

KARĀPIRO LAKE DOMAIN MASTERPLAN

DRAFT AUGUST 2025



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1

Section One Introduction

Purpose of this Plan

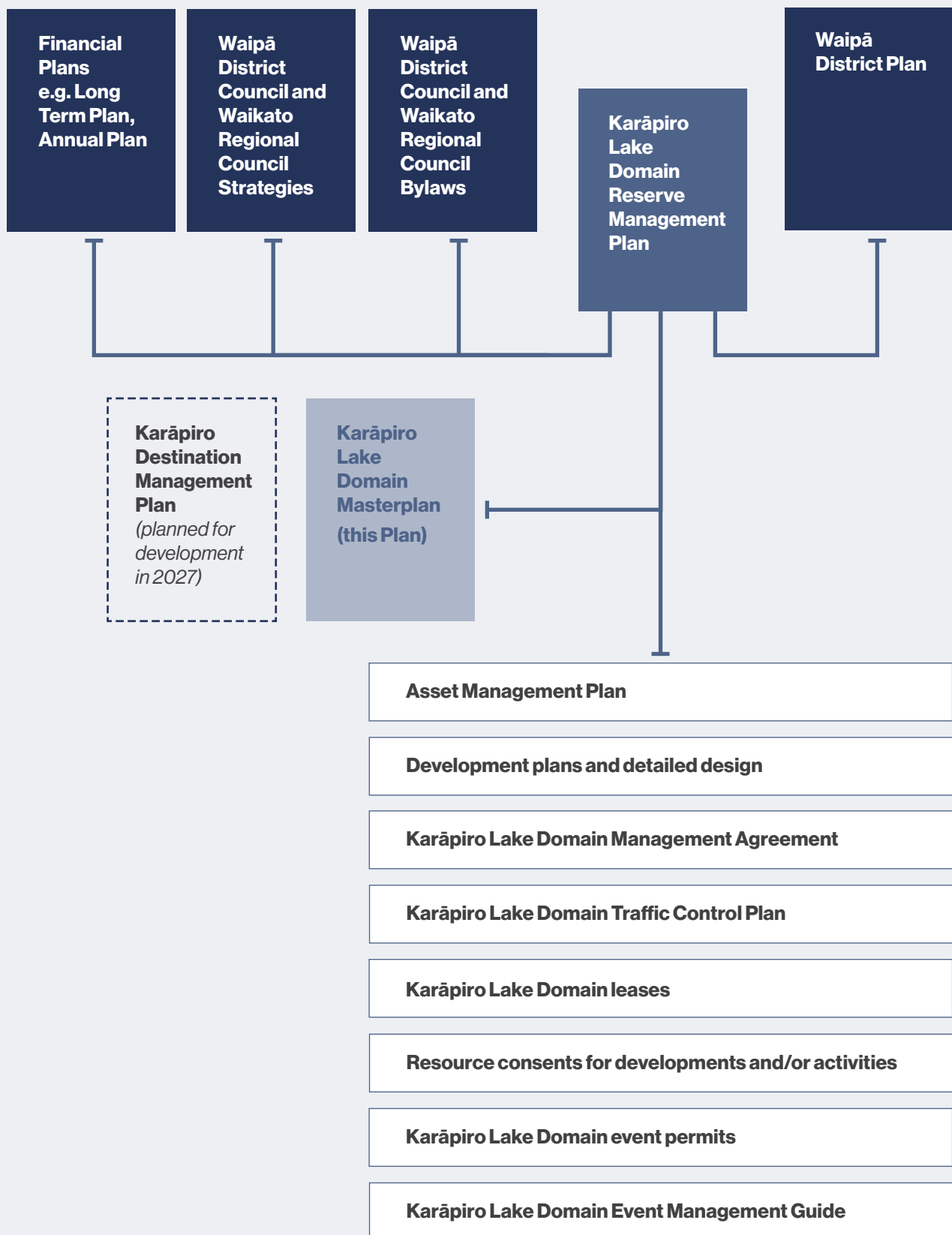
The Masterplan sets out design principles and key actions required to deliver the long term vision, ensuring all initiatives are aligned with the strategic direction outlined in the draft Reserve Management Plan 2025 (RMP). It provides a high-level framework to guide investment, third-party occupancy and development decisions, offering a coordinated approach to achieving long-term objectives.

