

## **KAITAWA RESERVE Management Plan**



KAPITI COAST DISTRICT COUNCIL

**KAITAWA RESERVE  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT  
KAPITI COAST DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**August 1993**

## **PREFACE**

### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Kapiti Coast District Council's Parks and Recreation Department is formulating a comprehensive set of management plans for its public reserves. Preparation of these plans enables the Council and the Department to review current management practices and determine future management strategies for individual reserves. It will also assist in identifying priorities and planning the future allocation of resources between the Council's numerous reserves.
- 1.2 Public consultation is an important part of the project, as reserve management needs to be responsive to the needs and concerns of the community. In November 1992, the Council advertised its intention to prepare the first fifteen management plans and invited the public to submit suggestions and concerns for the drafting stage. Draft Plans were then prepared and further public comment invited in April 1993. The concerns and suggestions expressed in the submissions are reflected in the final Management Plans. The Council thanks all those who made submissions for their valuable contribution.

### **2.0 Management Plans**

- 2.1 A Management Plan is a working document which sets out the objectives and policies of management and how these should be achieved. It also records changes and additional information as it becomes available.

Management Plans provide a framework within which all future management will be carried out subject only to review at defined intervals, usually five years. A Management Plan sets out the principles governing the management of an area in a way which will be readily understood by those whose actions or interests will be affected by the plan; if the plan is not understood it will be set aside and ignored.

Management Plans should be the foundation on which all future management practices are based. Simply to record what is currently being done would be to evade the challenge of re-examining current practices.

- 2.2 A Management Plan has several requirements:

- (i) It must be comprehensive. Omission of some aspects may give rise to ambiguity and misinterpretation.
- (ii) It must be practical and it must permit some flexibility yet within prescribed limits. Too rigid prescriptions may be self-defeating.
- (iii) It must be clear, concise and easy to understand, conveying its message in the simplest yet most effective way.

- (iv) To remain appropriate, it must provide for review so that changed or changing circumstances maybe taken into account.
- 2.3 A comprehensive Management Plan is a means of ensuring continuity of management. It is also a means of explaining to the general public the reasons behind the decisions made by the Kapiti Coast District Council.
- 2.4 While a Management Plan provides the overall direction for ongoing management, there is generally a need for an annual programme of special works to be drawn up and priorities assigned. An effective way for this to be achieved is for a management schedule to be prepared which would be updated annually and would be available to the public. The management schedule should specifically cover two aspects:
  - (i) A description of the special works to be completed in the year.
  - (ii) A budget with specific costings of works to be completed in that year.
- 3.0 **Management Plan Format**
- 3.1 The Management Plan begins with a basic description of the reserve and its uses. This is by no means exhaustive and additional descriptive information is included where necessary in the later Policy sections. The Aim(s) and Objectives of the Management Plan are then identified, followed by a Policies Section which sets out the ways in which the aim(s) and objectives are to be achieved.
- 3.2 The Policy section has been written so as to provide a complete reference on each particular topic rather than having to refer to several sections to gain a complete understanding. Under each Policy heading relevant background information provides the rationale to the policy statement that follow it. The policies are grouped under three headings: Administration and Management, Management of Resources and Use and Development.

M W Cardiff  
Reserves Superintendent



# KAITAWA RESERVE

## MANAGEMENT PLAN

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## **PART ONE: DESCRIPTION**

### **1.1 Legal Description and Location**

#### **1.1.1 Kaitawa Reserve consists of 6.8464 hectares of land comprising:**

- Lot 28 DP 23774
- Lot 16 DP 24665
- Lot 60 DP 23083
- Lot 1 DP 26848
- Lot 21 DP 26848.

#### **1.1.2 At present the land is designated partly Scenic Reserve and partly Recreation Reserve.**

#### **1.1.3 The Reserve is located in a residential area 1.5 kilometres from the Coastlands Shopping Centre, east of the main trunk line. It is accessible from Kaitawa Crescent, Rewai Street, Waimanu Grove and Hookway Crescent.**

