drained, good quality (non peaty) soils.

They will be located centrally to the community, with good road access and visibility. They will ideally be located adjacent to, or near schools to encourage opportunities for shared facilities and use.

2.1.3 Development Standards

Development requirements for Sports and recreation parks are primarily driven by the needs of the particular sport and recreation activities planned for the park, together with enhancing the amenity of the area through tree planting and allowing for casual use.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	Developed off-street car parking where possible. Sealed parking provided at high use sites. Car parks to be lit where adjacent to floodlit sports fields. (Also refer District Plan parking provision requirements)
Toilets	Standard quality toilets to be provided on site – either stand alone or as part of clubrooms. May only be accessible during times of sports play. Changing rooms may be provided in association with clubs. Locate near to playgrounds if these are provided.
Trails	Tracks and paths will be provided where the park is providing a linkage route. Accessible access will be provided from car parks to clubrooms/toilets/play equipment. Surface will generally be sealed with asphalt or concrete.
Furniture and structures	Standard park furniture, including seats and bins provided. Lighting may be provided around car park/clubroom areas.
Floodlighting	Floodlights for training purposes will be provided where appropriate, with operational costs met by the sports clubs.
Visitor information	Standard name and control signage. Map of field layout to be provided with ground numbers shown where applicable.
Gardens	Little or no garden development. Gardens may be provided around entrance/car park/clubrooms.
Play equipment	Playground may be provided, particularly if the park also provides neighbourhood use function. Refer to Playground Strategy for additional level of service guidance and specific site requirements.
Drainage and irrigation	Field drainage and irrigation will be provided where conditions require, generally only at sites where senior level competition occurs.
Buildings	Clubrooms and changing sheds permitted where provided by the club utilising the park.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Artificial sports turf	No demand is currently envisaged for the provision of artificial sports turf.
Sand carpet sports turf	Installation may be considered for high use locations

2.1.4 Service Delivery Standards

The primary focus for sports fields' maintenance is grass mowing and turf quality.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass mowing	High quality grass mowing standard to meet the usage needs of the particular sports codes on playing surfaces. Standard quality mowing for surrounds and general use areas.
Turf management	Regular turf renovation programmes undertaken, including mechanical aeration, fertiliser, weed control, under-sowing and topdressing as required for the level of usage and turf condition.
Arboriculture	Standard weed control standard for fence-lines, structures and car parks to maintain a tidy appearance consistent with grass standard.
Vegetation control	Garden areas will be maintained to a medium quality standard.
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structure maintenance will be focused on maintaining good structural condition and a tidy appearance. Monthly inspection and non-urgent repairs within one week.
Play equipment	Play equipment to be maintained in accordance with NZS 5828:2004 or its amendments. Inspection regime based on the following: Visual – Daily Operational – Monthly Main - Annual To be maintained in “as new” condition, free from any breakages, damage or graffiti. Paint coatings to be maintained to a standard that ensures the asset achieves its design life, and its appearance is appropriate to the site.
Litter	Litter bins to be emptied before overflowing (minimum once per week). All sites left in litter free state following any visit and collected prior to any mowing operation. Minimum of once weekly inspection.
Graffiti/vandalism repair	Removed/repared within two working days.
Trails and hard surfaces	Shall be kept free of litter and detritus.
Toilet cleaning	Cleaning shall be undertaken three times weekly or more frequently during major events or as required.

2.2 Neighbourhood Parks

2.2.1 Description

A developed urban park designed for use by the local residential community. They are generally smaller in size, ranging from 1,000m² up to 2ha. The average ideal size is considered to be from 3,000m² to 5,000m².

The neighbourhood park should be easily accessible, ideally from more than one road frontage. The neighbourhood park will be well maintained; be free draining; have flat or gently undulating grassed areas; be safe and provide an attractive welcoming ambience to the immediate local community.

Neighbourhood parks are provided to “fill in” any gaps in the parks network to provide full distribution and access to parkland in urban residential areas.

Neighbourhood parks should provide an open grass area suitable for small-scale ball play, children’s play equipment, seating, amenity lighting, paths and attractive amenity planting. Larger parks may accommodate small community buildings and small-scale sports facilities such as basketball half courts.

Examples include Mark Ball Drive, Tuakau



Mark Ball Drive Reserve, Pokeno

2.2.2 Provision

The level of service target is to provide access to an open space park area within a 10 to 15 minute walk of any residential property in urban areas. This means parks should be distributed so that there is no greater distance than 800 metres from an urban residential property to a park. Other parks, for example sports and recreation parks etc., may also meet this need and duplication is not necessary.

Neighbourhood parks should be a minimum of 2,000m² with a preferred provision of up to 5,000m² with at least 50% comprising usable flat land.

The size is larger than many existing or traditional neighbourhood parks, but it allows for a reasonable mix of activities including a large ball play space, basketball half court, playgrounds (both junior and senior), gardens and “quiet” spaces. It is also important to be able to provide a reasonable separation for adjoining residential properties from the active/noisy activities.

Neighbourhood parks should have an open frontage (providing a safe ambiance) with access to at least one road frontage plus pedestrian/cycle access to other streets, to maximise linkages to as many parts of the neighbourhood as possible. Ideally neighbourhood parks should have three access points.

Suitable land for neighbourhood parks will generally be acquired at the time of planning new subdivisions.

2.2.3 Development Standards

The aim is to provide an attractive area for local use for children's play, relaxation and to enhance the local amenity value.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	On site car parking not required. Street side parking bays for larger neighbourhood parks.
Toilets	Not usually provided.
Trails	Dual use paths that provide linkages between roads and access to play equipment. Trail design and gateways to play equipment must be fully accessible. Can be either compacted gravel, paved or asphalted depending on the location and use.
Furniture and structures	Provision of standard quality seating, picnic tables and litter bins. Bollards or attractive amenity style fencing provided to prevent vehicle access where required. Lighting not generally provided.
Visitor information	Standard name and control signage.
Gardens	Garden planting will not generally be provided.
Play equipment	Playground equipment provided to meet local needs. To include a minimum of three items of play equipment. Youth facilities may also be provided on Community Neighbourhood Parks. Refer to Playground Strategy for more detailed level of service and specific site requirements.
Vehicle barriers	Bollards or attractive amenity style fencing provided to prevent vehicle access where required.
Buildings	Generally buildings will not be provided for. Appropriate community or recreation buildings that do not compromise open space values will be considered to meet specific local needs on larger sites.

2.2.4 Service Delivery Standards

The primary focus for Neighbourhood park maintenance is to provide consistently good standards - particularly in relation to grass mowing and safe play equipment.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass mowing	Good quality grass mowing standard that consistently maintains a surface suitable for walking and informal ball games.
Turf management	Turf cover should be consistent and largely weed free.
Vegetation control	Standard weed control specification for fence-lines and structures to maintain a tidy appearance consistent with grass standard.
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structure maintenance will be focused on maintaining good structural condition and a tidy appearance. Monthly inspection and non-urgent repairs within one week. Critical Structures inspected six monthly.
Gardens	All garden areas will be maintained to a medium quality standard.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Playgrounds	Play equipment to be maintained in accordance with NZS 5828:2004 or amendments. Inspection regime based on the following: Visual – Monthly Structural - Annually To be maintained in “as new” condition, free from any breakages, damage or graffiti. Paint coatings to be unfaded and free from chips/flaking.
Litter	Litter bins to be emptied before overflowing (minimum once per week). All sites left in litter free state following any visit and collected prior to any mowing operation. Minimum of once weekly inspection.
Graffiti/vandalism repair	Removed/repaired within two working days.
Trails and hard surfaces	Shall be kept free of litter and detritus.
Toilet cleaning	Cleaning shall be undertaken three times per week.

2.3 Recreation and Ecological Linkage Parks

2.3.1 Description

Recreation and ecological linkages cover a wide range of purposes, from developed areas with mown grass and trees, revegetation areas through to undeveloped green areas. They provide an important role in meeting sustainability objectives through the ability to enable ecological services by way of buffering, protection and enhancement of biodiversity through the urban environment, aesthetic and landscape values, diversity within the urban landscape,, and further opportunities for picnicking, play spaces and enhancing walking and cycle linkages. Many linkage parks are usually acquired through subdivision processes.

In the Waikato District this category is strongly represented by “esplanade reserves” provided along waterways for environmental protection and public access.

It also includes lakeside areas including Hakanoa, Waikare, Ohinewai and Kainui.

They also offer a wide range of experiences, from largely unused or inaccessible areas through to areas used actively for picnics, walking, biking and other recreation.

These areas often provide for walkway and transport connectivity from one neighbourhood to another or to link parks together.

Some of the linkage parks may be based on geographic features within the urban environment, where buildings are not possible, for example stream gullies, drainage areas or steep hillsides.

Generally recreation and ecological linkages will have a low level of development, except where usage and demand warrants it. This may include formalising accessways, tracks, park furniture and signage.

Examples include Tamahere Gullies, Waikato River Esplanades



Tamahere Gullies

2.3.2 Provision

Recreation and ecological linkages areas can be land that need not be fully accessible and may provide a community benefit through the visual amenity they provide such as incorporating a stand of trees and the opportunity to protect or enhance biodiversity. Land need not be flat but the cost benefit of maintaining difficult gullies, steep land and other non-developable land should be carefully considered prior to any future acquisitions.

Minimum parcel size of land is not a specific requirement for the future although in terms of general planning a minimum of 3,000m² should be seen as an effective area which will provide visual impact.

Location of recreation and ecological linkages will generally be related to geographic features and dispersed throughout the district providing corridors of “green” possibly linking parks via walkway systems. In the Waikato District “esplanade reserves” provided along waterways is a typical example of this category.

Reserves along waterways are generally classified as a Local Purpose Reserves (Esplanade) under the Reserves Act 1977, and the creation and determination of width etc., is determined by requirements in the District Plan and Resource Management Act 1991 (RMA). Esplanade reserves (and strips) are then acquired through subdivision processes. Council can acquire esplanade strips, at any time through, agreement with landowners outside of the subdivision process.

When used for beautification purposes, recreation and ecological linkages are usually located at “entrances” to town and residential precincts, close to town centres and along arterial roads.

In addition to the statutory considerations under s229 to 237H of the RMA the following criteria should be applied when considering acquisition:

- Creates effective linkage between existing parks or access points
- Protects areas of high ecological value
- Creates future opportunity for linkages to be created
- Is located in an area that will provide high value in terms of visual impact
- Offers opportunity to add value to other recreation and ecological linkages
- Offers opportunity to help enhance environmental features e.g. waterways

2.3.3 Development Standards

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	Not required.
Toilets	Not required.
Trails	Not generally required – otherwise sealed and graded appropriate to usage. Track standard met.
Furniture and structures	Picnic tables and bins may be provided at roadside areas used for picnicking. Seating along walkways may be provided at strategic viewing points or other rest points. Lighting not generally required. Litter bins not provided.
Visitor information	Walkways and trails - signage provided with way-finding information Other sites - signage not generally required. Greater weed management for biodiversity areas based on regional council guidelines.
Tree planting	Gardens will not generally be provided, other than specific town entrance or other sites.
Gardens	Not required unless also functions as a Neighbourhood park.
Play equipment	Not required.

2.3.4 Service Delivery Standards

Recreation and Ecological Linkages will generally have a standard to low level of maintenance provided.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass mowing	Residential areas and picnic spots a medium standard of mowing. Other areas shall be a low standard of mowing.
Gardens	Where provided gardens will be maintained to a medium standard.
Vegetation control	Weed control specification for fence-lines and structures to maintain a tidy appearance. Animal pest and weed control will be a high priority on sites being revegetated, with control to a standard that does not suppress the establishing native plants. Other areas will be limited to target weeds and animal pests or control around public use areas and on tracks. Waikato Regional Pest Management Strategy requirements will be followed.
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structure maintenance will be focused on maintaining good structural condition and a tidy appearance. Annual inspection and non-urgent repairs within one week. Bridges inspected six monthly.
Litter	All sites left in litter free state following any visit and collected prior to any mowing operation. Minimum of once monthly inspection.
Graffiti/vandalism repair	Removed/repared within two working days of notification. Minimum of once monthly inspection.
Trails and hard surfaces	Formed tracks and paths maintained in a smooth and safe condition free of potholes, scouring, obstructions and other hazards or defects. Paths shall be kept clean and tidy, free of litter, green debris and weeds. Minimum of once monthly inspection.

2.4 Nature Parks

2.4.1 Description

The primary purpose of Nature Parks is to provide opportunities for people to experience or protect the natural environment and to provide habitat for flora and fauna.. Typically areas of indigenous bush, wetlands, or other natural landscapes are considered Nature Parks. They may include walking tracks, mountain bike tracks, picnic areas and facilities to support and service these activities.

The values and attributes of Nature Parks include:

- Large scale sites.
- Low impact recreation activity.
- Intact or relatively intact natural ecosystems.
- Unique, significant or threatened NZ indigenous flora and fauna.
- Natural wetland areas.
- Water bodies such as lakes/ponds.
- Outstanding natural features and landscapes including geological features.



Lake Kainui

2.4.2 Provision

Nature parks contain natural features that are being restored or conserved. Typically they will be adjacent to/or contain water bodies such as wetlands, coastal margins or will be areas of native bush or other native ecological habitat. They can significantly add to open space and visual landscape values.

Some sites may be acquired and managed as natural parks that do not have existing strong values, but where their management as areas of native vegetation is considered the most appropriate land use.

Nature parks can be quite large where they contain wetlands, coastal areas or native bush.

For planning purposes no minimum size is identified, although it is expected sites will be no smaller than 1 hectare.

Land may be located anywhere in the District where a site has specific values that warrants its acquisition. The values identified in 2.4.1 will be used to assess value for acquisition and classification as a nature park.

2.4.3 Development Standards

Generally a low level of development is envisaged for Nature Parks with the objective being to provide a “natural” outdoor experience. Development will generally be limited to low impact activities such as walking and mountain bike tracks. Higher use sites may require ancillary visitor facilities such as car parking, signage and toilets.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	Off-street metalled car parking provided at high use sites only.
Toilets	Toilets to be provided at entranceway/car park area, or other gathering points throughout the park, where user stays of over one hour are envisaged or for high use sites.
Trails	Walking and mountain bike tracks provided as appropriate. Higher use walking tracks metalled and graded appropriate to usage. NZS HB 8630:2004 used to categorise tracks.
Furniture and structures	Limited furniture such as picnic tables provided at car parks/picnic areas. Seats provided at key viewing or rest points. Litter bins not usually provided. Shelters may be provided at high use sites. Viewing platforms may be constructed at appropriate sites.
Visitor information	Signage to be provided to identify the park and provide wayfinding/control information. Additional signage and visitor information as appropriate: Interpretation signs provided at historic sites and areas of significant ecological value. Map signs provided at entrance to larger sites with multiple tracks. Directional signage at path junctions.
Revegetation	If additional revegetation is required, a native planting and weed control programme will be undertaken. This will aim to re-create ecosystems characteristic of the original ecology. Eco-sourcing of plant materials will be used where practicable.

2.4.4 Service Delivery Standards

Service inputs on Nature parks are expected to be low with an emphasis on animal pest and weed control, track maintenance and operation of visitor facilities such as toilets and picnic/parking areas.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass maintenance	Low to medium standard quality grass mowing where required, e.g. picnic areas.
Animal pest and weed control	Animal pest and weed control will be a high priority on sites being revegetated, with control to a standard that does not suppress the establishing native plants. Other areas will be limited to target weeds and animal pests or control around public use areas and on tracks. Waikato Regional Pest Management Strategy requirements will be followed.
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structure maintenance will be focused on maintaining good structural condition and safety. Monthly inspection and non-urgent repairs within one week. Bridges inspected six monthly.
Trail maintenance	Trails will be maintained in a safe and usable condition. The service level standard will be applied as per NZS HB 8630:2004 category. Trails are inspected monthly for routine repairs and maintenance, and six monthly for structural inspections.
Litter	All sites left in litter free state following any visit and collected prior to any mowing operation. Minimum of once weekly inspection at high use sites/carparking areas.
Toilet cleaning	Cleaning shall be undertaken at least weekly.
Graffiti/vandalism repair	Removed/repared within two working days.