The Masterplan is conceptual in nature; technical assessments, detailed design, consenting processes, and discussions with lessees (existing and future) will refine specific actions. As projects progress, amendments to the Masterplan may be necessary to respond to new information, evolving needs, or regulatory requirements, while remaining true to the overarching vision.

The role of the Masterplan in relation to other Council plans, bylaws and agreements is shown in Figure 1.

As shown in Figure 1, the Masterplan will inform a range of operational documents and agreements.

Figure 1. Documents and agreements informed by this Plan



Engagement Overview

The Masterplan has been developed concurrently with the new RMP.

Council has worked with mana whenua representatives from Ngaati Koroki Kahukura, Ngāti Hauā, Waikato Tainui and Raukawa to understand connections, values, desired outcomes and how these can be incorporated into this Plan.

Key partner organisations, including lessees, the Waikato Regional Harbourmaster, Sport Waikato, Mercury, Toitū Te Whenua Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) have contributed input into the Masterplan; with many of these organisations represented on the RMP Review and Masterplan Focus Group. This Focus Group, which also had representation from mana whenua, Council's elected members and the Cambridge Community Board, met several times through the review process. The purpose of the Focus Group was to seek input and feedback from mana whenua partners and key stakeholders on the project approach and potential policy directions and

Masterplan moves.

The process followed to develop the Masterplan also provided for our communities to provide input and feedback. Key actions and timeframes are set out in Appendix 1. This input highlighted a wide range of aspirations, requirements and concerns which were all carefully considered.

Statutory framework, leases and technical reports

A wide range of legislation and policy documents and reports informed the development of the RMP and this Masterplan. These are set out in Section 1 and Appendix 2 of the RMP.

The Council commissioned Market Demand and Feasibility Study for Potential New Commercial Accommodation at Karāpiro Lake Domain, Horwarth HTL, June 2025 also informed decisions on accommodation in this Masterplan.

Domain Development to Date

The following timeline outlines key moments in the history and development of Karāpiro Lake Domain. It traces the transformation of the site from its early cultural significance through to major infrastructural changes, governance milestones, and its emergence as a nationally and internationally recognised venue for recreation and sport.



Construction of Karāpiro Dam c1940's showing indicative outline of future Karāpiro Lake Domain. *Photo credit: Unknown*



Rowing eights race, British Empire Games, Lake Karāpiro, Waikato with spectators on the Karāpiro Lake Domain embankment in background. *Photo credit: Whites Aviation, Alexander Turnbull Library.*



England Men's Eight Oar Shell Rowing Team, British Empire Games, Lake Karāpiro, 1950 spectators on the Karāpiro Lake Domain embankment in background. *Photo credit: New Zealand Herald, Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections 1370-603-01*

Pre-European era

Ngaati Koroki Kahukura, Ngāti Hauā, and Raukawa establish ancestral connections to Karāpiro through whakapapa, occupation, and settlement that is evidenced by archaeological and cultural sites such as urupā (burial grounds), burial caves, and multiple pā (fortified villages) located around the Karāpiro Domain

The Waikato River is recognised as an awa tūpuna – an ancestral river with spiritual, cultural, and economic significance.

1830 Battle at Taumatawiwi

Ngāti Hauā, with support from Ngaati Koroki Kahukura and Ngāi Te Rangi, defeat Ngāti Maru at Taumatawiwi.

Bodies of fallen warriors are burned on a pyre built at the foot of a column of rocks where Hauoria Stream met the Waikato River; others are placed in the river. The odour from cremation gives rise to the name Karāpiro – 'karā' (rock) and 'piro' (odiferous).

Te Waharoa (Ngāti Hauā rangatira) instructs Ngaati Koroki to remain in occupancy at Karāpiro.

1940–1947 Construction of Karāpiro Dam

Construction begins in 1940; completed in 1947 after delays due to World War II. Lake Karāpiro is formed, submerging sites including the Horahora Power Station and the Taumatawiwi battle site. The sacred rocks were also submerged. The dam becomes part of a system of hydroelectric stations on the Waikato River.

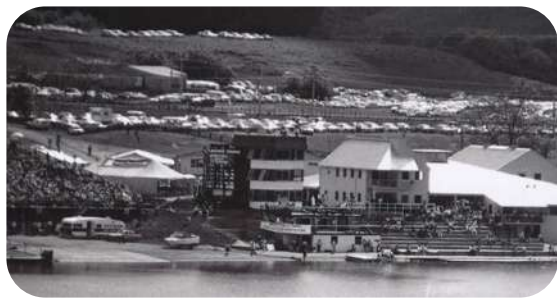
1947 - 1949 Establishment of Karāpiro Lake Domain

1947 - A camping ground and picnic area is established beside the new lake.