### **1.2 Physical and Natural Features**

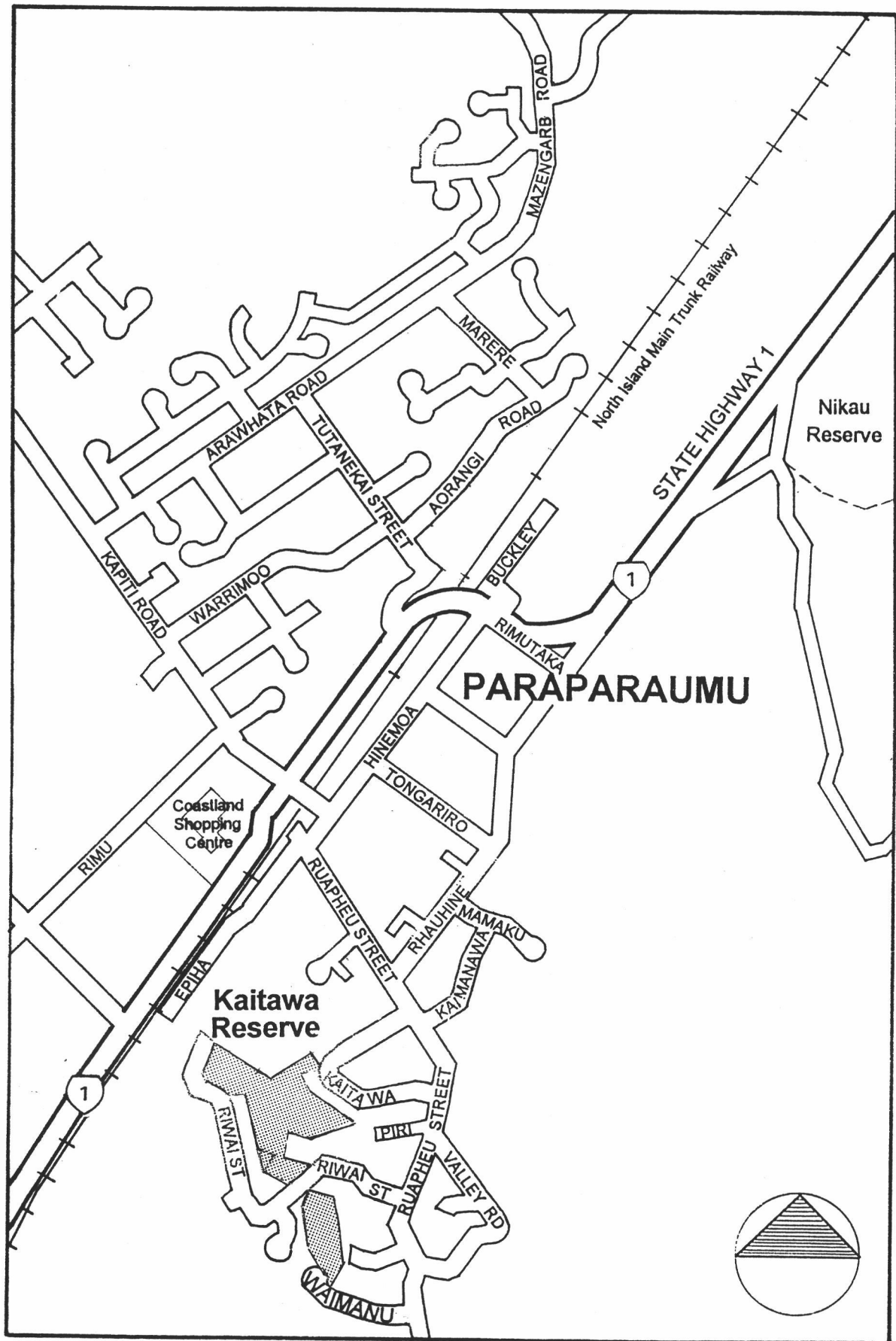
#### **1.2.1 The Reserve lies in the Wharemauku Stream Valley separated from the Paraparaumu coastal lowland by an intervening low ridge. The Wharemauku Stream flows from south to north through the Reserve joined by a small tributary creek which enters the Reserve by the Scout Association Hall. A large part of the Reserve is associated with the stream comprising the stream bed and low-lying areas adjacent to it and several areas of level higher ground. This higher ground comprises former river terraces through which the stream has cut forming high, near vertical banks in places.**

#### **1.2.2 Immediately west of the stream below Rewai Street the land rises steeply up to the ridge which forms the coastal escarpment. A wedge of Reserve land extends up this slope to the top of Rewai Street where a water reservoir is located on the ridge top overlooking the coastal lowland beyond.**

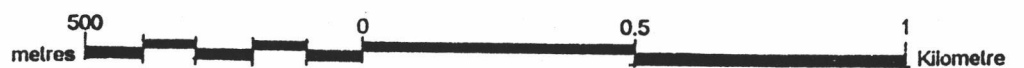
#### **1.2.3 The soils are alluvial containing varying proportions of river silt and gravel and tending to clay soils on the steep ridge slope.**

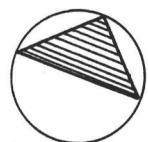
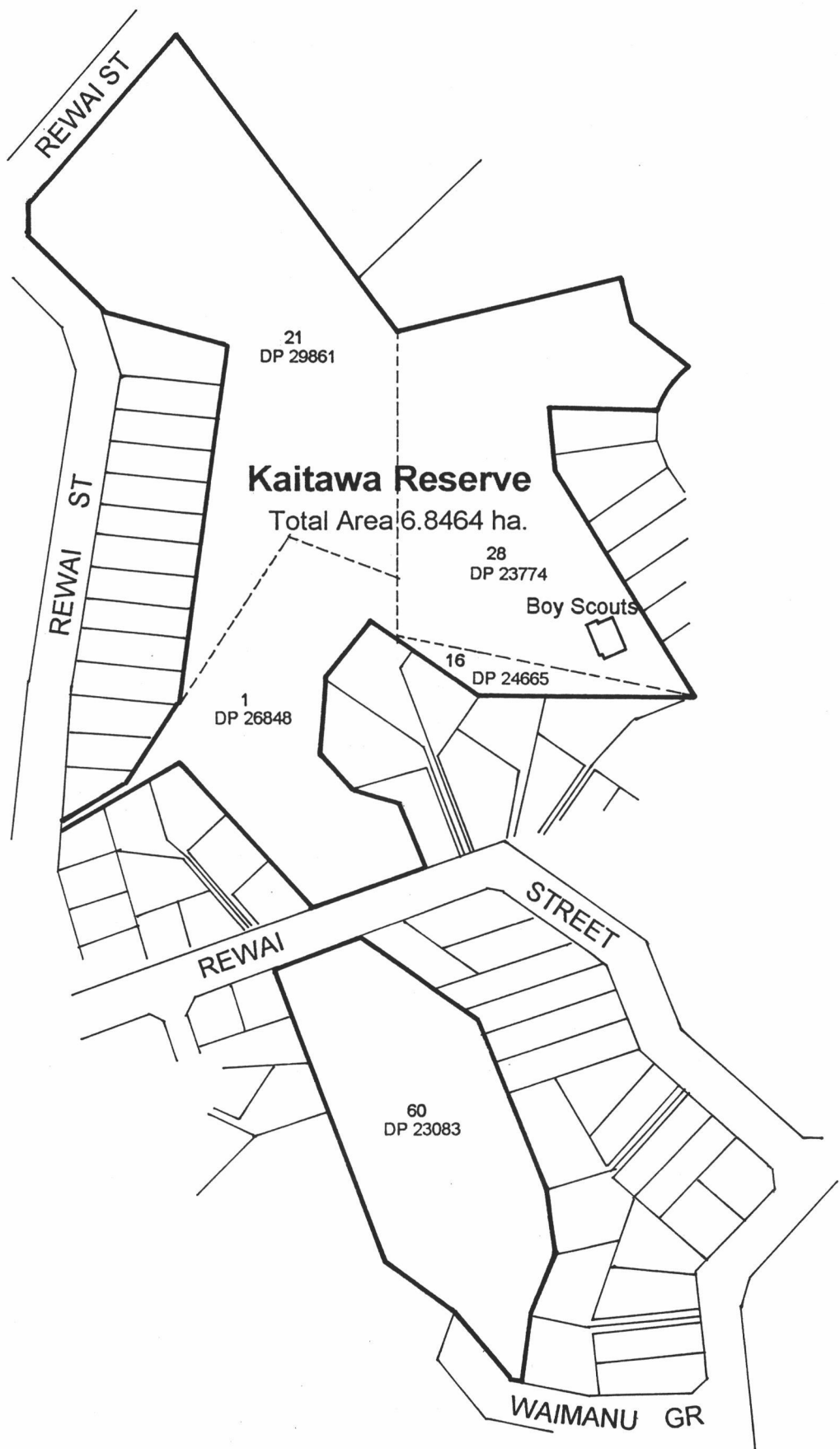
#### **1.2.4 The climate is characterised by typically warm summers and mild winters with rainfall of 800-1000mm per annum. The enclosing hills provide shelter from the north to north-westerly winds which predominate in the area.**