2.5 Outdoor Adventure Parks

2.5.1 Description

Outdoor adventure parks enable visitors to experience a variety of recreation activities in a wide range of open space environments.

Outdoor adventure parks will generally be large sites, usually located on the outskirts of urban areas. The character and management of Outdoor adventure parks varies widely from farm parks, pine forests, native bush and river and coastal areas. The recreation activities include those that require the space and separation from urban locations or require particular natural features. Examples include mountain biking, farm parks, equestrian, rock climbing, wind-sports, motorised recreation, camping, walking/tramping, picnicking, hunting, canoeing/kayaking etc.

The levels of service for outdoor adventure parks can vary widely depending on the type of park and level of use. Also the level of service may vary from one area of the park to another, e.g. entry points may be developed to a high standard with extensive facilities and more remote areas may have minimal services.

Examples include Wainui Reserve, which includes a functioning farm.



Wainui Reserve, Raglan

2.5.2 Provision

Provision will usually be based on either utilising existing public land which may have been acquired for reasons other than nature based recreation, e.g. water catchment or river protection areas, erosion control, quarries, open space protection; or where the direct acquisition of land for the primary purpose of nature based recreation will be justified.

Sites will generally be large (20 hectares plus) and located either on the outskirts, or quite some distance from urban areas.

2.5.3 Development Standards

The aim is to provide an area for people to experience nature through recreation activities appropriate to the particular park.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	Sealed entry road. Sealed car parks at high use sites. Metalled secondary roads and low use car parks.
Toilets	Toilets to be provided at entranceway/car park area and at gathering points throughout the park as required.
Trails	Metalled or natural walking paths dependent on category and level of use. Mountain bike tracks to be graded to a standard dependent on intended usage. Apply NZS HB 8630:2004 category system. Apply recognised Mountain bike grading system, e.g. Kennett Brothers.
Furniture and structures	Seats provided at key viewing or rest points on walking tracks. Vehicle barriers along roads to control vehicle access as required. Shelters, picnic facilities and litter bins where appropriate.
Visitor information	High quality signage at entrance to identify the park. Interpretation and map signs provided at major entry areas. Control and safety signage provided as required. Directional signage at path entries/junctions.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Trees and gardens	Tree planting and gardens will not generally be undertaken.
Recreation facilities	Dependant on intended purpose and use, development of recreation facilities such as adventure playgrounds, rope challenge courses, climbing walls, off road vehicle tracks, etc.
Revegetation	If additional revegetation is required a native planting and weed/animal pest control programme will be undertaken to protect and add to existing values.
Buildings	Generally buildings will not be provided for. Otherwise buildings provided for maintenance and services and for on-site community groups as required.
Forestry and farming	Forestry plantation and/or farming may be established as a management/maintenance regime and for revenue generation.

2.5.4 Service Delivery Standards

Service inputs on Outdoor adventure parks are expected to be low with an emphasis on animal pest and weed control, track maintenance and operation of visitor facilities such as toilets and picnic/parking areas. More intensive management inputs will be applied where plantation forestry or farming is utilised to manage the site.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass maintenance	Low to medium standard quality grass mowing where required, for example at picnic areas. Use of livestock where appropriate.
Animal pest and weed control	Animal pest and weed control will be a high priority on sites being revegetated, with control to a standard that does not suppress the establishing native plants. Other areas will be limited to target weeds and animal pests or control around public use areas and on tracks. Waikato Regional Pest Management Strategy requirements will be followed.
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structure maintenance will be focused on maintaining good structural condition and safety. Annual inspection and non-urgent repairs within one week. Bridges inspected six monthly.
Trail maintenance	Trails will be maintained in a safe and usable condition. The service level standard will be applied as per NZS HB 8630:2004 category. Trails are inspected monthly for routine repairs and maintenance and six monthly for structural inspections.
Litter	Litter bins to be emptied before overflowing (minimum once per week). All sites left in litter free state following any visit and collected prior to any mowing operation. Minimum of once weekly inspection.
Toilet cleaning	Cleaning shall be undertaken at least weekly.
Graffiti/vandalism repair	Removed/repared within two working days.

2.6 Public Gardens

2.6.1 Description

Public gardens include parks that are of significance to the city/district with an emphasis on horticultural displays.

The primary focus for public gardens is to create a place of beauty and tranquillity through high quality horticultural design and maintenance and other features as appropriate to the park's character. They often also may contain historic heritage values. Acquisition may be a result of gifting of privately developed gardens.

They will generally exhibit one or more of the following values and attributes:

- Peace and tranquillity
- Horticultural excellence and diversity
- Tourist destination
- Particular unique feature or character
- Historic, artistic or cultural values
- Horticultural and/or environmental education.

Public gardens will be developed and maintained to the highest standard.

Currently Woodlands near Gordonton and Cobourne Reserve at Port Waikato are the only public gardens provided by Waikato District.



Woodlands Park

2.6.2 Provision

Creation/acquisition of additional public gardens will be based on the opportunity to acquire a site that has specific special characteristics that warrant its acquisition or protection. Any site acquired will then need to be developed to a high standard to ensure that the benefits from the acquisition are maximised.

For planning purposes no minimum size is identified although it is expected sites will be no smaller than 5,000m².

There are no current plans to acquire additional public garden sites.

2.6.3 Development Standards

Facilities and amenities provided to a high standard as appropriate to its purpose, that clearly identifies that these parks are of a “special” high value.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	Developed sealed off-street car parking where possible.
Toilets	High quality toilets to be provided on site.
Trails	Developed dual use (min 2.5m width) pathways on main routes. Main routes to be hard paved or the standard will be applied as per SNZ HB 8630:2004 and Council Trail Strategy (currently in draft form) category.
Furniture and structures	High quality furniture, fencing, lighting and structures provided. Seats, bins, tables, lights etc. to be of a consistent brand /style. Use of specifically themed or quality furniture and structures above that normally used in other parks to be used where possible. Unless the park is closed at night, pedestrian standard lighting provided along main routes. May include statues and sculptures.
Visitor information	Comprehensive signage to be provided that includes as appropriate: Interpretation panels describing history and special values or features. Map of the park. Guided trail(s). Information and control signage at all entrances. Directional signage at path junctions. Educational information and plant labels.
Gardens and plant collections	High quality horticultural displays will be developed that may include mixed shrubs, roses, perennials or annuals as appropriate.
Play equipment	Dependent on the purpose and use of the park, development of high quality playground will be undertaken to standard above that normally provided at neighbourhood parks. Play equipment suitable for pre-school, junior and senior children’s play may be provided.
Water features	Dependent on the nature or topography of the park opportunities for the development of water features such as lakes, ponds, streams or fountains may be included.
Buildings	Cafes/restaurants and visitor centres may be provided. Maintenance buildings, aviaries and small zoological displays may also be provided.

2.6.4 Service Delivery Standards

Services operated and maintained to a high standard as appropriate to its purpose that clearly identifies that these parks are of a “special” high value.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass maintenance	Highest quality grass mowing standard for high use and garden areas.
Horticulture	Highest quality garden maintenance standard for garden areas.
Weed control	Highest quality garden maintenance standard applied to achieve a “weed free” environment.
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structures to be maintained in “as new” condition, free from any breakages, damage or graffiti. Monthly inspections and non-urgent repairs within three days. Bridges inspected six monthly. Paint coatings to be unfaded and free from chips/flaking.
Gardens	All garden areas will be maintained to a high standard.
Play equipment	Play equipment to be maintained in accordance with NZS 5828:2004 Inspection regime based on the following: Visual – Monthly, 3 monthly Structural - Annual To be maintained in “as new” condition, free from any breakages, damage or graffiti. Paint coatings to be unfaded and free from chips/flaking.
Litter	Litter bins to be emptied before overflowing (minimum three times per week). All sites left in litter free state following any visit and collected prior to any mowing operation. Minimum of three weekly inspections.
Graffiti/vandalism repair	Removed/repared within one working day.
Trails and hard surfaces	Shall be kept free of litter and detritus.
Toilet cleaning	Cleaning shall be undertaken daily or more frequently if required. More frequent servicing shall be scheduled during events or peak usage.

2.7 Cultural Heritage Parks

Cultural heritage parks primarily relate to the cemeteries but also included a small number of heritage sites such as pa sites and redoubt

2.7.1 Description

Cemeteries are provided to provide a location for interments and remembrance. The primary objective is to create a respectful environment that is attractive, restful and suitable for reflection and grieving. Cemeteries will require a high level of development to meet their purpose and visitor needs. They are included within the park network to reflect the wide range of uses and values cemeteries provide.

Other heritage parks include historic elements or other links with cultural history that are managed with the primary purpose of preserving the significant heritage values and features, and enabling appropriate public access, education and remembrance. e.g. pa sites and Alexandra Redoubt.

Examples include Alexandra Redoubt Reserve at Tuakau, Kingitanga Reserve Ngaruawahia.



Tuakau Cemetery

2.7.2 Provision

Provision of cemeteries will meet the future interment needs of the community to provide appropriate sites for burial close to the main population centres and towns.

The provision and location of cemeteries will be reviewed in more depth through a separate Cemeteries Strategy to assess current levels of available land and future demand.

2.7.3 Development Standards

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	Off-street car parking is provided on the street frontage. Sealed roadway provided through the cemetery for public, burial and maintenance access.
Toilets	Medium quality toilets provided at main sites.
Trails	Access pathways in larger lawns.
Furniture and structures	Standard quality seats and refuse bins. Water taps provided for public use, at convenient locations throughout the cemetery.
Visitor information	Entrance name sign and site/lot location map.
Gardens	Shrub gardens will be developed at the main sites that enhance amenity values and provide an attractive and peaceful environment.
Buildings	Maintenance buildings may be provided.

2.7.4 Service Delivery Standards

Cemeteries will be maintained to a consistently high standard.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass maintenance	Medium to high standard (no collection of clippings).
Horticulture	High quality garden maintenance standard.
Vegetation control	Standard weed control standard for fence-lines, structures and car parks to maintain a tidy appearance consistent with grass standard.
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structure maintenance will be focused on maintaining good structural condition and a tidy appearance. Provide adequate water taps throughout site. Monthly inspection and non-urgent repairs within one week.
Litter	Litter bins to be emptied before overflowing (minimum once per week). All sites left in litter free state following any visit and collected prior to any mowing operation. Minimum of once weekly inspection.
Hard surfaces	Shall be kept free of litter and detritus.
Toilet cleaning	Cleaning shall be undertaken three times weekly or more frequently as required.
Bookings/customer service	Pre sales of plots will be allowed Burials arranged via funeral directors or directly with Council. Burial records search provided on-line and via office staff.
Burial services and grave reinstatement and maintenance	Provided as required by on-site staff to ensure a high level of customer satisfaction is achieved at all times.
Fees and Charges	Annual review of fees and charges for all interment services.

2.8 Civic Parks

2.8.1 Description

Areas open space provided within retail/business areas, designed to provide a space for visitors to the town centre, casual gatherings, meetings, relaxation, lunchtime, etc. These areas will have a high standard of development and presentation associated with their high profile location and visitor usage.

Civic Parks also provide for the location of public and community buildings such as community halls and swimming pools.

Examples include Tuakau War Memorial Hall and Huntly Information Centre

2.8.2 Provision

The size of civic parks can vary widely from a few hundred square metres up to a hectare or more for large squares and community buildings. Provision is largely dependent on historic design, but consideration should be given to the creation of civic parks in all new business/retail centre developments.

Civic parks are located in central locations that are easily accessible or where a natural point of congregation will occur.

No further civic parks are envisaged within the Strategy planning period.

2.8.3 Development Standards

Facilities and amenities provided to a high standard as appropriate to its purpose.

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Transport provision	Off-street car parking may required for community buildings.(Also refer District Plan parking provision requirements)
Trails and paved areas	High quality paved surfaces will provided for both function and decorative purposes.
Furniture and structures	High quality furniture, fencing, lighting and structures provided. Seats, bins, tables, lights etc. to be of a consistent brand /style. Use of specifically themed or quality furniture and structures to match other central business furniture design. Amenity and feature lighting provided to add night time ambience and security.
Art works and special features	Art works and special features to add interest and reflect Waikato's character and events will be provided where possible
Visitor information	Signage to be provided only where required: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation panels describing history and special values or features.
Gardens	High quality gardens will be developed that may include mixed shrubs, perennials or annuals as appropriate.
Grass areas	Good quality turf grass will be provided.
Play equipment	Will not generally be provided.

2.8.4 Service Delivery Standards

Services operated and maintained to a high standard to ensure consistent high level of presentation for visitors to the town.

Services	Maintenance Standard
Grass maintenance	Highest quality grass mowing standard, with clippings collected and mechanical edging.
Horticulture	Highest quality garden maintenance standard.
Weed control	Highest quality weed control standard applied to achieve a "weed free" environment. (Grade 1 amenity Specification).
Furniture and structure maintenance	Structures to be maintained in "as new" condition, free from any breakages, damage or graffiti. Response and repair to any observed or reported damage within 24 hours or as soon as practicable.
Litter	Litter bins to be emptied three times weekly (or as required before overflowing). Daily loose litter inspection and collection.
Hard surfaces	Shall be kept free of litter and detritus.

2.9 Trees

While trees are not a specific parks category, due to their significance in the parks environment a level of service has been specifically developed for tree provision and management.

The Council's tree policy also provides additional direction on the provision and management of trees

2.9.1 Description

Many parks and streets are planted with trees to enhance the landscape, provide shade, shelter, cooling and visual interest. Management of trees is usually split between parks and street trees. Street trees traditionally require the most management due to the negative issues that can be caused to neighbours and street users.

2.9.2 Provision

Park Trees

Opportunities to establish trees as appropriate to the site and location will be maximised. Typically these will be on the neighbour's boundary to create sense of enclosure and shelter and to minimise the use of area available for active recreation as appropriate to the site.

Street Trees

Provision of street trees has historically been provided in certain streets where either berms, community desire or traffic calming/amenity has resulted in their establishment. Currently there are 2500 street trees.

Street trees will generally be provided where:

- there is sufficient public support
- there is sufficient space to accommodate root zone development (the minimum requirement is 1.2m. wide)
- street trees are unlikely to cause significant long term management problems (such as potential conflict with overhead wires, underground services, traffic visibility and alternative road plans)
- trees will enhance the quality of the streetscape.

2.9.3 Development Standards

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
New tree planting	<p>The designs for new tree planting shall be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The relationship of trees with their surroundings in terms of character, form, amenity and ecological value • The foreseeable effects of trees in relation to shade, views, services and potential damage to built structures <p>The scale of trees in terms of built structures in relation to potential size and numbers of trees used in the design.</p>
Street tree planting	<p>The actual placement of individual street trees shall be based on the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall design of the street planting • the proximity to and likely effect on overhead wires • the proximity to and likely effect on underground services • the effect on vehicular and pedestrian access and sight visibility • the possibility of alternative roading plans such as road widening and intersection improvements.
Consultation – Street trees	<p>Consultation with local residents and property owners will be undertaken, wherever this is appropriate, before any major street tree planting is undertaken. In commercial areas wider public consultation, with business owners for instance, will be undertaken if necessary. Consideration will be given to written requests from residents not to have a street tree outside their property, and a decision will be based on how critical the tree is to the overall design for the street.</p>

Services and Facilities	Development Standard
Consultation - Park trees	Park tree planting will generally be a of a routine nature and consultation will only be required where an extensive planting or replacement programme is proposed or the overall effect of the planting will significantly change the nature of the park.

2.9.4 Service Delivery Standards

Services	Maintenance Standard
Overall objective	To promote maintenance of trees in a safe, healthy and natural form. Priority for work shall be based on: (a) health and structural safety of the tree (b) essential service clearance (c) form pruning for desirable clearance and amenity effects.
Street tree inspections	All street trees are to be inspected every 4 years and where areas of possible failures are noted, specific more detailed inspections, may be required by a qualified arborist.
Street tree maintenance	A remedial work schedule will be developed for annual completion to fit the approved budget. The general service level is to ensure that each street tree receives maintenance, if required, every 4 years. Specifically identified trees requiring a greater level of maintenance will be identified and recorded for annual maintenance. Scheduled maintenance will include corrective pruning to improve the long term shape of the tree, removal of dead or dangerous branches, crown lifting and thinning to improve visibility for road users and to ensure warning signs are visible. All scheduled work will be undertaken to established arboricultural practices.
Emergency works	These works might arise as a result of sudden tree breakage, accident or local emergency access requirement. Generally the works undertaken will be to make a hazard safe while also complying with sound arboriculture practices.
Park tree inspections	Park trees are to be inspected over a five year period and where areas of possible failures are noted, specific more detailed inspections may be required by a qualified arborist. Park tree inspections will be documented, as and when, they are undertaken.