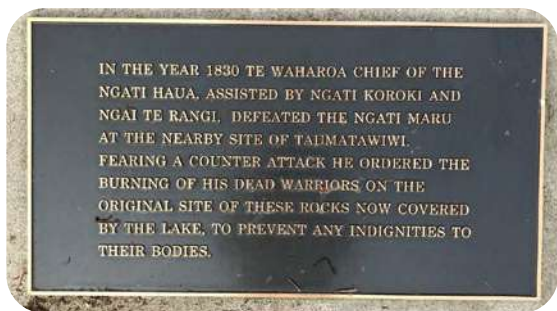
1949 - Domain formally placed under a Domain Board via the Public Reserves, Domains, and National Parks Act 1928.

1950 Hosting of British Empire Games

Lake Karāpiro hosts rowing events for the 1950 British Empire Games.



1978 World Championships at lake Karāpiro. Photo credit: Cambridge Museum and Historical Society.



Six vertical posts that were possibly created and installed for the opening of the Sir Don Rowlands Centre in 2010 positioned at the gate 2 entrance.

1978 World Rowing Championships

The World Rowing Championships were hosted at Lake Karāpiro - a first for the Domain as well as the first time they were held in the Southern Hemisphere. The event attracted 100,000 spectators and rowers from 28 nations.

An agreement with Iwi allowed the sacred rocks (that were previously submerged in 1947) to be removed for the 1978 World Rowing Championships and relocated. One rock is now at the Maungatautari Marae and others at the memorial site at the Karāpiro Domain.

1982–1989 Domain Land Management Changes

1982: Five reserve parcels are classified for recreation under the Reserves Act 1977.

1987: Domain vested in Matamata County Council.

1989: Management transfers to Waipā District Council following local authority amalgamation.

2008 – Title Consolidation

Council secures Certificate of Title 433904 for five parcels. Remaining two parcels classified as recreation reserve under Title 58A/822.

2009 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

MoU signed between Waipā District Council, Ngāti Hauā, and Ngaati Koroki Kahukura. Recognises mana whenua as kaitiaki and upholds protection of cultural values. Supports cultural use of Te Manawa o Matariki within the Events and Community Centre.

2010 Waikato River Settlement Act

Recognises Waikato-Tainui's role in restoring and protecting the river. Embeds Te Ture Whaimana o Te Awa o Waikato (Vision and Strategy) into the regional policy framework.

2010 Opening of Sir Don Rowlands Centre

Purpose-built event centre completed in June 2010, prior to hosting the World Rowing Championships.



Grandstand on Karāpiro Lake Domain for the 2010 World Rowing Championships. *Photo credit: Unknown*

2010 World Rowing Championships

2014 – Treaty Settlements

Ngaati Koroki Kahukura confirmed as holding dominant mana whenua, ahi kā, mana whakahaere, and kaitiaki roles from Karāpiro to Lake Arapuni.

Ngāti Hauā and Raukawa receive statutory acknowledgements and deeds of recognition for Karāpiro and Lake Karāpiro.

2020s Ongoing Development and Co-Management

Collaborative relationships with mana whenua continue to guide ecological restoration, cultural expression, and event support.

Whānau remain actively engaged in cultural, sporting, and environmental initiatives.

Strong national and international presence as a venue for recreation, sport, and major events.

