

3.13 WATERWHEEL HERITAGE PARK

3.13.1 DESCRIPTION

The Waterwheel Heritage Park is located on Spencer Avenue on land formerly owned by the Department of Conservation (DOC) and Norske Skog.



3.13.2 HISTORY

The Waterwheel Heritage Park project was started in 1990 by a group of enthusiastic local volunteers. The group's initial aim was to save items of agricultural, industrial and social history important to Kawerau and Whakatane. Due to the skills of the principal volunteers, the group's focus became the restoration of agricultural machinery and by 2008 it had developed a collection with an estimated value of over \$2 million.

In 2009 the land owned by Norske Skog was swapped for a parcel of land owned by DOC on the Norske Skog side of the Tarawera River. The existing DOC land and the land swapped with Norske Skog were then vested in Council. Council leased the Reserve to the Waterwheel Historic Trust in February 2009.

The Trust has installed an operational waterwheel and plans to develop the Park further by adding auxiliary buildings and a museum. The site will be used for restoring historic equipment, attracting tourists, grazing, displaying historic machinery and training students.

3.13.3 STATUS

Waterwheel Heritage Park is vested in, and administered by, the Kawerau District Council. The park is a Recreation Reserve as defined by the Reserves Act 1977.

The legal description is Lot 1 DPS 395904 (2.093) and Sec 1 SO 406753 (2.5005). The Park is approximately 5.5 hectares in size.

3.13.4 POLICIES

Landscape Character

1. The relaxed and informal nature of the Waterwheel Heritage Park shall be retained.
2. Maintenance and development shall be to a standard appropriate to various uses of the Park.

Vegetation

1. Any further planting on the river embankment shall be with tree and shrub species complementary to the character of the Park.
2. The integrity of all native plantings shall be maintained.
3. Prior to removal of any vegetation its historic, ecological and aesthetic merit must be assessed against the goal of removal.
4. Pest plants should be controlled and where possible eliminated from the Park.
5. Sound horticultural techniques appropriate to the uses of the Park shall be applied in the management of its vegetation and turf.

Access/Parking

1. Primary access for park visitors and service vehicles will be maintained from Spencer Avenue.
2. During development of the Park, parking alongside Spencer Avenue will be sufficient. As development and use of the Park increases, diagonal parking of the west side of Spencer Avenue and a bus turnaround area at the northern end of the Park may be required.
3. The track along the Tarawera River from the Kawerau Golf Course to the Waterwheel Heritage Park shall be maintained in a semi-wilderness state for walking access.