2.10 Network Design

2.10.1 Park Distribution

While total provision of parks within a community provides an indicator of the adequacy or otherwise of recreational open space for a given population, an equally important factor is the distribution of particular types of parks across the urban environment.

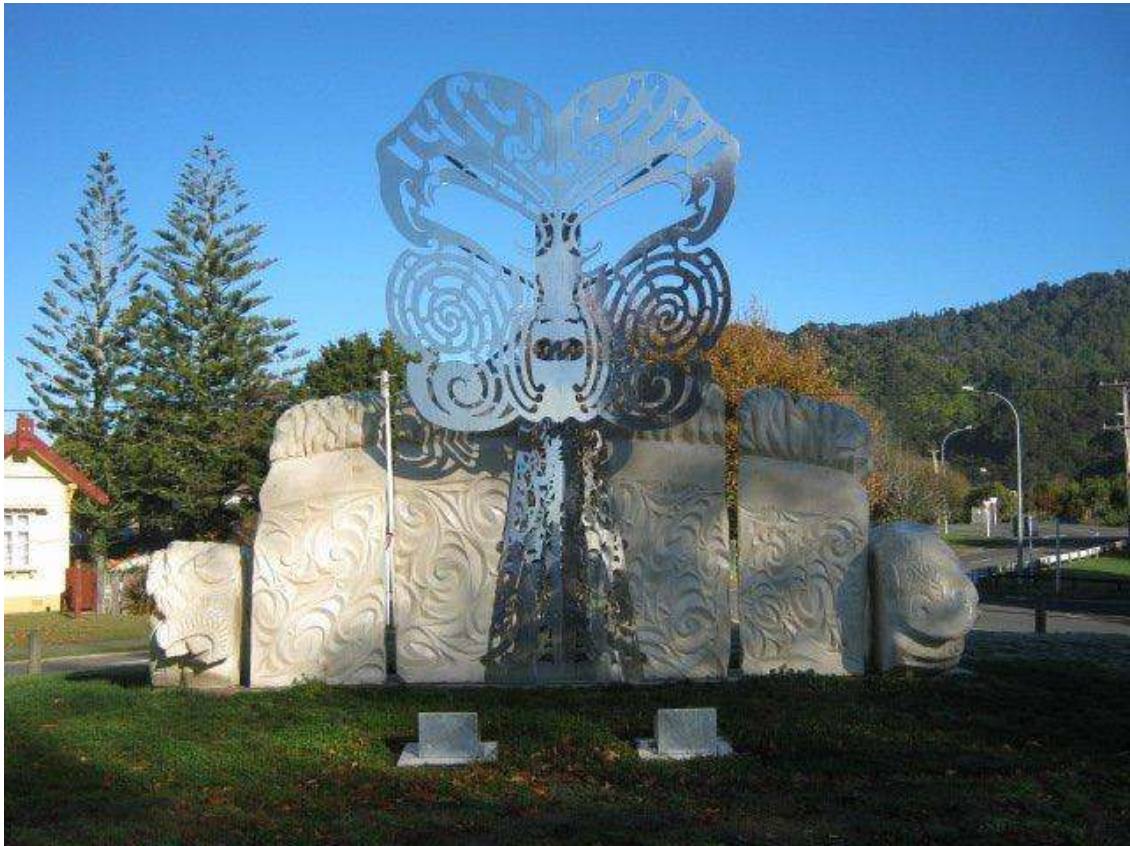
Well-balanced provision of the different types of park land throughout the urban environment is critical to ensuring people have good access to a variety of recreational experiences.

Good distribution of parks is also critical in enhancing the landscape values of an urban area. The distribution of parks of varying size and style and the linking of these with corridors of green space provides an attractive environment and a greater sense of “liveability”.

Distribution of future parks will be based on the following guidelines:

- Sports and Recreation are predominantly located around the three main residential centres of Huntly, Ngaruawahia and Raglan to meet local community needs for sports fields and facilities.
- Neighbourhood Parks will be located throughout the urban areas designed to provide an area of open green play space within easy walking of any home in a residential zone, and to create or enhance urban connectivity.
- Recreation and Ecological Linkages will be provided to create pedestrian/cycle linkages and landscape/ecological corridors between parks, and to enhance off-road transportation routes. Where natural topographical features occur, such as waterway or drainage routes, then these are likely to be provided as parks as part of subdivision development. However, it is important that these linkages are provided even where these natural opportunities are not present.
- Nature Parks will be provided to protect natural areas of significance and to provide recreation opportunities consistent with their character.
- Outdoor Adventure parks will be provided at selected locations that present opportunities to meet the needs for developed adventure recreation facilities and activities such as equestrian, motorised and load activities that are not compatible with urban environments or mixing with other recreation activities.

SECTION 3: CURRENT PROVISION



3.0 Current Provision Analysis

3.1 Overall District Park Provision

The following comparative information has been obtained from the 2014 Yardstick Report. The 2014 Yardstick figures have been used so that a comparison can be made with the other "peer" organisations. The comparison of land against population is based on the 2013 Census.

Waikato District's provision of publically accessible parks is 1,996 hectares⁴. This equates to a provision of 31.5 ha/1,000 residents. The median in New Zealand is 15.1 hectares.

For more accurate comparison purposes the parks are split between:

A - Actively maintained/urban park - 599 hectares at 9.4 hectares per 1,000 residents compared to national median of 8 hectares per 1,000 residents.

B - Natural/conservation park – 1,398 hectares at 22 hectares per 1,000 residents compared to Yardstick national median of 7.0 hectares per 1,000 residents.

The following table and chart shows the maintained and natural land provision of six similar sized organisations (by resident base) and Waikato District⁵.

Organisation	Hectares of Maintained Park per 1,000 residents	Hectares of Natural/Conservation Park per 1,000 residents
Whangarei District	8.2	5.4
Hastings District	5.9	2.2
Rotorua District	8.7	8.3
Waikato District	9.4	22.1
South Waikato District	2.6	1.3
Waimakariri District	7.7	6.9
Kapiti Coast District	8.9	0.7
Tasman District	10.0	2.8
Waipa District	6.6	59.4
Median	8.2	5.4

For maintained /urban parks, Waikato District is slightly above the median benchmark for both the peer group and nationally.

For natural areas, Waikato District has the second highest provision, but is still significantly above the median benchmark for the peer group and nationally⁶.

An analysis of park distribution in the urban areas based on there being a park within 500m of all residential properties indicates that distribution and coverage is reasonably good in the major urban centres. The analysis of accessibility is based on access to Neighbourhood and Sports and Recreation parks, which provide space for play and active recreation, so in addition to these areas, there is also access to other park types.

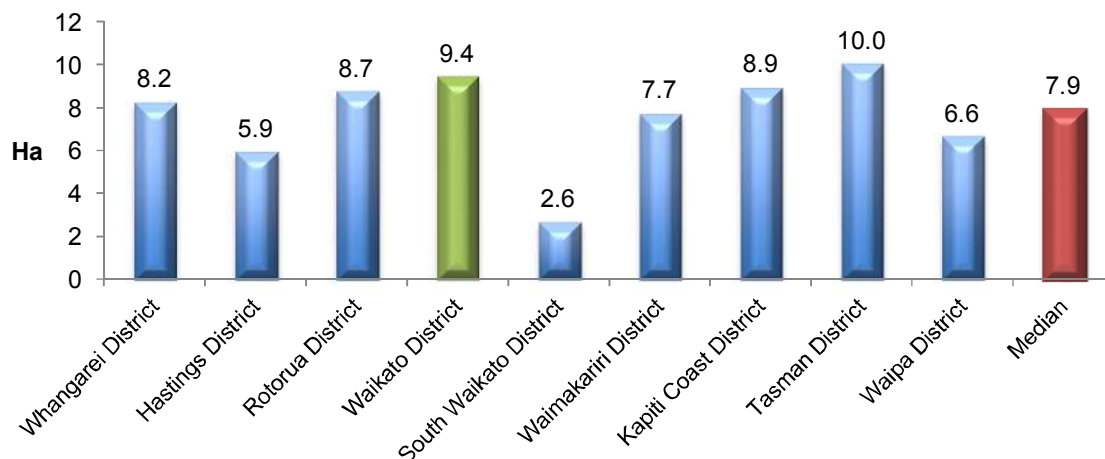
The major deficiency is in Tuakau, with a large gap in the centre/south area of the town. This is also consistent with overall parks provision in Tuakau being below the level of service target.

⁴ Area sourced from "WDC parks land areas Master v3" updated August 2014

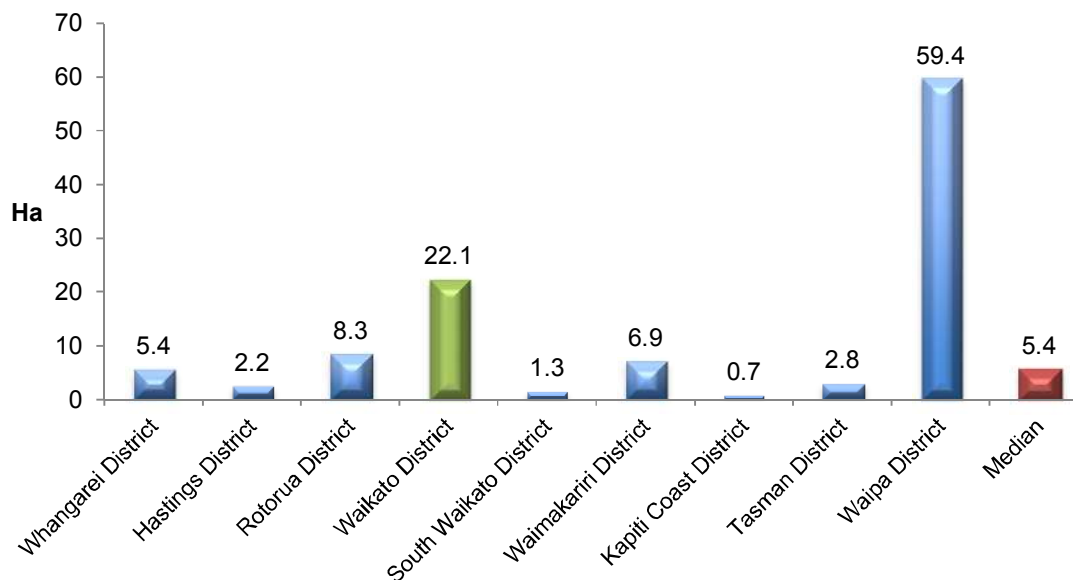
⁵ 2014 Yardstick Report.

⁶ 2014 Yardstick Report.

Hectares of Maintained Park per 1,000 residents



Hectares of Natural/ Conservation Park per 1,000 residents



Note: Includes both nature parks and recreation and ecological linkages categories

3.2 Park Provision by Park Category

The following comparisons, against each of the parks categories, use the updated land information contained in Appendix 6.1 of this strategy, with the 2014 Yardstick data.

3.2.1 Sports and Recreation

A total of 250 hectares is provided by Waikato District, which equates to 3.9 ha/1,000 residents. The NZRA Parks Categories 2011 identifies that common provision of Sports Parks is between 1.5 ha to 3.0 ha/1,000 residents. The median 2014 Yardstick figure for Sports Park provision is 2.4 ha/1,000 residents. The demographic group median is 2.1 ha/1,000 residents.

Waikato District's provision of sports and recreation parks is higher than all benchmark indicators.

3.2.2 Neighbourhood Park Provision

There are 52 hectares of neighbourhood parks in Waikato District. This equates to 0.8 ha/1,000 residents. The NZRA Parks Categories 2011 identifies that common provision of Neighbourhood Parks is between 1.0 ha to 1.8 ha/1,000 residents. The 2014 Yardstick median provision is 0.9ha/1,000 residents.

Whilst Waikato District has a low provision of neighbourhood parks, sport and recreation parks also provide space for neighbourhood use, such as children's playgrounds and areas for picnics and informal ball play.

3.2.2 Nature Park Provision

There are 1,098 hectares of nature parks in Waikato District, which equates to 17.3 ha/1,000 residents. The NZRA Parks Categories 2011 identifies that common provision of nature parks is between 5 ha to 15 ha/1,000 residents. The 2014 Yardstick median provision for nature parks is 4.0 ha/1,000 residents.

This indicates that overall the district has a very high provision of nature parks compared to other councils in New Zealand.

3.2.3 Recreation and Ecological Linkage Park Provision

There are 300 hectares of recreation and ecological linkage parks in Waikato District, which equates to 4.7 ha/1,000 residents. It primarily relates to ecological areas along waterways and has been grouped with the nature parks as un-maintained land.

There is no benchmark guideline for the provision of this type of park land as provision is very variable. The 2014 Yardstick median provision is 2.1 ha/1,000 residents. This indicates that the district has a high provision of recreation and ecological linkage parks in Council ownership.

3.2.4 Outdoor Adventure Park Provision

There are 213 hectares of outdoor adventure parks in Waikato District, which equates to 3.4ha/1,000 residents. Yardstick 2014 has identified that there is considerable variability from one organisation to another for the provision of outdoor adventure parks. The median provision is 2.6 ha/1,000 residents indicating Waikato's provision is similar to the median.

3.2.6 Public Garden Park Provision

A total of 7 hectares of public garden is provided, primarily the Woodland Homestead and Garden. This equates to 0.1 ha/1,000 residents. The NZRA Parks Categories 2011 references that the common Yardstick benchmark range is 0.1 ha to 0.2 ha/1,000 residents. The median 2014 Yardstick figure for public gardens is 0.5 ha/1,000 residents.

3.2.7 Civic Space Provision

A total of 13 hectares of civic space is provided which equates to 0.2ha/1,000 residents.

There is no benchmark guideline for the provision of civic space. The 2014 Yardstick median provision is 0.06 ha/1,000 residents. Waikato District includes community buildings in the civic parks category, which is likely to be the reason provision is slightly higher than the median.

3.2.8 Cultural Heritage Provision

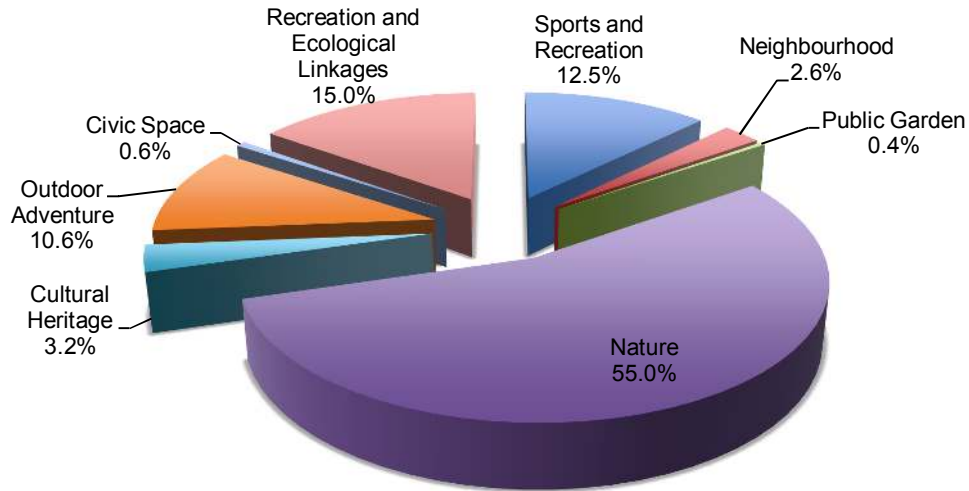
A total of 64 hectares of cultural heritage parks are provided, primarily comprising the cemetery areas. This equates to 1.0 ha/1,000 residents.