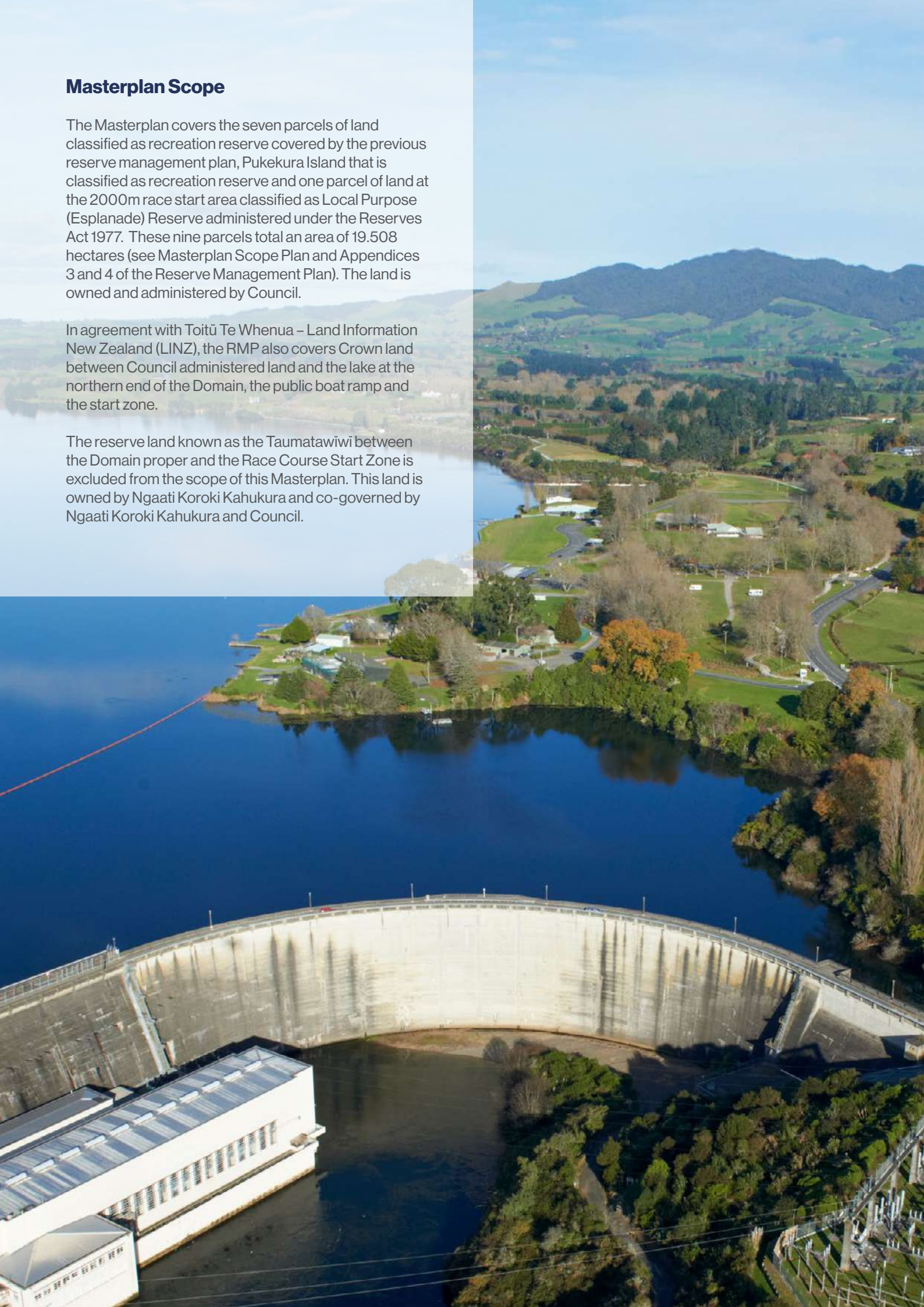
The Domain now supports a wide range of uses, with established facilities for public access, accommodation, water sports, events, and high-performance training.

Masterplan Scope

The Masterplan covers the seven parcels of land classified as recreation reserve covered by the previous reserve management plan, Pukekura Island that is classified as recreation reserve and one parcel of land at the 2000m race start area classified as Local Purpose (Esplanade) Reserve administered under the Reserves Act 1977. These nine parcels total an area of 19.508 hectares (see Masterplan Scope Plan and Appendices 3 and 4 of the Reserve Management Plan). The land is owned and administered by Council.

In agreement with Toitū Te Whenua – Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), the RMP also covers Crown land between Council administered land and the lake at the northern end of the Domain, the public boat ramp and the start zone.

The reserve land known as the Taumatawiwi between the Domain proper and the Race Course Start Zone is excluded from the scope of this Masterplan. This land is owned by Ngaati Koroki Kahukura and co-governed by Ngaati Koroki Kahukura and Council.