#### **1.2.5 Much of the bottom land has been cleared and is maintained in mown grass, but significant native bush remnants remain, associated most particularly with the steep banks which rise up from the stream in several places. This bush contains a wide range of species including kaikomako, kohekohe, rewarewa, karaka, ngaio, nikau, pittosporum, mahoe and kawakawa. A few exotic trees, mainly willow, also occur along the stream.**



## LOCATION PLAN





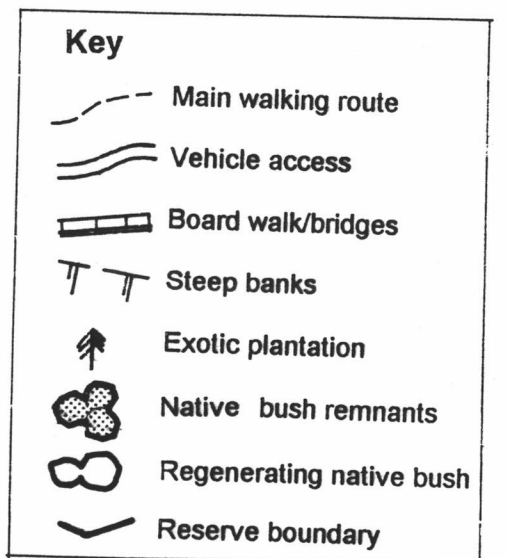
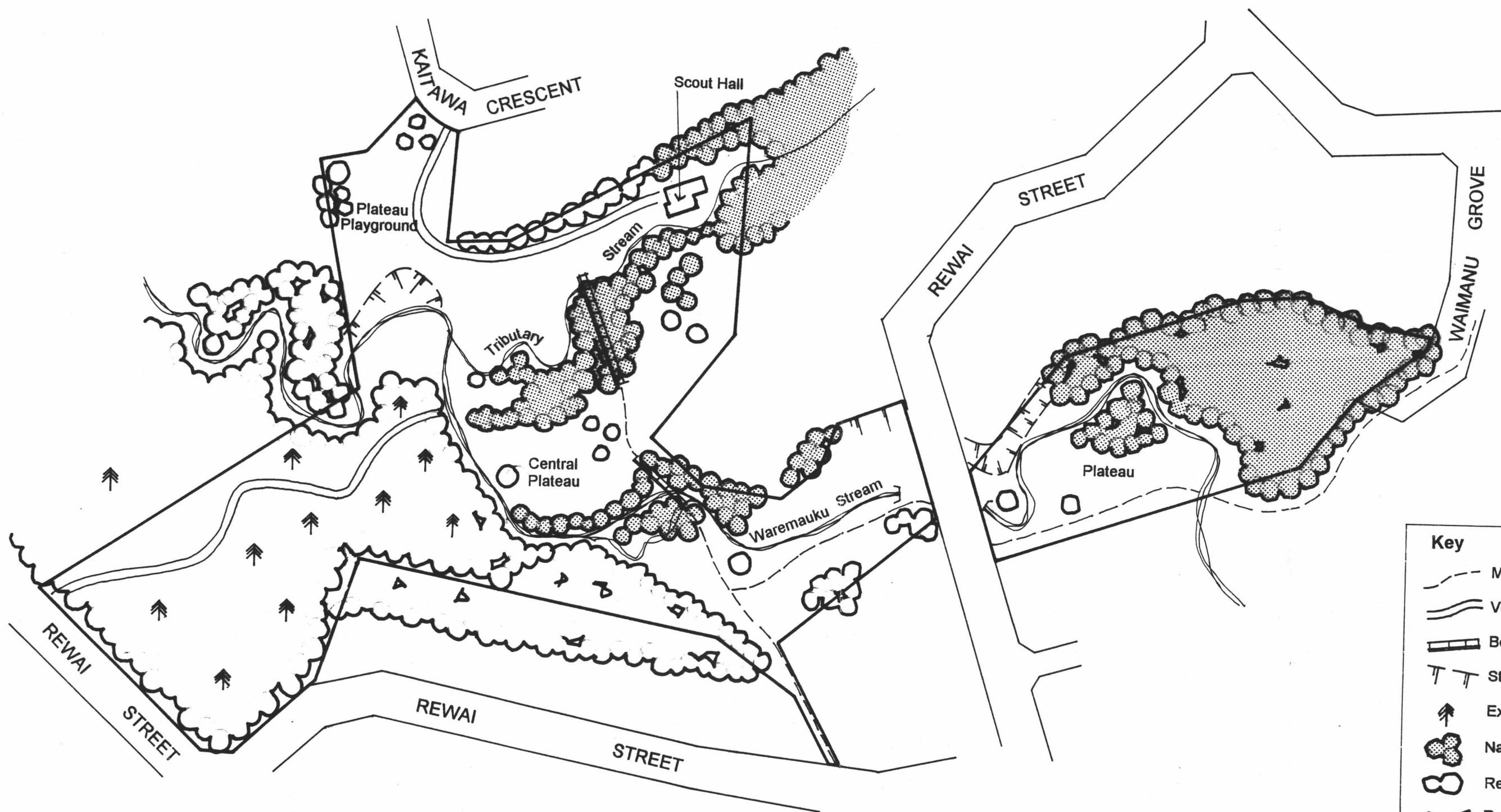
Scale 1: 3000

Legal Description

- 1.2.6 The steep western wedge of the Reserve is mainly vegetated with *Pinus radiata*, cryptomeria and Douglas fir.
- 1.2.7 Throughout the Reserve there are areas of blackberry and gorse occurring mainly on steep ground which is not easily maintained.
- 1.2.8 A significant bird population exists in the Reserve and the stream is habitat for eels, cockabulies and invertebrates.