There is no benchmark guideline for the provision of cultural heritage parks. The 2014 Yardstick median provision is 0.2 ha/1,000 residents. This indicates that overall, the district has a higher than average provision of cultural heritage parks.

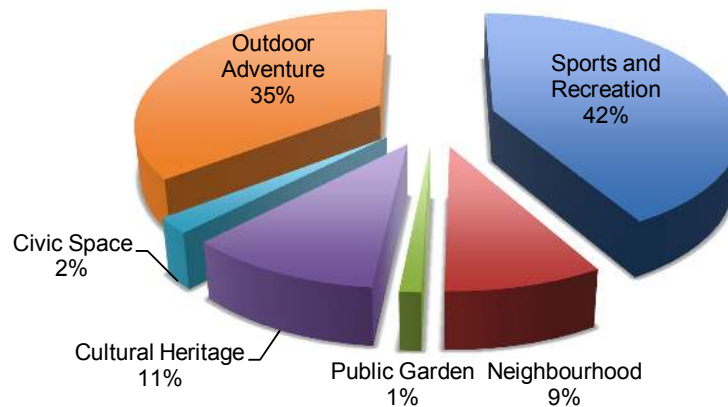
3.3 Summary of Provision

The following two pie charts show the proportions of park types that make up the District's park network.

Proportion of Waikato District Parks by Category



**Proportion of Maintained/Urban Parks by Category
(Excludes Nature and Recreation and Ecological Linkage Parks)**



3.3 Summary

In summary, Waikato District has an overall high provision of parks, primarily due to a very high provision of natural/conservation park areas.

Maintained/urban parks provision is similar to the peer group and the national benchmark.

Sports and Recreation park land provision is comparatively high.

Neighbourhood park provision is comparatively low, but sports and recreation parks providing local neighbourhood park functions may offset this deficiency.

Distribution of parks and access to areas for active play and recreation is generally very good in the urban areas, other than for an area in Tuakau.

3.4 Target levels of service

The following are the target levels of service for planning future provision of parks in the Waikato District based on current levels of service and national benchmarks.

These targets are provided as a guide only. They will provide a base guideline for:

- Calculating and determining park land provision in growth areas
- Provide indicators for long term planning purposes
- Support actions to fill significant gaps in levels of service
- Support disposal of surplus land
- Maintain levels of service consistent with national benchmarks

There is no implication that these target levels of service need to be, or could be achieved through changes to current park provision,

Category	Level of Service Target Ha/1,000 residents	Current Provision (Hectares)	Current Provision (Ha/1000 residents)
Maintained / urban park			
Sports and Recreation Parks	2.6	249.8	3.9
Neighbourhood Parks	1.5	51.9	0.8
Public Gardens	0.2	7.1	0.1
Civic Spaces	0.2	12.9	0.2
Outdoor Adventure	2.5	212.5	3.4
Cultural Heritage	1.0	64.2	1.0
Total	8.0	598.5	9.4
Nature / conservation park			
Recreation and Ecological Linkage	3.0	300.1	4.7
Nature Parks	4.0	1,097.7	17.3
Total	7.0	1397.8	22.1
Total	15.0	1,996.3	31.5

SECTION 4: PARK PROVISION BY COMMUNITY

4.1 Introduction

This section examines the provision and distribution of actively maintained (urban) parks across the district by an analysis of park provision in each of the district's main urban areas. It excludes the nature parks, as we are most interested understanding the availability of urban park land, which can be actively used for recreation purposes.

4.1 Huntly Township

4.1.1 Discussion

Total urban park provision

Urban park provision in the Huntly township area is 54.3 hectares, which equates to 7.8 hectares per 1,000 residents.⁷

This is similar to the target level of service of 8 hectares per 1,000 residents.

Neighbourhood Parks

There is a total provision of 20.3 hectares, which equates to 2.9 ha/1,000 residents. This is a higher level of provision compared with the rest of the district and the target level of service of 1.5ha/1,000 residents.

A neighbourhood or alternative park should also be available within ten minutes easy walk, or approximately 500 metres from each residential property.⁸

Sports and Recreation Parks

There is a total provision 17.7 hectares of Sports and Recreation Park land, which equates to 2.5 ha/1,000 residents, which is similar to the target level of service.

Recreation and Ecological Linkages

The majority of park provision in Huntly is nature parks with 635 hectares, at 91.4 ha/1,000 residents, which is a very high level of provision.

This is likely to be a reflection of historic park provision along the Waikato River and is therefore unlikely to be added to in the future. As a result, over time the provision ratio will decrease as population increases.

4.1.2 Huntly Summary

Huntly's current overall urban park provision is similar to the level of service guidelines, and this supplemented by a very high provision of nature park. Therefore provision is considered adequate to meet the current population level.

⁷ Based on 2012 Township populations used on the WDC Long Term Plan 2014

⁸ A 10 minute walking distance is widely considered an appropriate time to represent acceptable level of accessibility for planning purpose, however there is no particular standard or benchmark. This 10 minute guide is then interpreted into a distance with 600metres commonly used. For WDC it was decided that 800metres was an appropriate distance to use, to avoid creating the expectation for additional park provision in the rural villages

Predicted population growth is not significant and therefore there is unlikely to be a need to acquire additional parks, unless new subdivisional development occurs and neighbourhood parks are required to achieve the objective of a park with 800m of a residential property.

4.2 Ngaruawahia

4.2.1 Discussion

Total urban park provision

Urban park provision in Ngaruawahia area is 44.4 hectares, which equates to 8.4 hectares per 1,000 residents.

This is consistent with target level of service of 8 hectares per 1,000 residents.

Neighbourhood Parks

There is a total provision of 7.5 hectares, which equates to 1.4 ha/1,000 residents. This is consistent with the target level of service of 1.5ha/1,000 residents.

A neighbourhood or alternative park should also be available within ten minutes easy walk, or approximately 500 metres from each residential property.

Sports and Recreation Parks

There is a total provision 17.1 hectares of sports and recreation parks, which equates to 3.3 ha/1,000 residents, which is slightly above the target level of service.

Recreation and Ecological Linkages

There is a total provision 8.8 hectares, which equates to 1.7 ha/1,000 residents. This is half the level of service guideline of 3.0ha/1,000.

4.2.2 Ngaruawahia Summary

Ngaruawahia current overall urban park provision is consistent with the level of service guideline, and neighbourhood and sports and recreation parks are similar to the desired level of service. As such overall provision is considered adequate to meet the current population level.

Predicted population growth is not significant and therefore there is unlikely to be a need to acquire additional parks, unless new subdivisional development occurs and neighbourhood parks are required to achieve the objective of a park with 800m of a residential property.

4.3 Raglan

4.3.1 Discussion

Total urban park provision

Urban park provision in Raglan is 30.1 hectares, which equates to 10.6 hectares per 1,000 residents.

This is higher than the target level of service of 8 hectares per 1,000 residents.

Neighbourhood Parks

There is a total provision of 1.9 hectares, which equates to 0.68 ha/1,000 residents. This is considerably lower than the target level of service of 1.5ha/1,000 residents.

A neighbourhood or alternative park should also be available within ten minutes easy walk, or approximately 500 metres from each residential property.

Sports and Recreation Parks

There is a total provision 18.6 hectares of sports and recreation parks, which equates to 6.5 ha/1,000 residents, which is above the target level of service.

Recreation and Ecological Linkages

There is a total provision 8.3 hectares, which equates to 2.9 ha/1,000 residents. This is consistent with the level of service guideline of 3.0ha/1,000.

4.3.2 Raglan Summary

Raglan current overall urban park provision is higher than the level of service guideline. While neighbourhood park provision is low, this offset by a higher level of sports and recreation park provision. As such overall provision is considered adequate to meet the current population level.

Predicted population growth is not significant and therefore there is unlikely to be a need to acquire additional parks, unless new subdivisional development occurs and neighbourhood parks are required to achieve the objective of a park with 500m of a residential property.

4.4 Tuakau

4.4.1 Discussion

Total urban park provision

Urban park provision in Tuakau is 12 hectares, which equates to 2.8 hectares per 1,000 residents.

This is considerably lower than the target level of service of 8 hectares per 1,000 residents.

Neighbourhood Parks

There is a total provision of 1.7 hectares, which equates to 0.4 ha/1,000 residents. This is considerably lower than the target level of service of 1.5ha/1,000 residents.

A neighbourhood or alternative park should also be available within ten minutes easy walk, or approximately 500 metres from each residential property.

Sports and Recreation Parks

There is a total provision 6.9 hectares of Sports and Recreation Park land, which equates to 1.6 ha/1,000 residents, which is below the target level of service.

Recreation and Ecological Linkages

There is a total provision 3.0 hectares, which equates to 0.7ha/1,000 residents. This is lower than the level of service guideline of 3.0ha/1,000.

4.4.2 Tuakau Summary

Tuakau current overall urban park provision is well below the level of service guideline, both in total and across all park types.

There is a significant gap in the provision of active play and recreation space in the centre/south area from Buckland Road to Dromgools Rd.

Combined with a reasonably high predicted population growth there is strong need to identify and acquire additional park land in this area.

The following actions are recommended for Tuakau

- *Identify and acquire a total of approximately 25 hectares of suitable park land to increase neighbourhood and sports park provision to meet level of service targets for the current population*

4.5 Linkages – All areas

An important part of an effective parks network is the interconnection between our neighbourhoods and community's that ensure it is easy to walk and cycle between them. This encourages social connections, physical activity and enhances the overall "liveability of our urban areas.

Parks play an important role in providing these linkages – both between parks and also to connect neighbourhoods.

Due to the long-term incremental growth and development of our towns, these linkages are not particularly strong. As such we will work to improve and enhance community linkages through acquisition and development of linkage parks where opportunities arise. Planning for new development areas will ensure that the parks network is designed to maximise linkages.

SECTION 5: FUTURE DEMAND

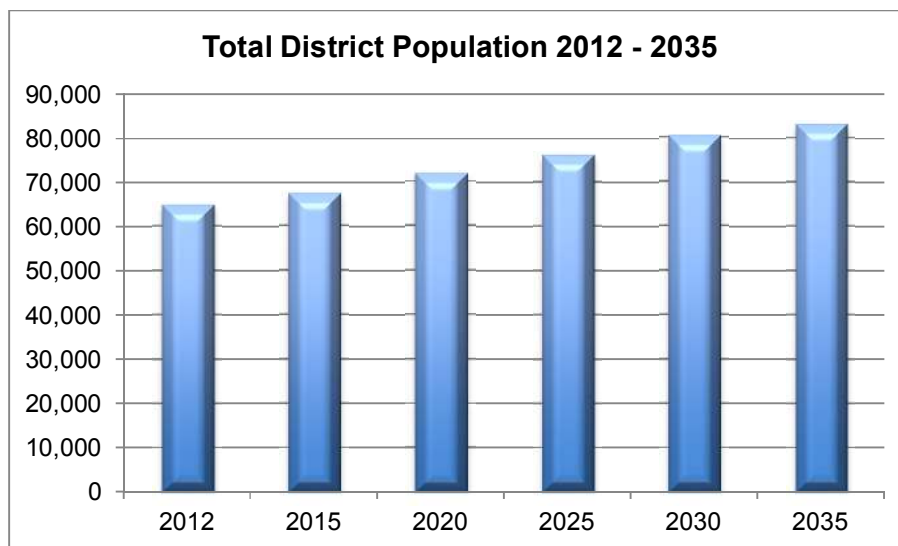


5.0 Future Demand

5.1 Demand Analysis

5.1.1 Trends

Based on population projections from the University of Waikato, the Waikato District population is projected to increase by approximately 8,841 to 76,142 by 2025. This is an increase of 13.1% over the ten-year period from 2015 to 2025 (1.3% per year).



The majority of this growth will occur in the northern townships of Tuakau and Pokeno and surrounding areas. Growth in other townships is static or relatively low.

Waikato District Population Projection - By Village or Town

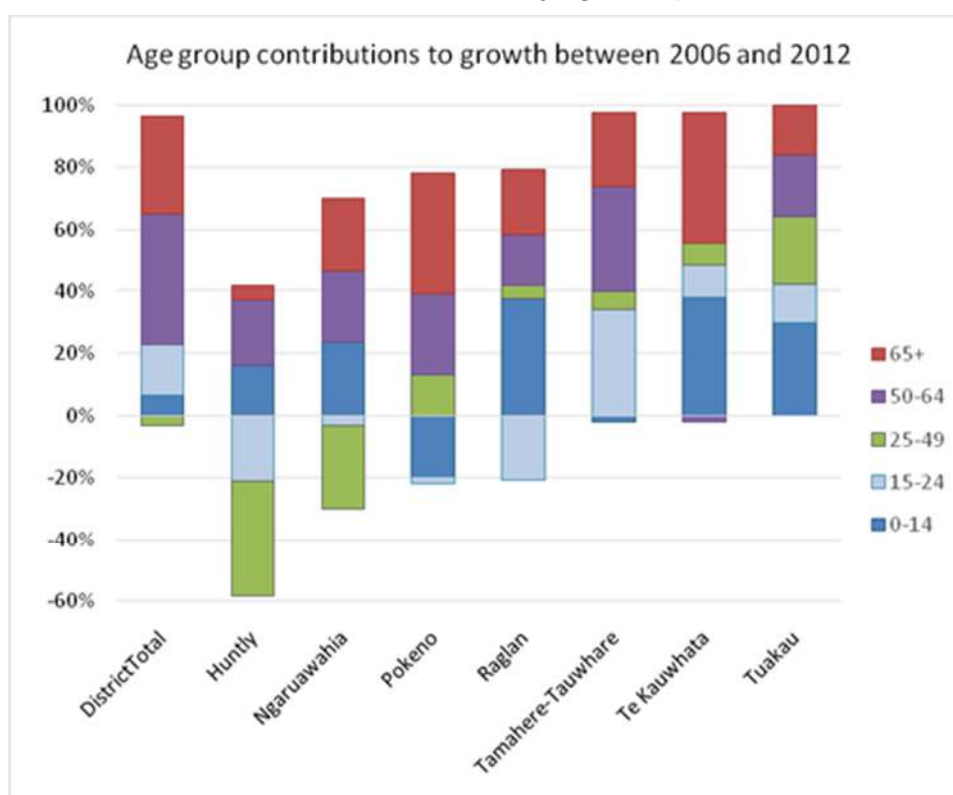
Settlement	2015	2020	2025	Change 2015-2025	
Towns					
Huntly	6,985	6,970	6,950	-35	-0.5%
Ngaruawahia	5,299	5,361	5,456	157	3.0%
Pokeno	1,508	2,492	3,417	1,909	126.6%
Raglan	2,729	2,729	2,728	-1	0.0%
Te Kauwhata	1,771	2,271	2,793	1,022	57.7%
Tuakau	4,844	5,451	6,064	1,220	25.2%
Waikato Towns Total	23,135	25,274	27,408	4,272	18.5%
Rural Villages					
Eureka	116	124	133	18	15.3%
Gordonton	210	225	240	30	14.3%
Horotiu	588	615	643	55	9.3%
Mangatangi	45	46	48	3	6.8%
Mercer	159	164	169	11	6.8%
Maramarua	70	75	79	8	12.0%
Matangi	476	518	560	84	17.7%
Meremere	499	526	496	-3	-0.6%
Naike	16	16	17	1	7.3%
Onewhero	125	130	134	9	7.3%
Port Waikato	947	981	1,017	70	7.3%
Pukekawa	31	32	34	2	7.3%
Otaua	97	101	105	8	7.9%
Tamahere CLZ	2,579	2,857	3,149	570	22.1%
Tauwhare	209	232	245	35	16.9%
Tauwhare PA	155	158	158	3	1.7%

Taupiri Community	440	440	442	1	0.3%
Te Kowhai	665	720	771	107	16.0%
Rangiriri	90	92	94	4	4.1%
Glen Afton	163	173	181	18	11.4%
Pukemiro	267	284	297	30	11.4%
Renown	122	130	136	14	11.4%
Glen Massey	267	284	297	30	11.4%
Whatawhata	375	414	451	77	20.4%
Waikato Rural Villages					
Total	8,710	9,337	9,895	1,186	13.6%

Population Demographics

The following chart shows the breakdown of age group contributions to growth within the main townships of the Waikato District between 2006 and 2012. The proportion of people aged 15 to 49 years living in Huntly and Ngaruawahia decreased and the proportion of people aged 50 years and above increased in all townships. This information suggests that the average age of the District's population is getting older with fewer families with children.