Masterplan Scope Plan



Legend

Karāpiro Lake Domain Masterplan scope

Other Reserve

Taumatawiwi

Classification

Recreation Reserve
 Local Purpose (Esplanade) Reserve

Land Ownership/Management

Waipā District Council
 Crown ownership / LINZ management
 Ngaati Koroki Kahukura ownership co-governed by Ngā Pae Whenua

Existing Site Plan: Karāpiro Lake Domain

Legend

-  Site extent
-  Gate
-  Te Awa River Ride

Facilities:

- ① Site office
- ② Sir Don Rowlands Centre
- ③ Finish tower
- ④ Public boat ramp
- ⑤ Sand court
- ⑥ Grandstand
- ⑦ High and low rope courses
- ⑧ Campground amenity block
- ⑨ Overflow carparking area
- ⑩ Podium Cafe
- ⑪ Perry Community Water Sports Centre
- ⑫ Maintenance shed
- ⑬ Spectator embankment
-  Toilets
-  Boat ramp
-  Campground
-  Playground
-  Rob Waddell Lodge
-  Chalets
-  Public parking
-  Rowing course

Lease areas:

*Lease areas as of October 2024 (approximate extents)

-  A Karāpiro Water Ski Club
-  B Cambridge Rowing Club Inc.
-  C St Peters School Trust Board
-  D Te Mana Visions Charitable Trust / Karāpiro Rowing Club *rented (not leased)
-  E Waikato Cycling Sports Academy Inc.
-  F Te Manawa o Matariki (Ngaati Koroki Kahakura Trust and Ngaati Hauaa Iwi Trust)
-  G Karāpiro Rowing Inc.
-  H Gourmet Delicious Limited
-  I Waikato Recreation Charitable Trust
-  J New Zealand Rowing Association Inc.
-  K Cambridge Yacht and Motor Boat Club Inc.
-  L Karāpiro Kayak Racing Club Inc.
-  M Canoe Racing New Zealand Inc.
-  N Waikato Rowing Club Inc.