### **1.3 History and Present Use**

- 1.3.1 The Reserve was formed from four reserve contributions from local subdivisions vested variously in 1961, 1962, 1965 and 1969.
- 1.3.2 Little development of the Reserve occurred for many years except for construction of the Scout Association Hall in 1967, which still remains the only building. Much of the ground was invaded by blackberry and gorse during this time.
- 1.3.3 In March 1980, approximately two hectares of *Pinus radiata* was burnt in a fire. There was concern about the potential fire hazard of the spreading gorse.
- 1.3.4 In the early 1980s the Parks and Recreation Department of the Council began a general improvement programme which included planting of exotic species on the south-west slope to control gorse and clearing and spraying of blackberry and gorse throughout the Reserve. A wider track was cut up to the "plateau" area west of the Scout Association Hall to provide access for weed control and mowing. As the result of this effort, significant areas have been converted to mown open ground. In subsequent years a playground was built near Kaitawa Crescent and two sets of steps and bridges constructed to facilitate access to the newly opened up plateau area.
- 1.3.5 Today, the Reserve is used for walking and picnicking, nature study, children's play and Scout activities.



Scale 1:2000

# **Kaitawa Reserve Site Features**

## **PART TWO: AIM AND OBJECTIVES**

### **2.1 Aim**

- 2.1.1 The aim of this Management Plan is to manage and develop Kaitawa Reserve as a scenic reserve for protection of its natural features, and for public enjoyment of those features.

### **2.2 Objectives**

- 2.2.1 To recognise and enhance the Reserve's "natural" character.
- 2.2.2 To encourage public enjoyment of the Reserve by the provision of open space, access and facilities that are in keeping with the natural character of the Reserve.
- 2.2.3 To protect and manage existing vegetation and to encourage regeneration of indigenous species.
- 2.2.4 To integrate the Reserve as an intrinsic part of the local open space and pedestrian network.

## **PART THREE: POLICIES**

### **ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

#### **3.1 Administration**

- 3.1.1 Kaitawa Reserve is administered by the Parks and Recreation Department of the Kapiti Coast District Council under the direction of the Reserves Superintendent. Administration includes not only the organising of day-to-day management but also park financing and long-term development planning. Specialist expertise may be sought on occasion to provide advice or specialist service on specific management issues such as tree or stream maintenance.
- 3.1.2 As the Reserve is a public reserve the Kapiti Coast District Council recognises that liaison with the local community and user groups is an integral part of its management, enabling the Council to be responsive to user needs and local concerns. Community groups have, in the past, participated in special projects such as clean-up programmes. This can be of benefit, not only by extending Council resources, but by fostering community involvement and pride in the Reserve.

#### **Policies**

- i The Reserve shall be administered and managed by the Parks and Recreation Department of the Kapiti Coast District Council.
- ii Specialist expertise shall be sought when required to ensure a high standard of Reserve management.
- iii Local residents, regular users and interested community groups shall be consulted about management issues and their participation in Reserve protection and special projects encouraged.
- iv The management plan shall be reviewed regularly and amended where necessary in accordance with the requirements of the Reserves Act 1977.

#### **3.2 Interpretation of Policies**

- 3.2.1 The Policies section of the Management Plan (Part Three) sets out the policies required to achieve the Aim and Objectives identified in Part Two. Each policy area has descriptive paragraphs (eg, 3.7.1) followed by specific policy statements (eg, 3.7, i, ii, iii, iv). The policy statements are to be read and applied in the context of the preceding related descriptive paragraphs.
- 3.2.2 To make the text of the Management Plan more readable the full name of the Kapiti Coast District Council is generally shortened to "the Council" or "Council".



## **Policies**

- i No activity or action that is contrary to the descriptive paragraphs shall be undertaken without the express permission of the Reserves Superintendent and the Paraparaumu/Raumati Wards Committee or its authorised delegate.
- ii Where the text in the Policies section (Part Three) refers to "the Council" or "Council" this means the Kapiti Coast District Council.

### **3.3 Reserve Status**

- 3.3.1 Kaitawa Reserve's status under the Reserves Act 1977 needs to be rationalised as some of the land is classified Recreation Reserve and some Scenic Reserve.
- 3.3.2 The prime purpose of Recreation Reserves is to provide for outdoor recreation with protection of natural features a secondary objective. The purpose of Scenic Reserves, on the other hand, is primarily for the protection of scenic qualities and natural features, managed for public enjoyment.
- 3.3.3 There are no areas in Kaitawa Reserve suitable for sportsground development. The area is attractive for picnicking but intensive use for this purpose (e.g. accommodating group picnics) is limited by difficult access for extensive off-street parking and may not be compatible with the scenic and conservation values that exist at the Reserve.
- 3.3.4 The Reserve does have existing and potential scenic value derived from the natural features of land form, vegetation and the Wharemauku Stream. It is this scenic value which attracts public use. Therefore, it is proposed that the whole Reserve be classified as a Scenic Reserve so that its natural and scenic values can be protected for public enjoyment and facilities for passive recreation provided to the extent that it is compatible with the scenic values.

## **Policy**

- i Those parts of the Reserve which are currently classified as Recreation Reserve shall be reclassified as Scenic Reserve in accordance with the requirements of the Reserves Act 1977.