Contribution to Growth 2006 to 2012 by Age Group, Waikato District



Compiled from Statistics New Zealand, NZdotStat, Estimated Subnational Population (TA, AU) by Age and Sex at 30 June 2006-12 (2013 boundaries), Table Code 2346

Source: Births, deaths and migration in the Waikato district between 2006 and 2012, A. Marais, October 2013

Active Recreational Facilities

The implications of projected population changes for sports and recreation are that there would be decreasing demand for facilities for children and youth and perhaps less emphasis on competitive sports. However there is no evidence yet of any decline in overall demand for provision for sports areas or for youth facilities. This may be because of the diversity in codes played and because relatively informal sports such as touch rugby have shown growth nationwide.

Rugby and Rugby League continue to be the dominant senior sports actively played in the District. Soccer is increasingly popular and is popular with juniors. Centennial Park in Ngaruawahia has facilities for Netball, Rugby and an adjoining Rugby League Field. Huntly West sports field also has clubs and facilities for Tennis, Netball, Rugby, Rugby League, Softball and Cricket.

The trend to an aging population increase could result in a demand for rationalisation of existing facilities through amalgamation of centres of recreation or modification of sports facilities to serve the increased aging population. This is not expected to amount to a decrease in overall demand.

In summary there is likely to be some increased demand for a range of active facilities particularly combined centralised facilities and there is a need overall for more sports fields. Specific projects that will address these needs include the Raglan Recreation Centre and the proposed new sports field developments there and at Tamahere, Waerenga, Waitetuna and Duke Street in Ngaruawahia.

Walkways, Cycleways and Passive Recreation

In the foreseeable future, there is expected to be increasing emphasis on passive facilities such as walkways and swimming pools consistent with an aging population and visitor growth. This is also consistent with a general trend to greater emphasis on the environment and restoration of native vegetation and habitat on coastal and other waterside esplanades. The demand for amenity plantings and trees are a part of any passive appreciation of open space.

Demand is expected to mirror population changes especially in urban areas, but there is generally increasing demand for ecological management of open space.

5.2 Future Park Provision by Category

This strategy supports the existing park provision as appropriate, with the exception of additional land being required in the Tuakau area. Total provision of parks is high, however this is due to very high provision of natural and conservation land, which is unlikely to increase in the future, therefore the total ratio of parks will steadily decline as the population increases.

The important indicator is the provision of actively maintained (urban) parks and current total provision is consistent with the target of 8ha/1,000 residents.

Overall neighbourhood park provision is lower than the target level of service, however accessibility in all the main urban areas, other than Tuakau, is meeting the level of service requirement of an active recreation and play space within ten minutes walk of all urban residential properties.

5.2.1 Sports and Recreation Parks

Waikato District has an overall acceptable provision of sports and recreation parks, however with population growth in the north, particularly Tuakau, there will be need to identify and acquire additional land for sports and recreation parks.

Taking long term growth trends to 2045 into account, Tuakau requires a total of approximately 25 hectares of sports and recreation park land. This is approximately 18 additional hectares above current provision.

Additional land for sports and recreation parks need to be acquired in response to growth at a provision ratio of 2.6 ha/1,000 residents.

5.2.2 Neighbourhood Parks

Waikato District has a low provision of neighbourhood parks. However, it has a good provision of urban park generally and an analysis of park distribution in the main urban residential areas indicates that other than one area in Tuakau, there are no significant gaps in access to a park within the target of 800 metres.

Additional Neighbourhood Parks need to be acquired in response to growth at a provision ratio of 1.5 ha/1,000 residents.

5.2.3 Recreation and Ecological Linkage Parks

While Waikato District already has a high provision of recreation and ecological linkage parks, given the aging population, trends of increasing informal recreation and desire to protect and enhance environmental values, the need for this type of park land will continue in the future, particularly as a result of subdivision in growth areas.

Additional recreation and ecological linkage parks need to be acquired in response to growth at a provision ratio of 3.0ha/1,000 residents.

Over time, overall provision is likely to decrease by attrition as the population grows.

5.2.4 Outdoor Adventure Parks

Provision of additional land for outdoor adventure parks, will be considered on a case by case basis to take opportunity of suitable land becoming available to meet specific recreation needs that are otherwise not being met within the district.

5.2.5 Public Gardens

No further need for the acquisition of public gardens has been identified during the useful life of this strategy (10 years).

Over time, the ratio of public gardens will decrease by attrition as the population grows.

5.2.6 Civic Spaces

No further need for the acquisition of civic spaces has been identified during the useful life of this strategy (10 years).

5.2.7 Nature Parks

Waikato has a very high provision of nature parks, and no further need for the acquisition of nature parks has been identified during the useful life of this strategy (10 years).

Additional land may be considered if areas of significant value are identified and acquisition is considered desirable to protect the site for conservation and/or public access.

Over time, the ratio of provision of nature parks will decrease by attrition as the population grows.

5.3 Future Park Acquisition – District Wide

The following will be applied across the district for the acquisition of park land as a result of subdivisional development.

Acquire additional parks as a result of subdivisional growth to ensure good access to Sports and Recreation Parks, Neighbourhood Parks; pedestrian, cycle and ecological linkages; a balanced network of open space; and to achieve the target level of service.

SECTION 6 - APPENDICES



6.0 Appendices

6.1 Park Inventory Summary

The areas below have generally been derived from land title information. However some areas have been determined by GIS. The process of identifying and categorising the parks has only been initiated in 2014 for the development of this Parks Strategy. Confidence in the accuracy of the data is approximately 80% and it is expected that this information will continue to be refined over coming years to improve its accuracy and reliability.

Parks Inventory Summary - November 2014		Wards												
Category	Parks	Area (ha)	% of Total	Ha per 1,000 pop	Awaroa ki	Eureka	Hukanui-Waerenga	Huntly	Newcastle	Ngaruawahia	Onewhero-Te Akaunui	Raglan	Tamahere	Whangama Rino
Sports and Recreation	59	249.8	13%	3.9	52.4	3.8	54.8	20.7	6.7	17.2	50.5	25.7	9.4	8.6
Neighbourhood	66	51.9	3%	0.8	1.9	0.5	2.2	22.9	0.0	11.5	3.2	3.0	2.1	4.7
Public Garden	2	7.1	0.4%	0.1	0.0	0.0	6.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Natural	58	1,097.7	55%	17.3	42.8	0.0	253.0	678.8	1.2	21.9	37.4	50.8	4.4	7.3
Cultural Heritage	47	64.2	3%	1.0	20.7	1.8	3.6	8.8	5.3	14.0	2.6	2.1	0.0	5.4
Outdoor Adventure	15	212.5	11%	3.4	63.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.9	143.2	0.0	0.9
Civic Space	26	12.9	1%	0.2	3.8	0.3	1.0	0.9	0.0	0.6	5.6	0.0	0.0	0.7
Recreation and Ecological Linkages	393	300.1	15%	4.7	16.0	6.8	3.8	24.6	14.8	44.1	49.8	69.0	39.5	31.7
	666	1,996.3	100%	31.5										
Ward Totals														
Waikato DC Population - 2013	63,378				201.2	13.2	324.9	756.7	28.0	109.2	154.6	293.8	55.5	59.3
Maintained / Unmaintained split:					14.8%	0.6%	14.4%	10.1%	0.7%	16.3%	37.9%	1.4%	5.5%	7.7%
Contract / Managed parks		598.5	30%	9.4										
Natural / Open space parks		1,397.8	70%	22.1										

6.2 Strategy Implementation Plan

6.2.1 Introduction

The second stage of the Parks Strategy development process, will involvement the development of an Implementation Plan. This will involve a site inspection and analysis of each park to assess the current “development levels of service” of each park against the stated levels of service in the Parks Strategy. An analysis of park distribution will also be undertaken to assess in gaps in accessibility and any parks that are potentially surplus to requirements.

From the site inspections, a schedule of required new capital work will be identified, to bring the parks network up to the stated levels of service in the Parks Strategy. In some instances, assets may be identified for removal if they exceed the stated levels of service, however the more usual approach is to remove them when they reach the end of their useful life and not replace them.

A list of improvements will be identified for each park and an estimate of costs determined.

Each park will be assigned a park value comprised of a combination of the benefits of the physical site, and its potential use. A simple matrix will be used to categorise parks into high, medium and low value.

These park values will then used to determine the priority order of the upgrades, with high value parks being upgraded first, followed by medium value parks. As the implementation programme will have a period of ten years, low value sites are unlikely to be included, as they will fall into the 11-20 year period.

6.2.2 Park Values

Park values can be determined on several factors including the type of park, its setting, layout, current and future development and the types of activities undertaken. Recreational activities undertaken on a park reflect the value that people associate with an area and are often rated higher than aesthetic and existence values.

In providing a potential value rating of each park, the following will be taken into consideration:

- Park amenity value; using the aesthetic (natural beauty of the area) value and existence (knowing it is there) value, i.e. value of place.
- Recreation value; based on the use of an area for recreational activities, i.e. value of use.

These potential values are based on a high, medium and low basis, using the following matrix:

VALUES MATRIX	Place Value	Low	Medium	High
Use Value		The land area has limited aesthetic beauty and limited public perception that it is a park	The land may have a range of natural or ornamental settings and the park is locally recognised as a park	The land may have one or more outstanding natural or ornamental settings and is highly recognised for these aesthetics
Low	Very few activities possible to be undertaken on the park. May only include walking	LOW PLACE VALUE LOW USE VALUE		
Medium	Potential for a range of activities including active and passive pursuits, i.e. small ball games, running, dog exercise		MEDIUM PLACE VALUE MEDIUM USE VALUE	
High	Park provides either a range of active and/or passive activities or provides for specific activities that can not be provided in other locations in the region			HIGH PLACE VALUE HIGH USE VALUE

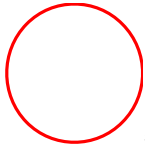
6.2.3 Current Development Levels of Service Assessment

To assist with consistency of approach, a matrix will be developed using the development levels of service identified in the Parks Strategy. The matrix will be used during site inspections to assess each park's compliance against the stated development level of service and to identify any over/under supply of service.

6.3 Maps

The following maps showing the location of the parks in the main towns and villages. A circle indicating 500-metre radius (10 minute walking distance) has been placed on neighbourhood and sports and recreation parks. The primary purpose of this exercise is to identify if there are any gaps in provision and accessibility.

6.3.1 Map Legend



500m radius catchment area for neighbourhood and sports parks



Sports Parks



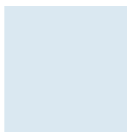
Neighbourhood Parks



Recreation and Ecological Linkage Parks



Cultural and Heritage Parks



Council land held for non park activities (commercial and utilities)

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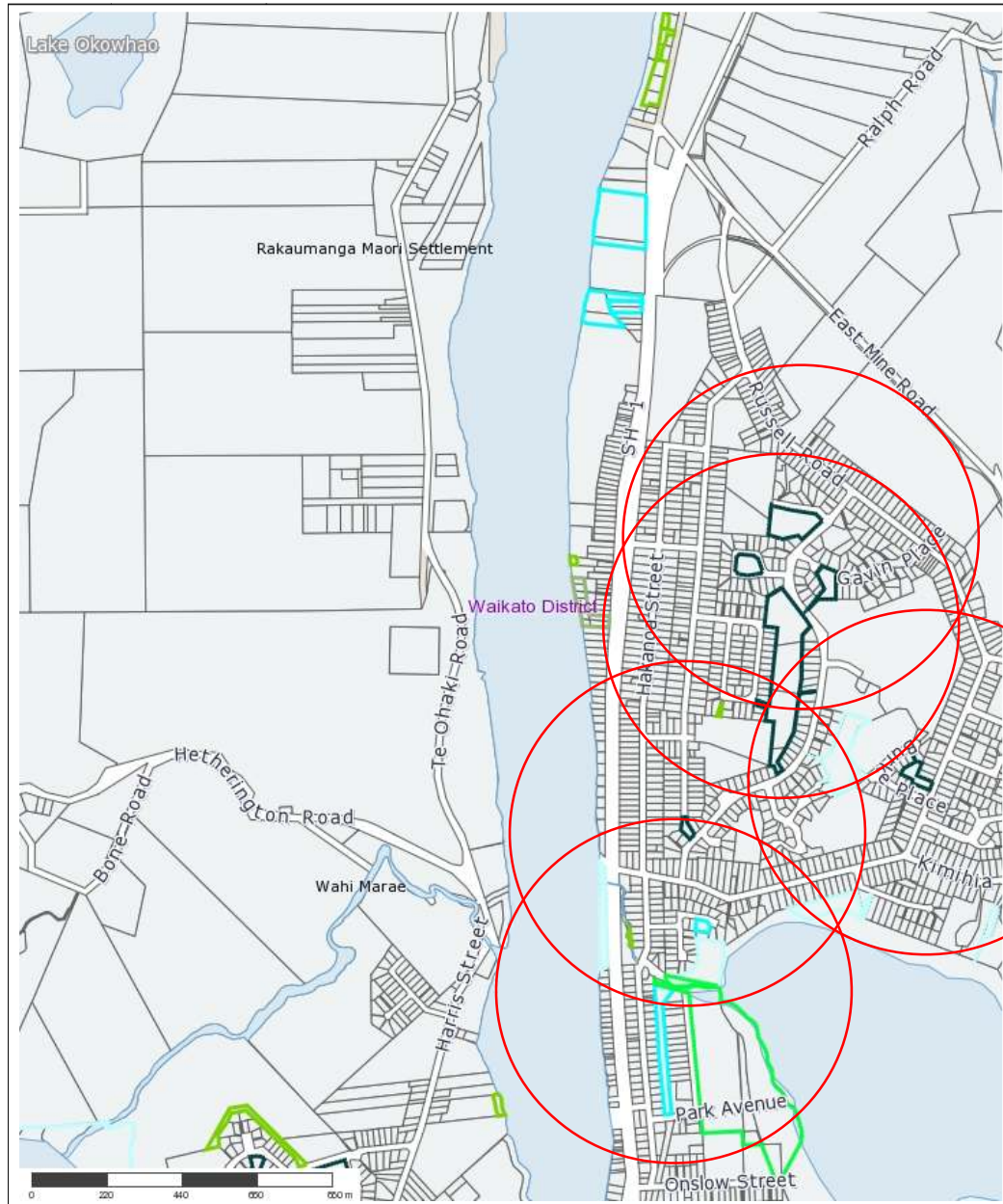
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6.3.2 Huntly North