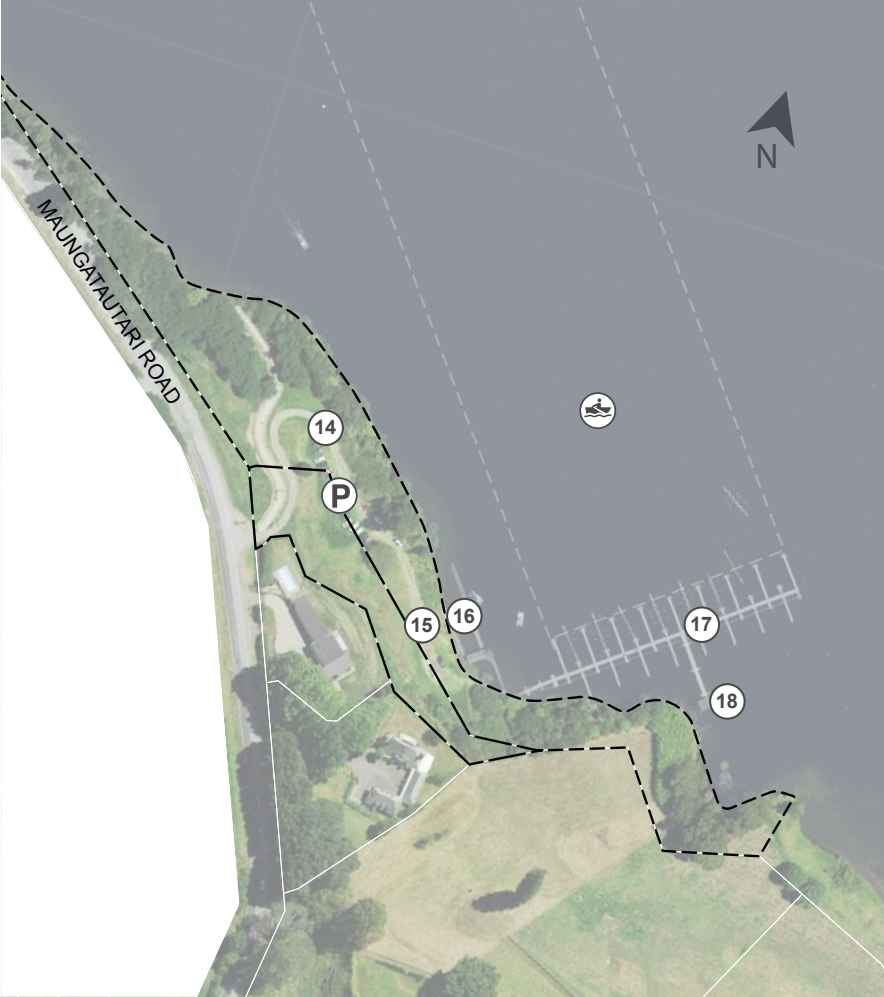
Existing Site Plan: Start Zone

Legend

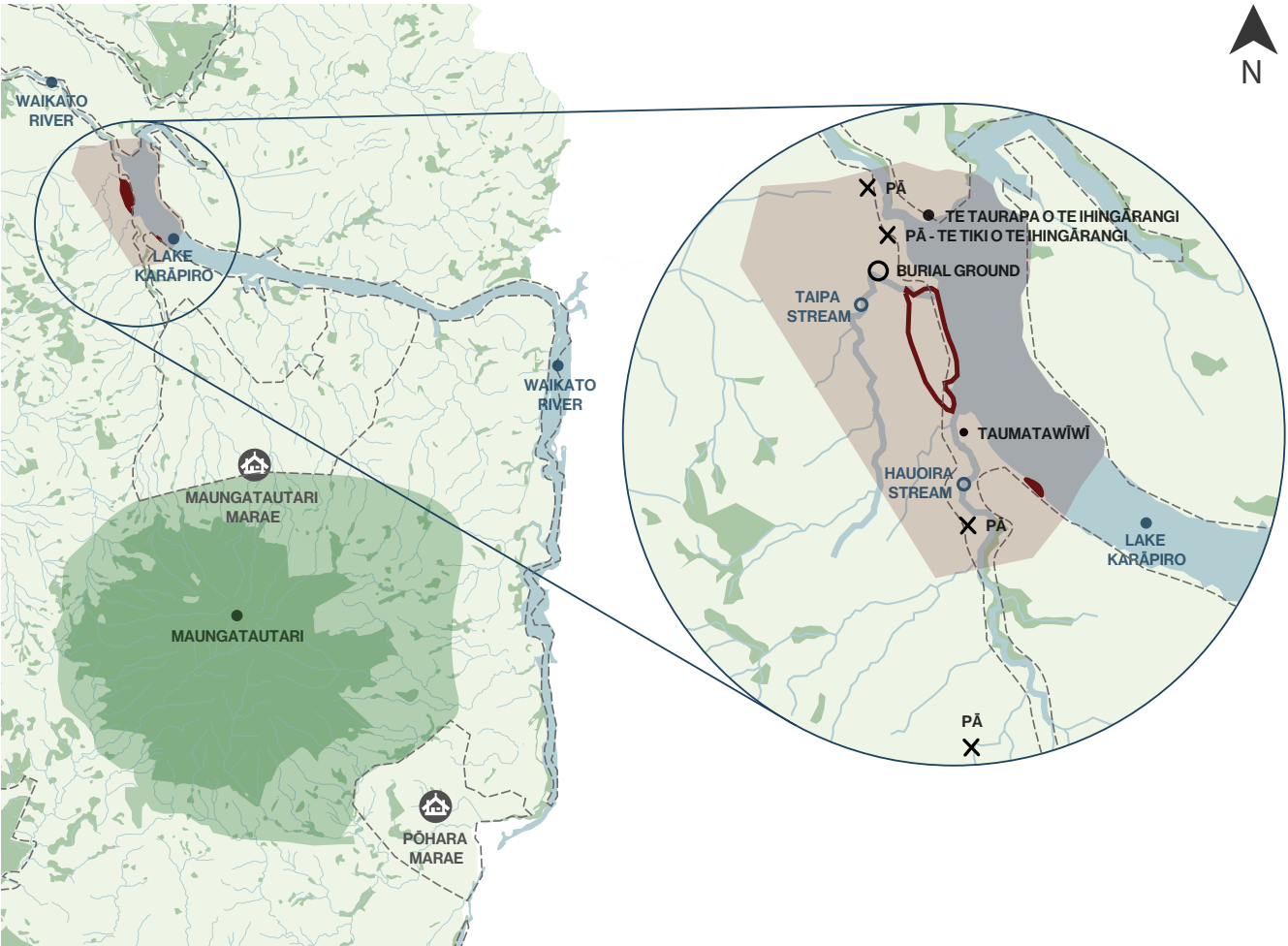
- Site extent
- Te Awa River Ride

Facilities:

- 14 Access road
- 15 Path access to pontoons
- 16 Rowing - aligners deck
- 17 Rowing - pontoons
- 18 Rowing - start tower
- P Parking
- Rowing course



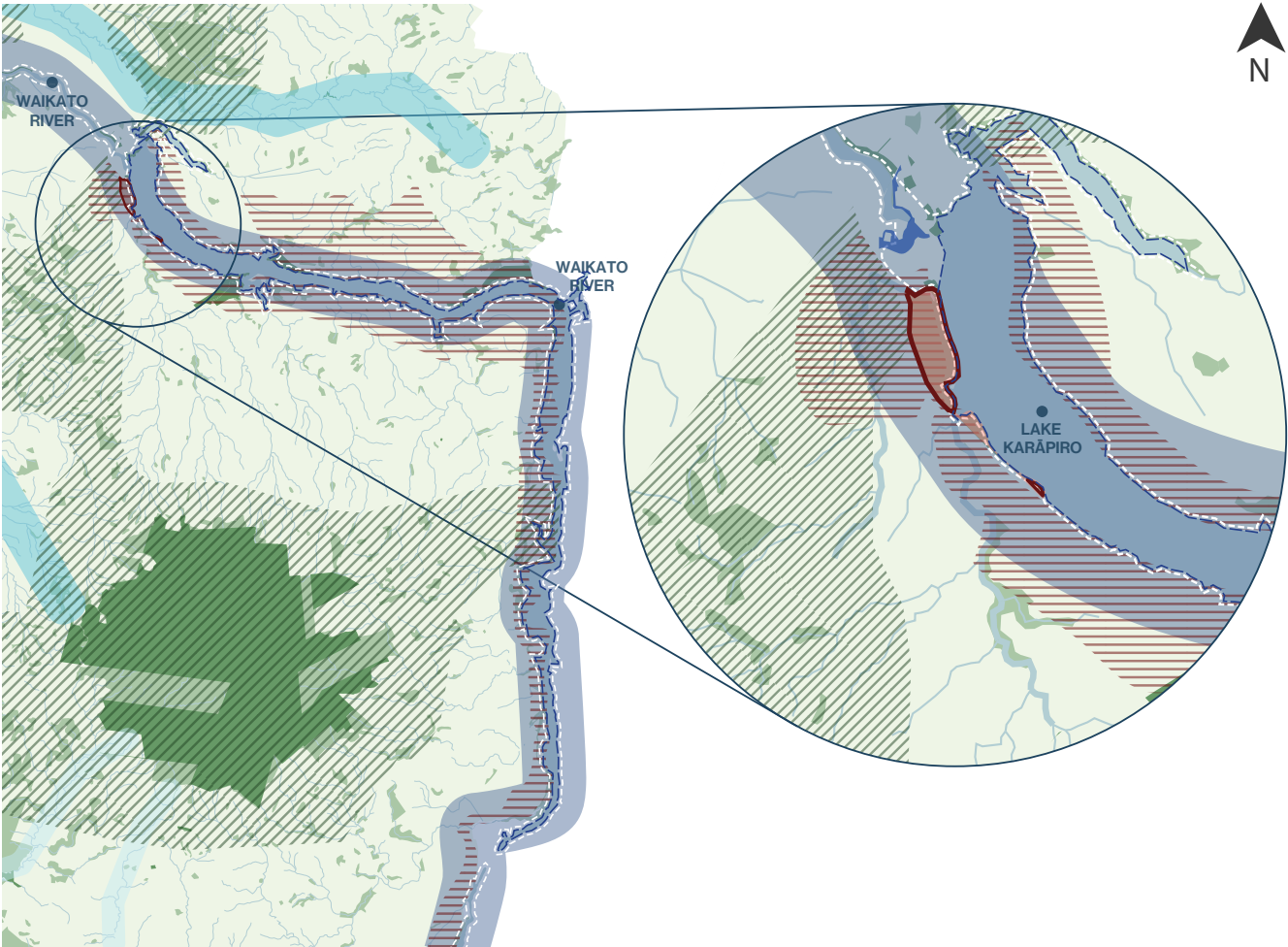
Sites and Features of Significance to Mana Whenua



Legend

- Karāpiro Lake Domain Reserve Management Plan scope
 - Waipā District
 - Significant Natural Areas
- Waipā District Plan Cultural Landscape Areas:
- Cultural Landscape Area Mountain
 - Cultural Landscape Area Battle Site
 - Cultural Landscape Area Alert