### **3.4 Adjacent Land Use**

- 3.4.1 Kaitawa Reserve is located in a residential area with a number of private properties directly adjoining it. Concerns can arise for local residents from nearby public reserve land including user behaviour, fencing requirements, privacy, and environmental effects of reserve vegetation. Open communication between the Council and local residents can do much to alleviate such concerns.

## **Policies**

- i The Parks and Recreation Department of the Council shall maintain regular communication with local residents over Reserve issues.
- ii The Council shall negotiate fencing covenants with adjoining land owners as required to ensure the privacy and protection of adjacent land.

### **3.5 Leases and Licences**

- 3.5.1 General policies about leases and related funding arrangements are currently being reviewed by the Council. The issue of exclusive uses in reserves and the Council's funding for these uses, which is a matter of community concern, is to be addressed in the review. The following points reflect existing policies and lease holders will be notified of any changes that affect them.
- 3.5.2 Leases and licences relating to public reserves are issued for uses considered compatible with the aims and objectives of the particular reserve. They are subject to conditions set down by Council policy including standards of behaviour and maintenance and are reviewed annually. The Council's Parks and Recreation Department may have particular requirements for lessees or licence holders to comply with reserve management standards, including maintenance and colour schemes for buildings.
- 3.5.3 Council policy requires leases and licences to have common tenure periods and anniversary dates to aid administration. Existing leases and licences on Council's reserve lands are gradually being brought in to line with this policy.
- 3.5.4 Currently, the Scouts Association holds a lease for the Scout Hall which will be extended. The Scouts have provided voluntary assistance over the years and their presence has benefited behaviour patterns in the Reserve. However, any more leases or licences for organised activities are not considered compatible with the passive recreation purpose of the Reserve.

## **Policies**

- i The existing Scout Association lease shall be renewed subject to usage remaining at a level compatible with other passive recreation use of the Reserve.
- ii The lease tenure period and anniversary date shall comply with Council requirements and shall be reviewed annually.
- iii The lessee shall comply with the Council's requirements for maintenance and management of the building and environs and rubbish disposal.

### 3.6 Environmental Controls

- 3.6.1 The extent and type of public use and the condition of the Reserve needs to be monitored and appropriate action taken to ensure the enjoyment and safety of users and protection of the Reserve itself.
- 3.6.2 The general appearance and upkeep of reserves is a common issue of public concern. This is reflected in the submissions about reserve management that were received in response to the Council's notification of intention to prepare Management Plans in 1992 (see Preface). Aspects of mowing, rubbish disposal, weed control, drainage and ground conditions were frequently mentioned. A high standard of maintenance appropriate to the natural setting is required to facilitate safe and enjoyable use and to promote pride in the Reserve.
- 3.6.3 Although no litter bins are provided at present litter is not a problem. This will be monitored and bins provided as the need arises.
- 3.6.4 The Council must also set an example of sound environmental management on reserves, including the control of noxious and invasive plants, control of noxious animals and skilled vegetation management. In particular, Old Man's Beard and *Cobea scandens* (which is becoming rampant near the Scout Association Hall) must be controlled to protect native vegetation. Gorse, once rampant in the area, is now giving way to regenerating native species but needs to be controlled on open ground.
- 3.6.5 Maintenance methods must be carefully considered and controlled to ensure the safety and protection of Reserve users and adjacent residential areas: in particular, the use of herbicides, pesticides and fertilisers, and the use of heavy equipment.
- 3.6.6 In exceptional circumstances it may be necessary to close the entire Reserve from the public to protect public safety or to protect the Reserve environment. For example, flooding, reparation of extensive damage (such as storm damage) or major redevelopment.

#### Policies

- i The Reserve shall be maintained regularly to an appropriate standard and damage or environmental problems attended to promptly.
- ii Activities that are damaging to the Reserve's resources shall be restricted while appropriate protective measures are taken or prohibited if incompatible with the Reserve's aims and objectives.
- iii In exceptional circumstances, the Reserve shall be closed to the public, at the discretion of the Reserves Superintendent.
- iv Noxious animals, especially possums, shall be controlled and, if possible, exterminated.

- v Noxious, invasive or unwanted weeds shall be controlled and, if possible, eliminated.
- vi The use of herbicides and pesticides shall be used as little as possible and shall be strictly controlled. Where particular safety concerns arise, local residents shall be consulted prior to use.

### **3.7 Signs**

#### **3.7.1 Signs are necessary in public reserves to:**

- identify places and routes;
- inform about public use and safety;
- in some cases, provide information of interest about the site or locality. (This is generally referred to as interpretation).

3.7.2 Well designed signs, used sparingly in well chosen locations, can be inviting and complement a park's image and intended use. Proliferation of different signs can, on the other hand, be obtrusive and off-putting. A unified Parks and Recreation Department sign system is to be designed for use throughout all reserves and will be implemented as resources permit. A well designed standard sign system will enhance the Council's public image. Standard construction is more economic and allows for rapid replacement of damaged signs.

3.7.3 The main requirement for signs at Kaitawa Reserve is direction/name signs at the various entrances combined with information about permitted and restricted uses. At some point in the future, some interpretation signage about local ecology may be appropriate.

### **Policies**

- i Sign requirements shall be reviewed and signs upgraded in accordance with a standard Council Parks and Recreation Department sign system.
- ii Signs shall be designed, constructed and maintained to a high standard.
- ii Advertising signs shall not be permitted.

## MANAGEMENT OF RESOURCES

### 3.8 Landscape Character

3.8.1 In general, the Reserve has a "natural" character in which vegetation, land form and the stream are the dominant elements. Development is minimal and low key being primarily maintenance of the open grassy spaces with one playground and pedestrian footbridges.

3.8.2 There are two distinct character areas:

(i) The Stream Environs

This consists of several low-lying areas at stream level alternated by three spurs of flat topped, higher ground (or plateaux) which "pinch" the stream into a narrow course between steep banks for short stretches.

The low-lying areas are generally maintained in mown grass bordered by vegetation on adjacent banks.