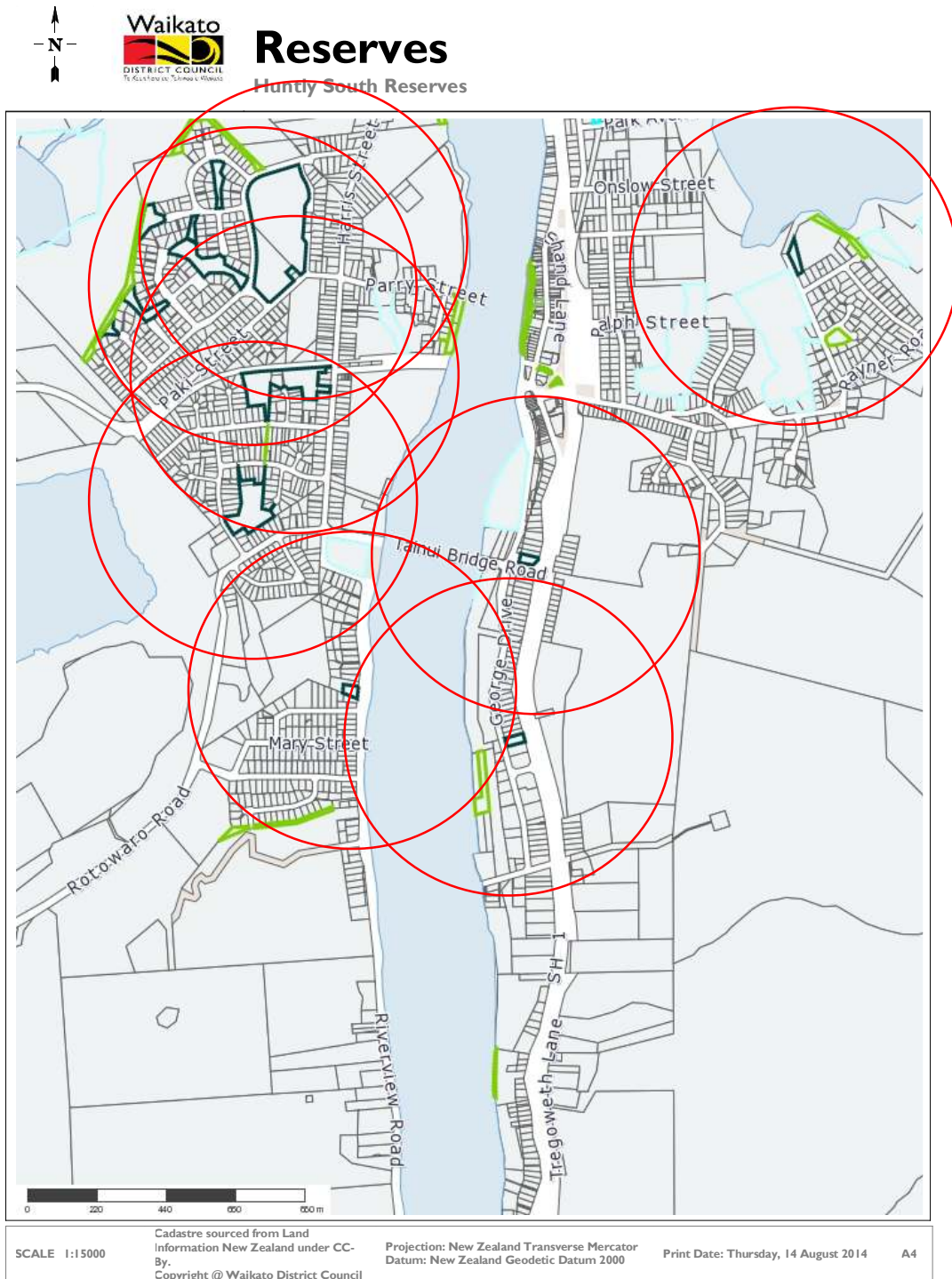


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Huntly North Reserves



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6.3.3 Huntly South

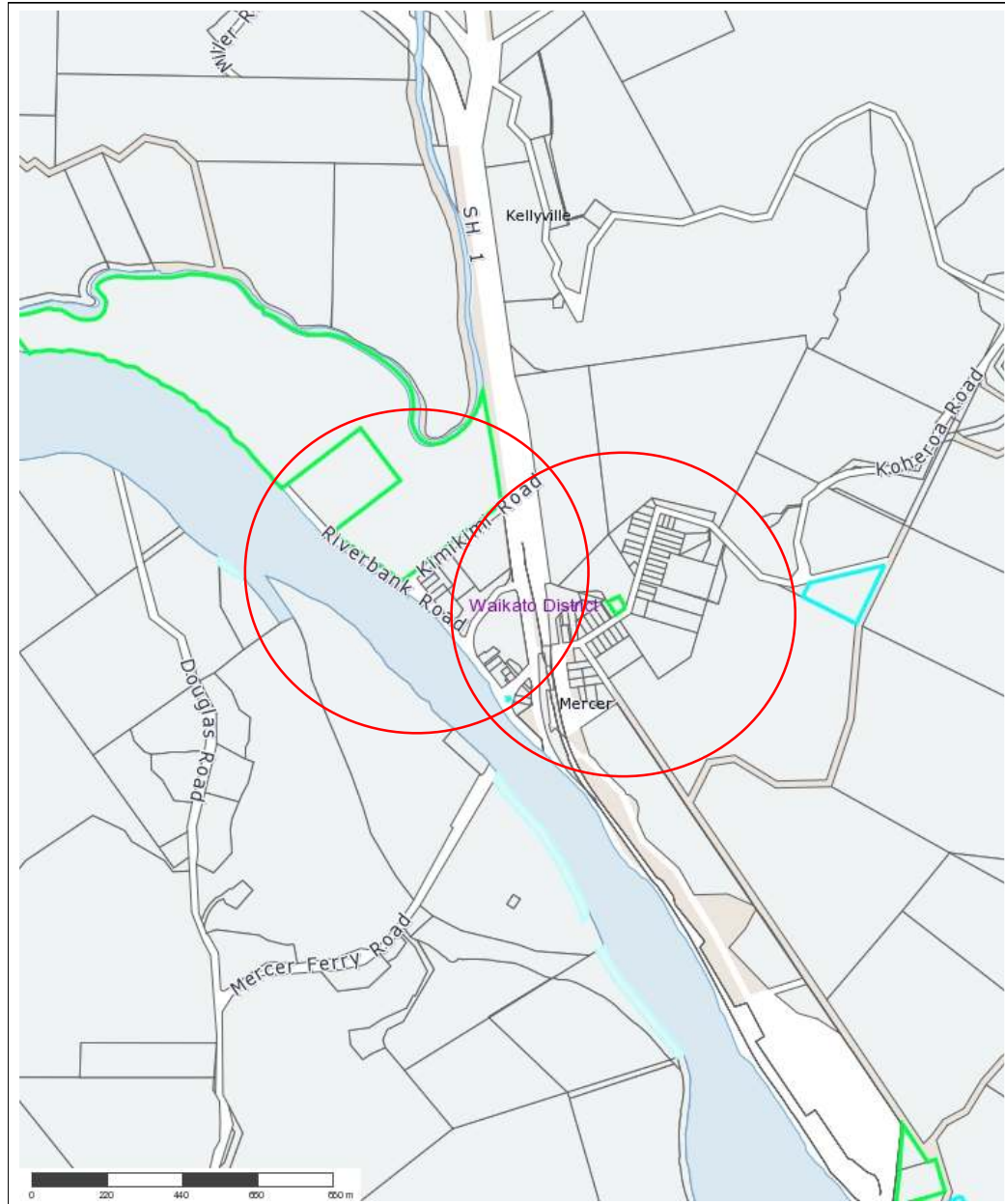


6.3.4 Mercer



Reserves

Mercer Reserves



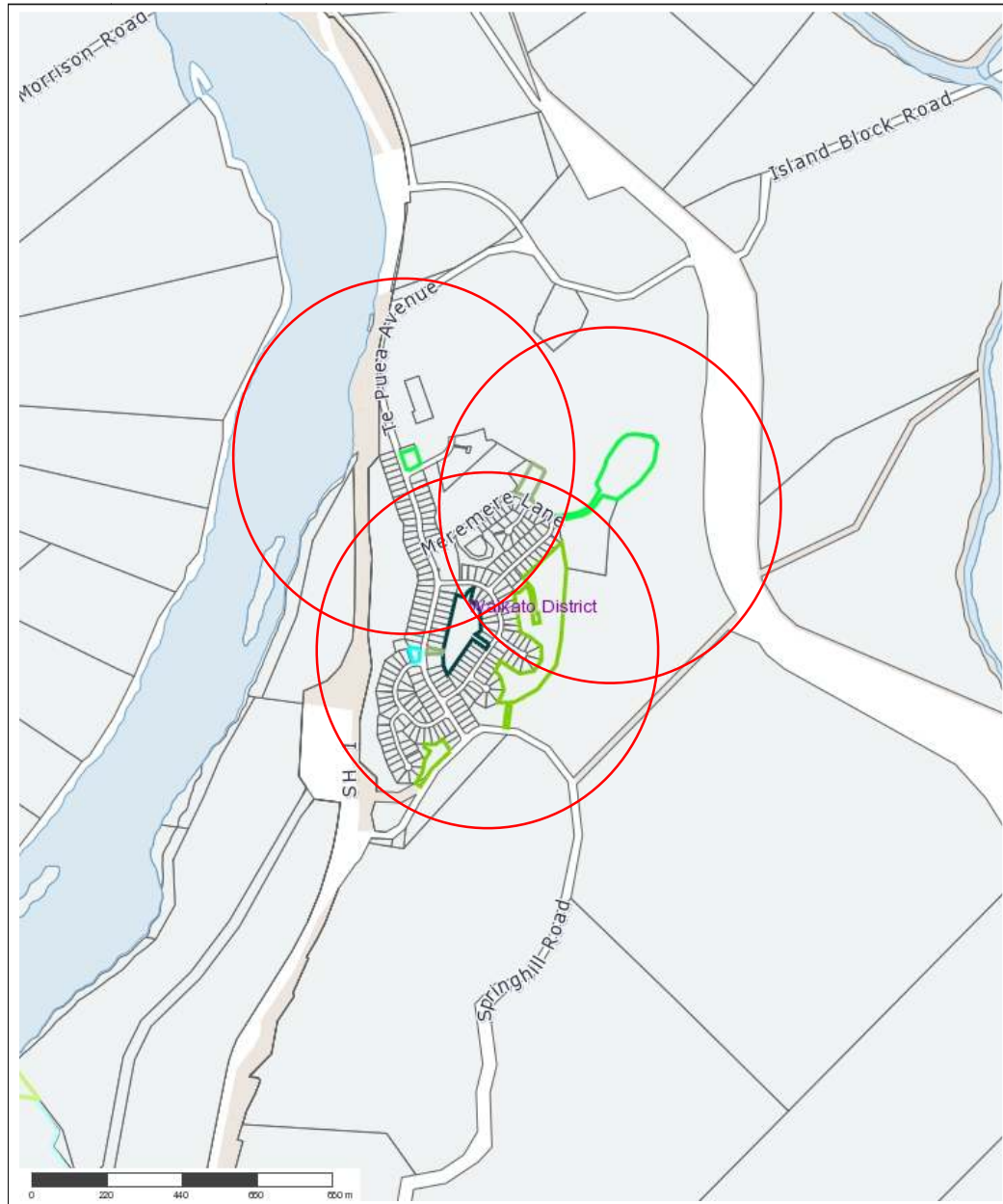
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6.3.5 Meremere



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Meremere Reserves



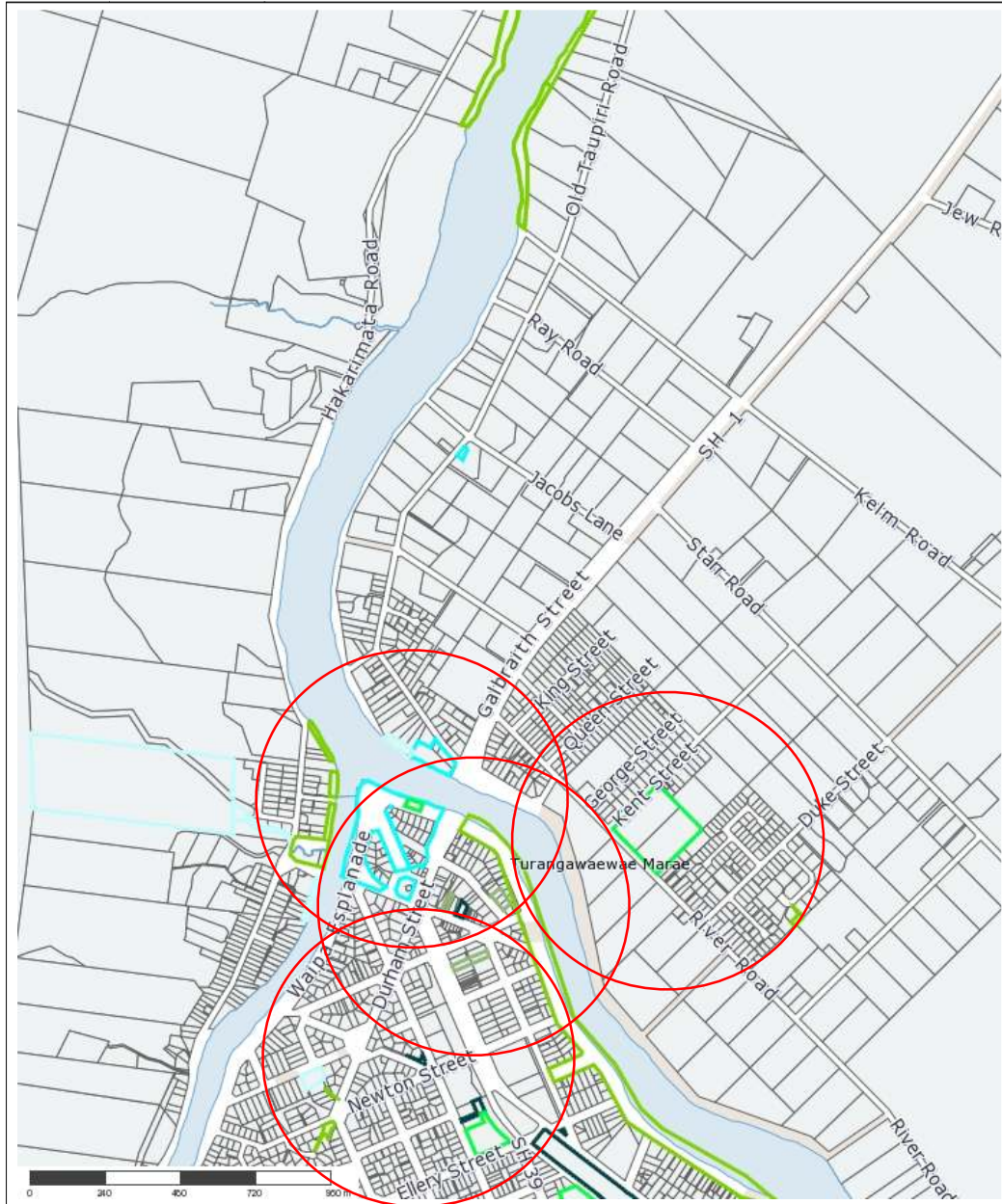
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6.3.6 Ngaruawahia North



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Ngaruawahia North Reserves



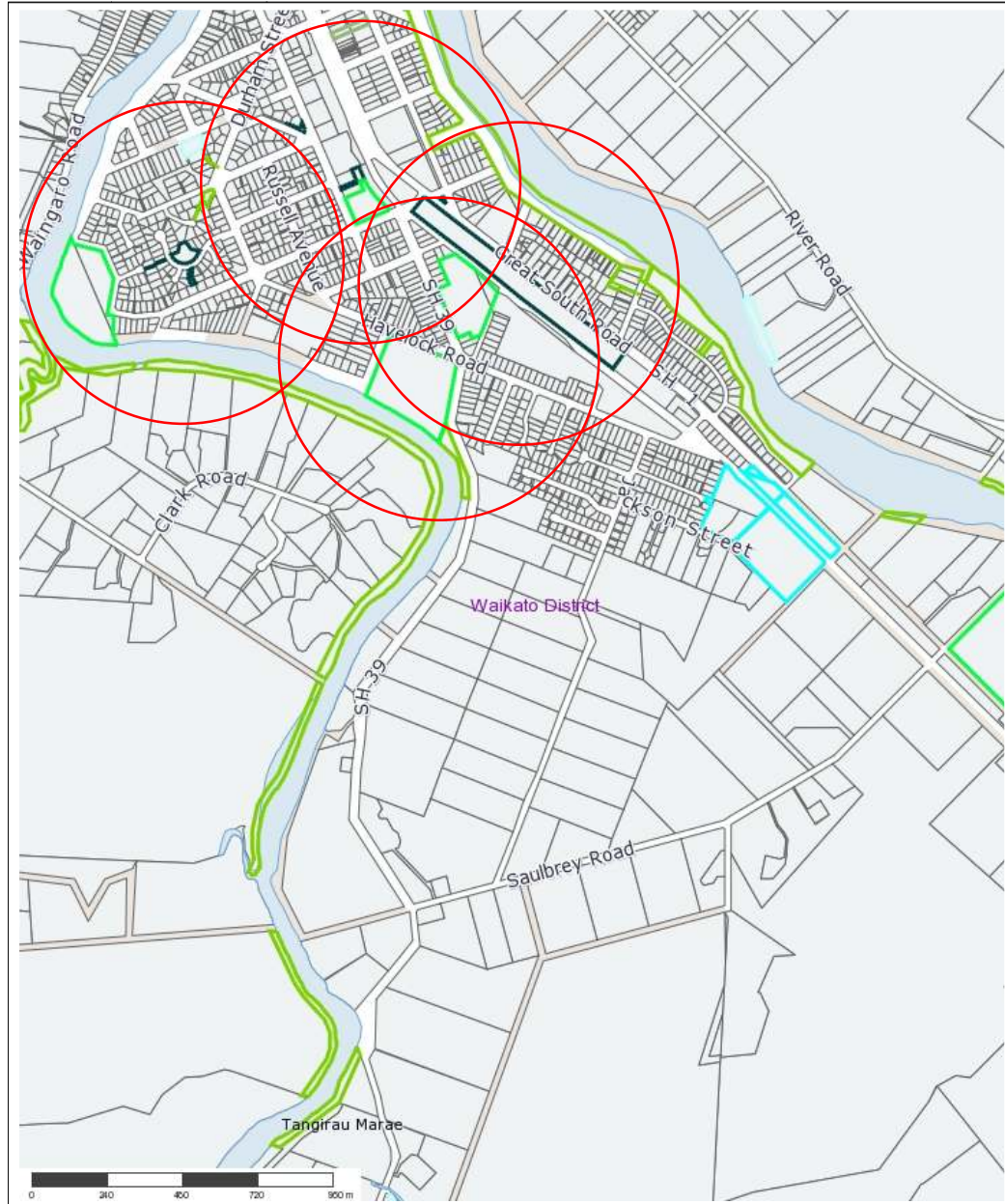
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6.3.7 Ngaruawahia South