The southern of the three plateaux is the site of the playground and is open ground with little associated vegetation. The northern plateau is also open ground but there is dense vegetation where the ground drops down steeply to the stream. The central and largest plateau consists of open ground dotted with native trees and mainly enclosed by the dense vegetation rising up from the steep banks below it. This gives a very attractive, sheltered, park land atmosphere to the area.

Essentially, the stream environment has an informal sheltered character with considerable interest provided by the alternating pattern of low and high ground and the contrast between open ground and pockets of vegetation.

(ii) The Western Slope

This contrasts markedly with the stream environs as the ground is very steep and densely vegetated with pine and Douglas fir, which completely encloses the one access track. The only open ground occurs at the northern boundary where long grass and blackberry grows amongst eucalyptus plantings.

Rising steeply above the stream this slope, including adjacent land upon which native bush is regenerating, is a visually important backdrop to the stream environment.

3.8.3 The wider setting is also visually important. To the north and east, grazed hills provide a rural backdrop and to the south, native vegetation is now emerging on once gorse-covered hills.



Open ground beside the stream contrasts with the steep, densely, vegetated western slope of the Reserve (pictured right background).



The central plateau features scattered native trees. The hills are a significant rural backdrop.



3.8.4 This native vegetation is a key element in local landscape character:

- Within the Reserve the pockets of native bush are vestiges of the vegetation which once covered this area. For such small remnants these contain a surprising diversity of species of botanical and ecological interest.
- A similar, larger bush remnant extends east through the housing area along the eastern tributary stream.
- Native bush is now regenerating on much of the undeveloped land to the south and west of the Reserve.

When considered together, an existing and potential framework of native vegetation can be seen as a consistent theme linking the surrounding housing areas.

3.8.5 Landscape development in the Reserve should recognise and enhance this essential ingredient of the local landscape.

- The central plateau is a particularly attractive area where native trees provide the basis for a very successful parkland effect. A similar character would greatly enhance and encourage use of the other two plateau areas.
- Similar grouped planting would enhance the large stream-side areas by providing shade while retaining a comparatively open character.
- The existing pattern of the native remnants on the terrace edges should be preserved and encouraged to spread onto areas infested with blackberry and other invasive weeds. This would strengthen the vegetation structure in the Reserve and provide more opportunities for its appreciation as has been done successfully with the bridge and step constructions adjacent to the central plateau.
- The conifer plantings on the western slope have effectively controlled the previous gorse problem and are now a prominent feature. In the long-term, a more unified landscape character will be achieved by encouraging native vegetation to take over.

3.8.6 There is support within the local community to develop the Reserve into a botanic garden. The sheltered site and varied topography would certainly provide suitable conditions for this, and the Wellington Botanic garden sets a precedent for successfully integrating botanic plantings with native bush. However, this is an issue which requires widespread consultation with the larger Kapiti Coast District community and detailed consideration of aims and objectives of such a garden in the proposed Open Space Study which the Council intends to commission. In the meantime, the Reserve's existing character is to be maintained and enhanced.

## Policies

- i The existing informal, "natural" character of the Reserve is to be protected and enhanced.
- ii The remnants of native vegetation shall be protected and encouraged to regenerate.
- iii Predominantly local native species are to be used for any new planting.
- iv The existing pattern of alternating open space and pockets of native vegetation shall be preserved and extended.
- v In the long-term, regeneration of native vegetation shall be encouraged to replace the conifer plantings.

### 3.9 Vegetation

- 3.9.1 The native bush remnants and scattered native trees are a significant landscape and botanical feature in the Reserve. These are to be protected. A healthy understorey is essential to the continuing regeneration of these remnants and, where this is threatened by excessive trampling, development of formed tracks or timber walkways should be considered to control access.
- 3.9.2 Clearance and spraying of blackberry and gorse is generally wasted effort unless alternative vegetative cover is established as these species will re-colonise cleared ground. Therefore, eradication of weed infestations will only be planned in terms of establishing more open ground to be regularly mown or revegetating with native species.
- 3.9.3 Survival and growth rates of any planting is dependent upon thorough site preparation and regular follow-up maintenance for weed control, fertilising and protection from damage. Expenditure on extra maintenance for several years is more than justified by rapid results and healthy plants.
- 3.9.4 A long-term management programme is needed for the conifer plantation. Initially, this will address pruning and thinning requirements to maintain the plantation in good order. In the long-term, phased removal of the trees will be needed as they become old to be replaced by native vegetation. Continuity of vegetative cover is essential for visual reasons and to ensure that gorse will not re-colonise the site. This will need careful planning and specialist advice to enable native regeneration to gradually occur under the conifers.
- 3.9.5 Any planting with local native species should ideally be propagated from local seed sources to protect the genetic purity of the bush remnants. This will require forward planning of planting projects.





△ Native bush remnants are a significant landscape and botanical feature of the Reserve.

◁ Timber walkways provide for both enjoyment and protection of the bush.



## **Policies**

- i The native bush remnants shall be protected from damage and encouraged to naturally regenerate.
- ii Eradication of weed infestations shall be carried out in conjunction with measures to establish alternative cover.
- iii A long-term management programme shall be formulated for the conifer plantation.
- iv Planting with native species shall, where practicable, be propagated from local seed sources.
- v Sound horticultural practices shall be applied to the maintenance and planting of the Reserve's vegetation and tree pruning shall be carried out only by skilled tree specialists.

### **3.10 Stream Management**

- 3.10.1 Wharemauku Stream drains a small catchment in the valley behind the Reserve. Water quality, siltation and flooding potential are largely determined by processes occurring upstream. Similarly, stream management at the Reserve may have downstream effects. Therefore, the Parks and Recreation and Operational Services Departments of the Council must consult over stream management at the Reserve and any problems arising from upstream management.
- 3.10.2 The stream is important as both a visual and recreation feature in the Reserve. Water quality appears to be good as the stream is habitat for eels, small fish and invertebrates. The stream attracts local children as a natural play area.
- 3.10.3 The stream floods periodically with some resulting erosion to banks. A timber retaining wall has been constructed to protect the outer edge of a sharp meander above Rewai Street. In the central and upstream area stretches of the stream have been contained within a deeper man-made channel to contain higher flows. This effectively converts it to an open drain.
- 3.10.4 This stream management strategy could be re-thought. Below Hookway Crescent, adjacent housing is well above flood level so that it would not matter if parts of the Reserve were periodically inundated. Regrading the banks to form a wider channel in some areas would facilitate public access to the stream. This could be incorporated with formed deeper pools and grassy basins contained by higher ground which could be holding areas for flood waters. Provided the ground is maintained in healthy turf to hold soil, the gentler stream edges would generally be less prone to erosion.

## **Policies**

- i The Council's Parks and Recreation Department and Operational Services Department shall consult over stream management issues.

- ii The stream shall be kept clear of debris and rubbish to ensure clear water flow.
- iii Alternative stream management strategies shall be investigated in consultation with the Council's Operational Services Department to enhance public enjoyment whilst providing adequate flood control.

### **3.11 Wildlife**

- 3.11.1 The Reserve attracts a significant bird population including a number of native bird species. The Wharemauku Valley is an area where vegetation cover is confined to relatively small and isolated pockets. The health and diversity of native bird populations in such areas depends upon corridors of vegetation to allow movement between habitats. The vegetation in the Reserve provides such a wildlife corridor, linking the bush in the tributary stream with the regenerating vegetation on the southern hills and escarpment.

### **Policies**

- i The Reserve shall be managed to protect and enhance its function as a wildlife corridor.
- ii New plantings shall include species which provide food sources to native birds.

### **3.12 Children's Play Area**

- 3.12.1 The design and location of children's play areas should provide stimulating and safe play opportunities for a range of ages, with both play structures and open space for ball games and exploration. Where possible, site features such as varied ground forms should be incorporated into the design to extend play opportunities. The site should also provide an environment which encourages year-round use with adequate sunlight, shade, shelter and seating for supervision.

- 3.12.2 The play area at Kaitawa Reserve includes swings and several climbing structures of a standard design used in numerous Kapiti Coast District reserves. As the play equipment has now been in place for over a decade, a comprehensive review of its safety and design is required in terms of the New Zealand Standard for Playgrounds and Play Equipment 1986. Immediate consideration must be given to:

- the provision of appropriate safety surfacing under all equipment from which there is potential for children to fall;
- detailed inspection for faults and damage.

- 3.12.3 The design, suitability of equipment and additional opportunities should also be reviewed to assess the need for longer-term upgrading. It has been

noted that the playground attracts comparatively little use as local children opt to play in the stream and bush areas instead. The existing site is very bare and unexciting in comparison. Relocation of the play area to take better advantage of site features should be considered in long-term planning.

3.12.4 It should also be noted that a range of modular play equipment is now being manufactured which is increasingly used in public playgrounds. This equipment incorporates a range of materials and colour and is designed to meet the New Zealand standard specification.

3.12.5 Consultation with children and parents who use the playground is essential to identify use levels, needs and issues. Moreover, local participation in planning, upgrading and planting the playground is likely to encourage its use and foster neighbourhood pride in the Reserve.

### **Policies**

- i The playground equipment shall be maintained to a high standard of safety and repair to conform with the requirements of New Zealand Standard 5828, 1986.
- ii Appropriate safety surfacing shall be installed under all play structures as soon as possible.
- iii The playground equipment shall be inspected regularly and thoroughly for damage and faults and any necessary remedial work carried out promptly.
- iv The need for upgrading and possibly relocating the play area shall be assessed in consultation with playground users and their participation in any upgrading encouraged.
- v The Building Department of the Kapiti Coast District Council shall be consulted about the design of any new play structures or alterations to existing structures, to ensure compliance with the requirements of the Building Act 1991.

### **3.13 Buildings, Structures and Site Furniture**

3.13.1 The design and location of buildings, structures, surfacing and site furniture can have a major impact upon the visual appeal of a reserve, either positive or negative. Many public reserves suffer from ad hoc development where poorly placed structures and unrelated styles and materials are unnecessarily obtrusive. Constructed features should be complementary to the open space qualities of a reserve, achieved by:

- design appropriate to the site and unified throughout;
- locations chosen to reduce visual impact or to enhance natural features.

### 3.13.2 Buildings

Buildings are to be kept to a minimum in the Reserve. The Scout Association Hall is the only existing building and its discrete location and dark colour reduces its visibility. (The white trim is unnecessarily obtrusive, however.) Public toilets are planned, to be built at such time as usage levels warrant. These must be designed and sited to be unobtrusive.

### 3.13.3 Site Furniture

Picnic tables, litter bins and more vehicle barriers are to be developed. Although small in scale, these elements can produce visual clutter so careful thought must be given to their design and placement.

Several pedestrian bridges which span the stream and tributary are of a plain functional style appropriate to the Reserve's character. Any new or replacement bridges should be of a similar style and sited to complement rather than dominate the stream.

### 3.13.4 Boundary Fencing

Boundary fencing is a necessity at the Reserve to ensure the security and privacy of adjacent properties but is obtrusive in places. Intervening vegetation is needed to screen these boundaries.

### 3.13.5 Maintenance

Poorly maintained buildings and structures can detract from a reserve's image and attract anti-social behaviour such as vandalism. This applies not only to the standard of repair but to the cleanliness of future toilets.

## **Policies**

- i All buildings, structures and site furniture shall be of a high design standard and shall be maintained in a state of good repair.
- ii When toilets are built, they shall be regularly maintained to a high standard of cleanliness.
- iii New buildings, structures and site furniture shall be designed and sited to complement the Reserve's character while meeting functional requirements.
- iv All new buildings and structures, and alterations to those existing, shall comply with the requirements of the Building Act 1991. The addition of new buildings shall be subject to planning approval under the Kapiti Coast District Scheme and shall be considered against the objectives of preserving the Reserve's open space qualities and providing for public enjoyment.
- v Boundary fencing shall be maintained in a state of good repair and its visibility reduced with the use of planting and/or landform.