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Ngaruawahia South Reserves



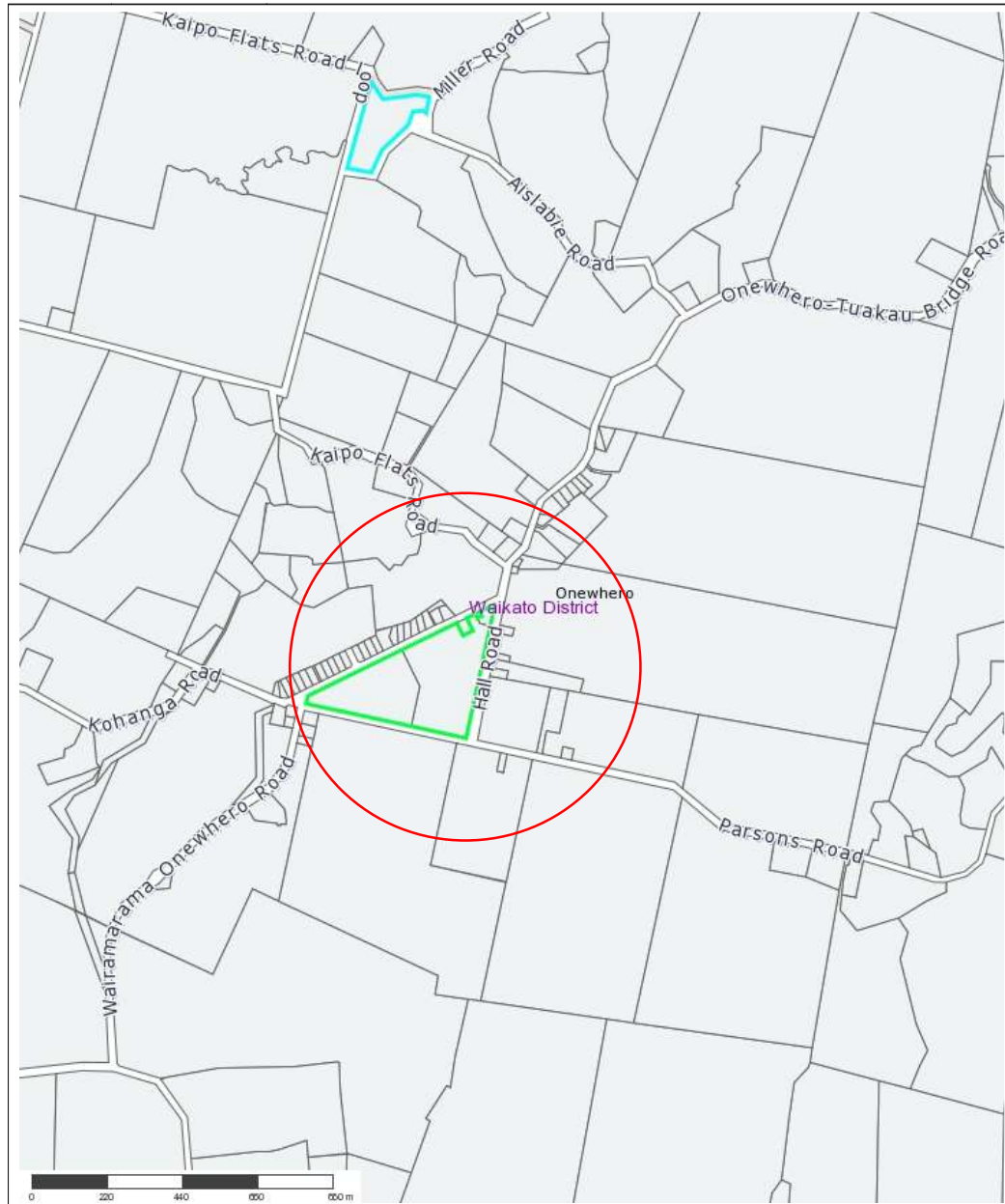
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6.3.8 Onewhero



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Onewhero Reserves



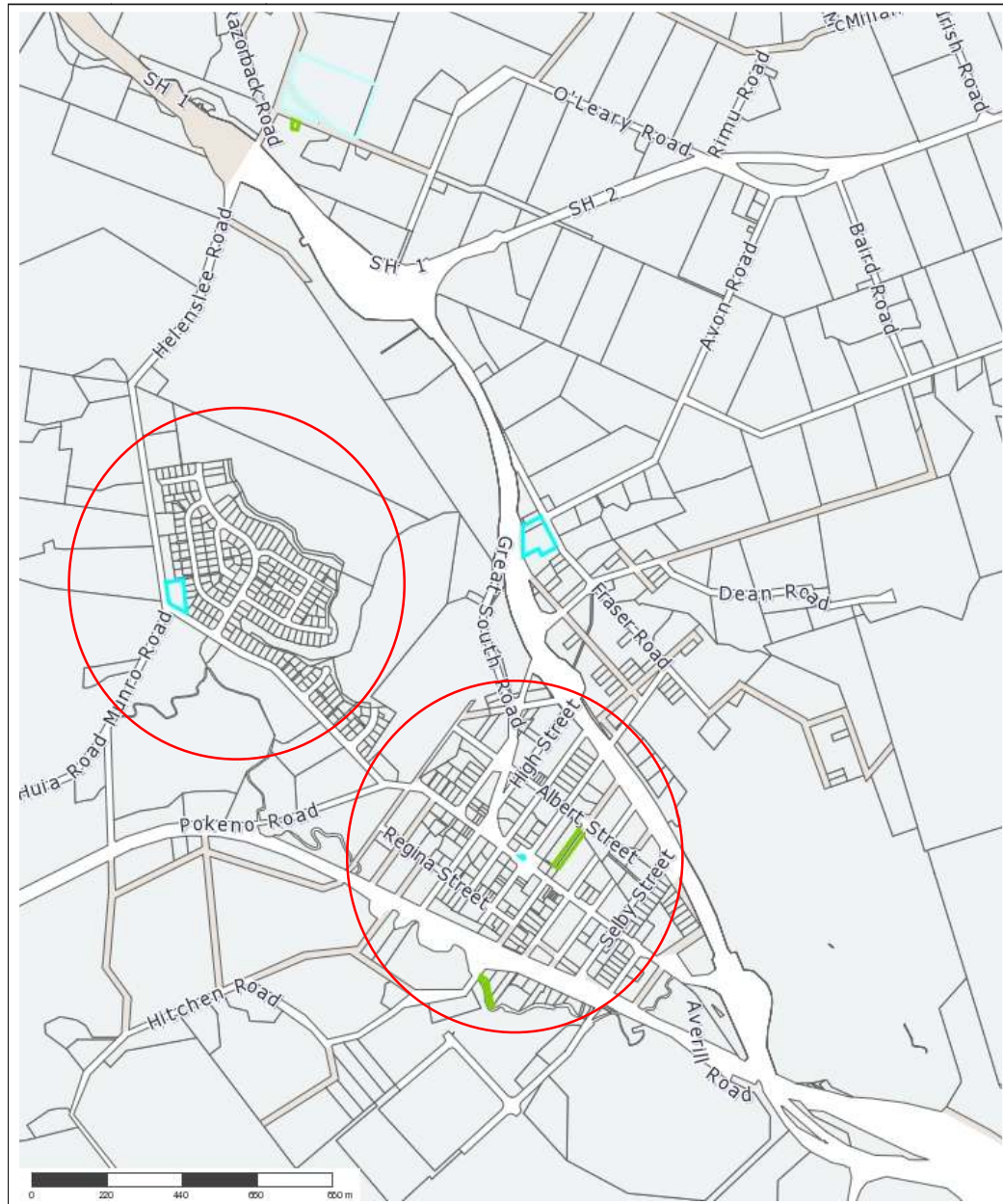
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6.3.9 Pokeno



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Pokeno Reserves



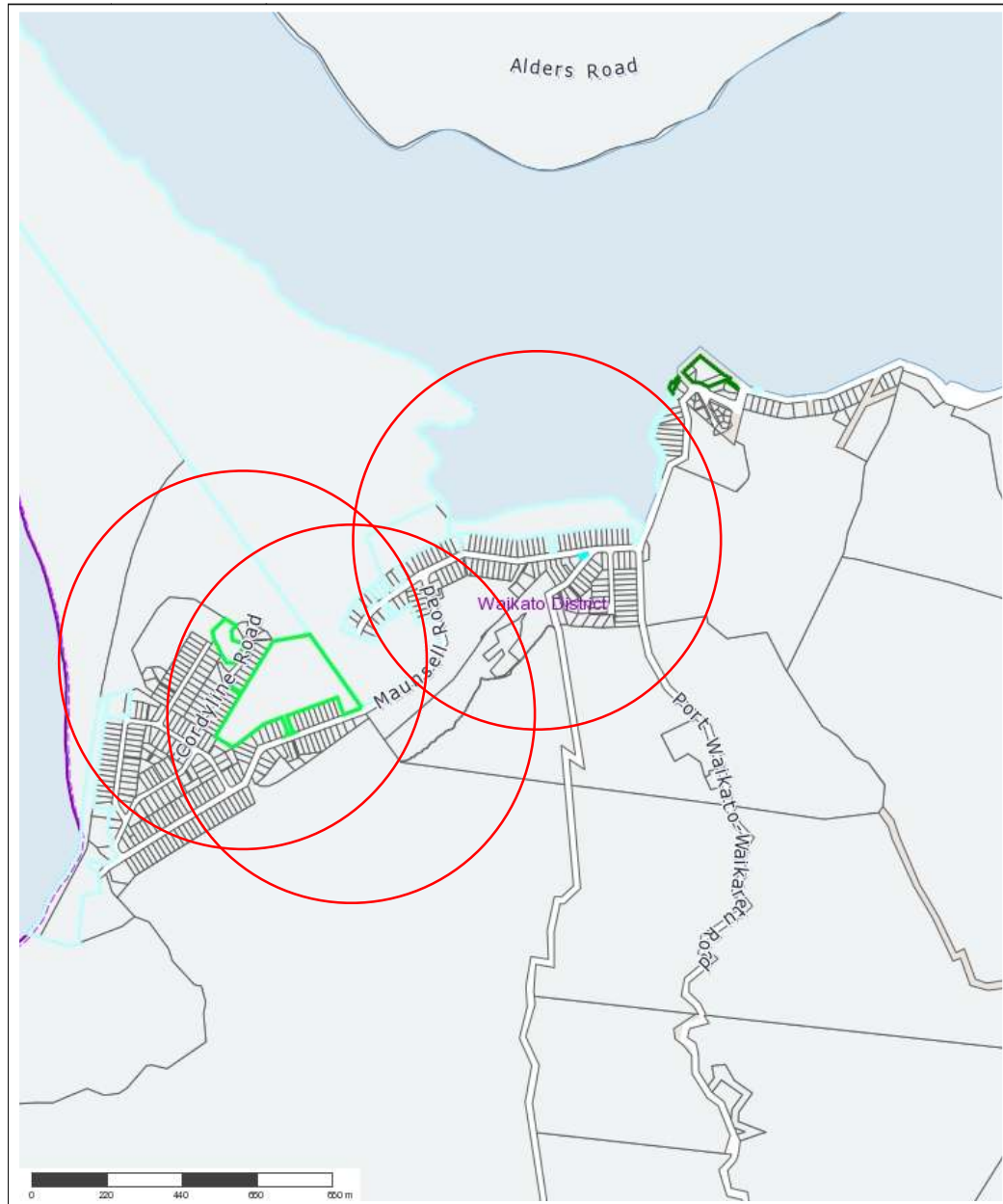
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6.3.10 Port Waikato



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Port Waikato Reserves



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6.3.11 Raglan East



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Raglan East Reserves



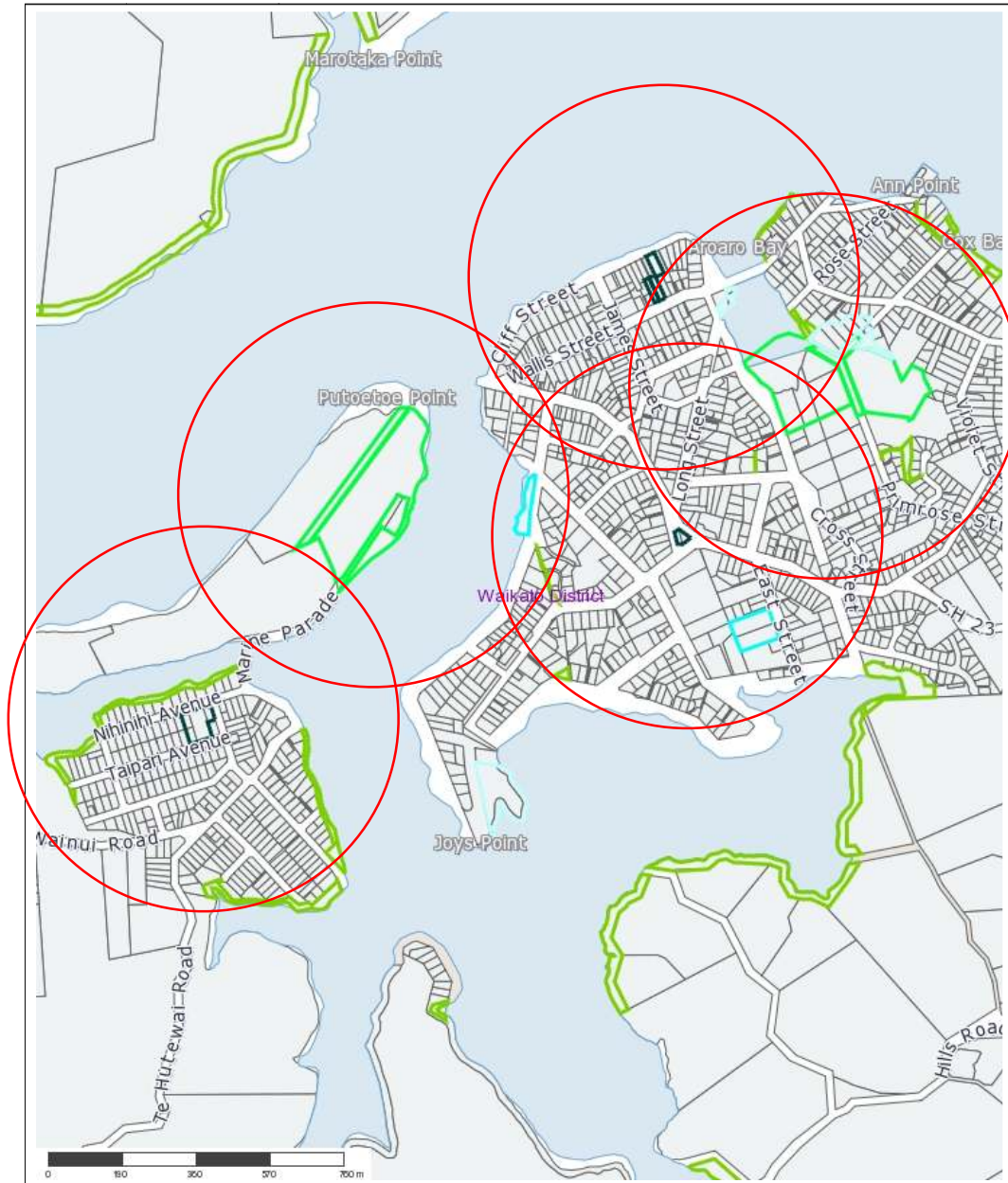
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6.3.12 Raglan West