## **USE AND DEVELOPMENT**

### **3.14 Recreation**

- 3.14.1 The Reserve is to be used for passive recreation only, including walking, picnicking and children's play.
- 3.14.2 The Reserve is mainly used by local residents but is gradually becoming more popular as awareness of the Reserve's attractions increases outside the area. Usage has also increased as the result of an improved maintenance programme in recent years. Usage levels need to be observed and appropriate picnicking facilities provided to meet increased needs.
- 3.14.3 The Scout Association has occupied the site for many years and although this is not generally a Scenic Reserve use, their activities have been compatible with the Reserve's aim and objectives so their continued use will be permitted.
- 3.14.4 Special events such as fetes and festivals are inappropriate at the Reserve as there are inadequate facilities or spaces to cope with large crowds.

### **Policies**

- i The Reserve shall be used for passive recreation only.
- ii Usage levels shall be monitored as a guide to the development of facilities.
- iii The Scout Association shall be permitted to use the Reserve, provided its activities remain compatible with other passive recreation uses.
- iv Special events such as fetes and festivals shall not be permitted.
- v Commercial use is inappropriate to the informal, passive recreation use of the Reserve, and shall not be permitted.

### **3.15 Access and Parking**

- 3.15.1 With access points from Kaitawa Crescent, Rewai Street, Waimanu Grove and Hookway Crescent, the Reserve is easily accessible for the local community. Tucked away in a quiet suburb it is less easily located by other visitors, as most of the entrances are not signposted. An Automobile Association sign on Ruapehu Street is therefore a necessity.
- 3.15.2 The Kaitawa Crescent entrance is to be developed as the main entrance as this is the only point where there is adequate space for off-street parking. A carpark is planned for this area at such time as demand requires.
- 3.15.3 Graded access suitable for mowers is required from several of the street entrances as the stream divides the mown ground into discrete areas. Only the Kaitawa Crescent entrance has a vehicle barrier, and there is a problem with trail bikes entering the Reserve from the Rewai Street frontage.



3.15.4 The pedestrian tracks have mainly been worn in from regular usage and there are areas which become muddy during winter. Two timber bridge walkways provide access across Wharemauku Stream and the tributary to the central plateau which was previously a problem access area, requiring foot wetting.

3.15.5 The vehicle track which runs up the western slope is eroded in places and obstructed by fallen trees and branches. This track needs to be maintained to a standard which will permit vehicle access in the event of fire.

#### **Policies**

- i Adequate signposting shall be installed to facilitate visitor access.
- ii The Kaitawa Crescent entrance shall be developed as the main entrance with future off-street parking.
- iii Vehicle barriers shall be constructed at the Rewai Street frontages.
- iv Pedestrian tracks shall be maintained for all-weather use but shall be of an informal character appropriate to the setting.
- v The vehicle track on the western slope shall be maintained to allow emergency vehicle access.

#### **3.16 Controls and Prohibitions**

3.16.1 Public reserves inevitably attract activities which are incompatible with management objectives. Although the Council seeks to encourage public enjoyment of the Reserve, it must impose certain controls to protect it from damage, maintain safety standards and promote its compatible use. The controls and prohibitions are a response to management problems that have consistently arisen over a period of years and are not simply a standard set of rules.

#### **Policies**

- i Unauthorised vehicle access shall not be permitted in the Reserve except in designated parking areas that may be developed.
- ii Dogs shall be permitted in the Reserve provided they are on a leash.
- iii Horse-riding and other recreation activities which may damage the Reserve's resources or compromise public safety shall not be permitted.
- iv Littering and rubbish dumping shall be prohibited and offenders may be prosecuted under the Litter Act 1979.

- v The lighting of open fires or use of portable barbecues shall not be permitted in order to protect Reserve vegetation.
- vi Measures to reduce and, if possible, eliminate anti-social behaviour and vandalism shall be investigated and, where appropriate, actioned.

### **3.17 Development**

- 3.17.1 Development, whether it is planting, new buildings or changed uses must be considered in terms of the Reserve's aim and objectives and, specifically, the likely effects upon landscape character, adjacent properties, patterns and levels of use and opportunities to enhance open space qualities.
- 3.17.2 Any development of facilities needs to be of an informal and unobtrusive character in keeping with the natural setting. Development of a carparking area, in particular, will need sensitive planning and design.
- 3.17.3 Should the Reserve be considered appropriate for development as a Botanical Garden (see 3.8.6 above), the Scenic Reserve classification and this Management Plan will need to be reviewed. In such an event, the scenic qualities and basic landscape character of the Reserve land should be preserved.

### **Policy**

- i Only development that is in accordance with the aim and objectives of the Management Plan shall be permitted.

### **3.18 Open Space Opportunities**

- 3.18.1 There is potential to link Kaitawa Reserve in with a wider open space and pedestrian network in the local area.
- 3.18.2 Firstly, the Wharemauku Stream is a natural corridor along which open space is to be preserved by the esplanade requirements of the Resource Management Act. This provides the opportunity to develop a walking route from Epiha Street to the Kapiti Golf Course. It also provides an opportunity to extend the natural character of the Reserve right along the stream as a consistent element of visual character in the area. It is unfortunate that recent housing has been allowed to encroach so close to the stream at Hookway Crescent. However, stream-side access is still possible there.
- 3.18.3 Secondly, undeveloped land on the ridge north of the Reserve is a prominent land form which has potential to be integrated into the open space network. The end of the spur is a viewpoint which could be linked via the conifer plantation in the Reserve to a track down to Epiha Street with a return route back along the stream. The regenerating native vegetation and pine plantings need to be managed and protected to enhance the scenic qualities of this prominent land form.



3.18.4 Thirdly, the remnant native bush in the tributary that crosses Ruapehu Street and flows past the Scout Association Hall has similar scenic and conservation value. It needs protection under an appropriate Reserve classification and should be considered as an addition to Kaitawa Reserve.

#### **Policies**

- i The feasibility of developing walking routes linking Kaitawa Reserve with nearby open spaces shall be investigated.
- ii Addition of adjacent open space to Kaitawa Reserve shall be considered in terms of the Reserve's aim and objectives.