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Raglan West Reserves



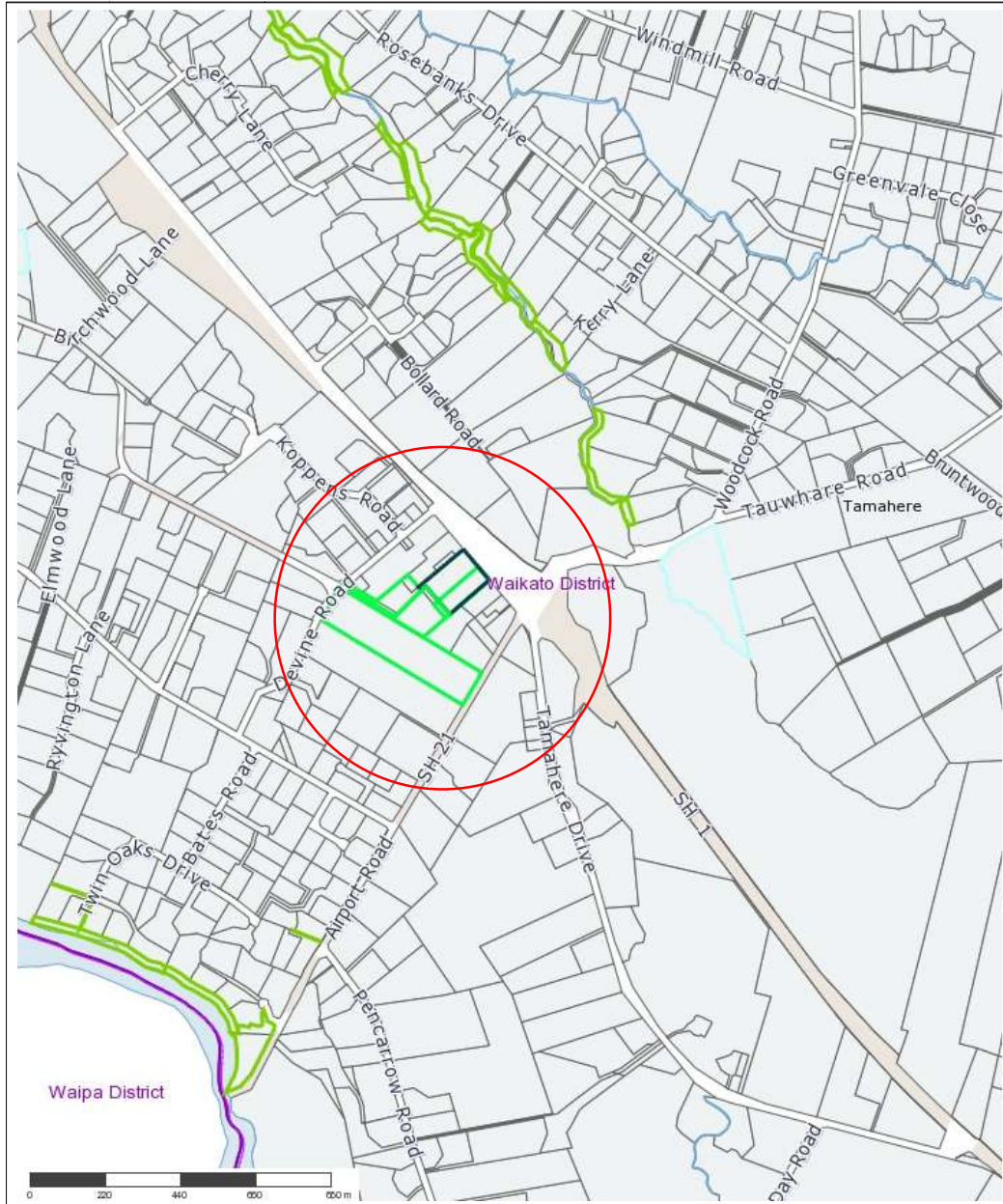
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6.3.13 Tamahere



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Tamahere Reserves



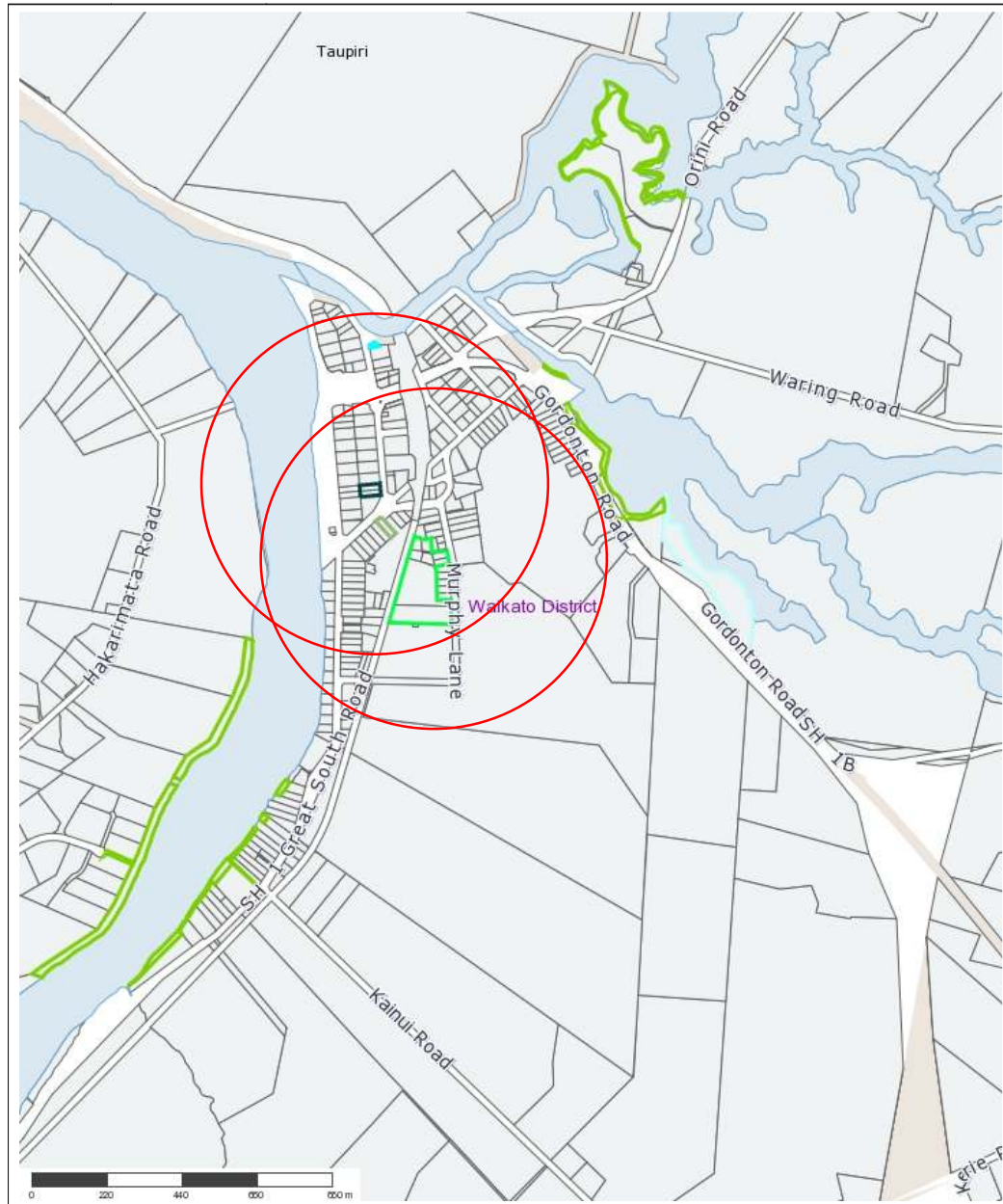
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6.3.14 Taupiri



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Taupiri Reserves



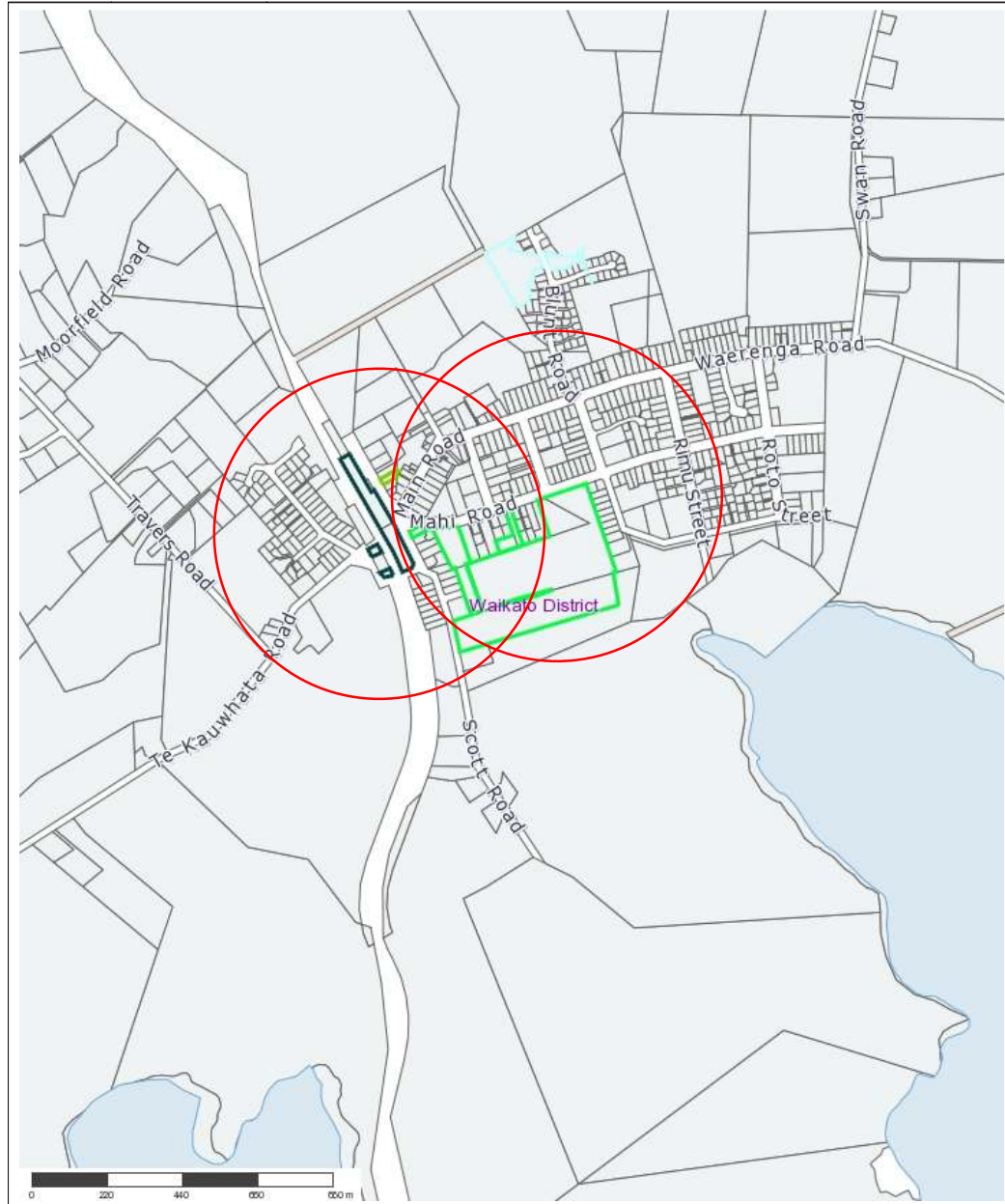
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6.3.15 Te Kauwhata



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Te Kauwhata Reserves



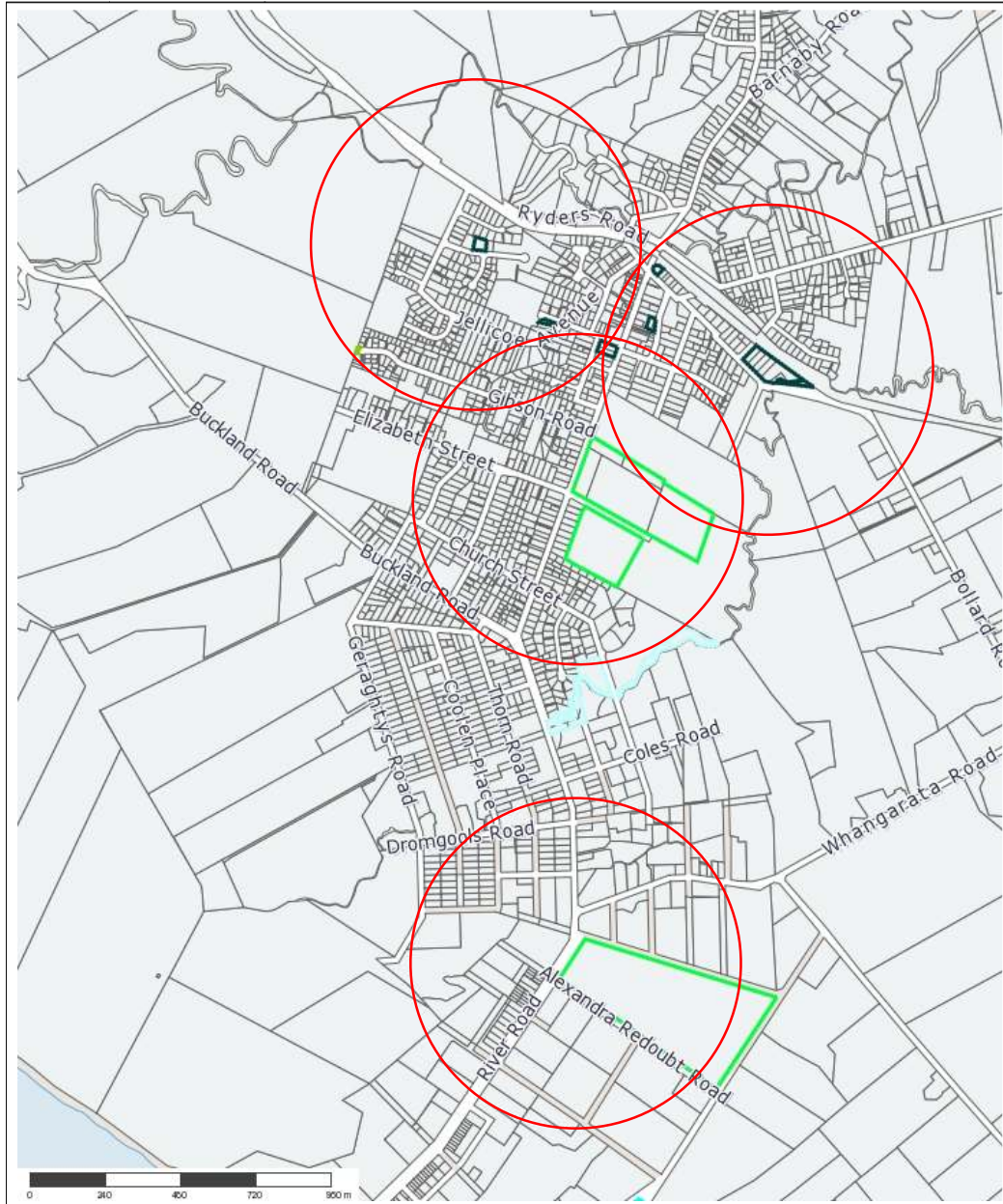
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6.3.16 Tuakau



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Tuakau Reserves



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