Indigenous Biodiversity and Amenity Context



Legend

- | | |
|---|--|
| Karāpiro Lake Domain Reserve Masterplan Scope | Hydro Electric Power Generation Infrastructure Area (Zone Overlay) |
| Waipā District | Hydro Operating Easement |
| Significant Natural Areas | Indigenous Forest Corridor |
| Reserves Zone | River and Lake Environs |
| Lake Karāpiro Events Zone | High Amenity Landscapes |
| 750m River Stream Corridor | |
| 500m River Stream Corridor | |
| 250m River Stream Corridor | |

2

Section Two Masterplan

Design Principles

The six Masterplan design principles provide a framework to guide the future development of the Domain. With a commitment to recognising mana whenua and upholding the significance of the Waikato River, these principles balance the needs of local communities, visitors, and elite athletes while ensuring that future developments remain feasible, adaptable, and aligned with long-term aspirations.

1

Whakapapa and Mana

Increase mana whenua recognition and partnership through:

- respecting intergenerational connections to the Domain and honouring the Waikato River as a tūpuna (ancestor), a taonga (treasure), and the mauri (life force) of mana whenua,
- embedding mana whenua values and mātauranga Māori in the design and development of the Domain,
- weaving the stories of mana whenua into the fabric of the Domain, ensuring Māori values, traditions and connections are seen, heard, and felt, and
- exploring opportunities to support other mana whenua aspirations at the Domain and the adjoining Taumatawīwī.

2

Taiao

Protect and restore the Domain's environment and the health and wellbeing of the Waikato River and surrounding ecosystems through:

- minimising increases in impervious surfaces and implementing water sensitive design options,
- naturalising the Taipa stream,
- providing for lake biosecurity facilities,
- identifying and addressing environmental risks,
- retaining mature trees where possible and providing for succession planting, and
- increasing native biodiversity.

3

Whakawhanake

Further develop the Domain as a world-class event and training venue by:

- enabling the development of high-quality, adaptable and functional facilities that support local through to elite aquatic sporting events and training activities; with priority given to non-motorised codes,
- retaining and enhancing multi-use spaces that enable national and international events to be hosted and outside of these times community use and enjoyment of these spaces, and
- exploring hubbing facilities and altering the range of accommodation to efficiently use space, meet needs and generate sustainable revenue streams while avoiding duplication.

4

Hauora, whanaungatanga and manaakitanga

Enhance community wellbeing and inclusion and ensure the Domain is a place where mana whenua, Council, lessees and event organisers can show kindness, respect, and support to visitors through:

- creating a welcoming, accessible, and safe environment for all,
- providing facilities for mana whenua cultural activities and everyday community use that respond to needs and aspirations,
- fostering connections to Lake Karāpiro, the Waikato River, the Domain and to each other,
- identifying and addressing hazards, and
- encouraging partnerships that support local identity, storytelling, and heritage preservation.

5

Huarahi

Improve safety, accessibility and ease of access by:

- improving vehicle, pedestrian, cyclist connectivity to and through the Domain and along the lake edge,
- ensuring the path and road network is designed from the outset to be inclusive and functional for all users regardless of age, ability, or circumstance, thereby reducing the need for separate solutions or future adjustments,
- enhancing wayfinding, and user experiences to support a more enjoyable and intuitive visit,
- creating more distinctive activity zones that are easy to understand and integrated,
- exploring ways to reduce adverse effects of vehicle movements, and
- integrating planning with adjoining land uses.

6

Whakamārohirohi

Ensure best practice asset management and developments that are feasible and resilient by:

- adopting a safety in design approach,
- investigating ways to improve operational efficiency and meet future demands,
- considering parks maintenance and whole of life asset costs,
- promoting realistic projects that will be operationally and financially sustainable,
- exploring opportunities to increase revenue streams that are aligned to the Reserve Management Plan,
- planning for climate change, projected increased visitation and potential new activities, and
- ensuring future assets are resilient to fluctuations in lake levels, without affecting or breaching Mercury's operational easement.

Key Masterplan Moves

The key Masterplan moves outline how developments on the Domain will help achieve the RMP Vision:

Karāpiro Lake Domain, a wāhi tūpuna and a taonga to mana whenua, is a premiere event and training venue for primarily non-motorised aquatic sport and valued community lakeside reserve on the banks of a healthy Waikato River.

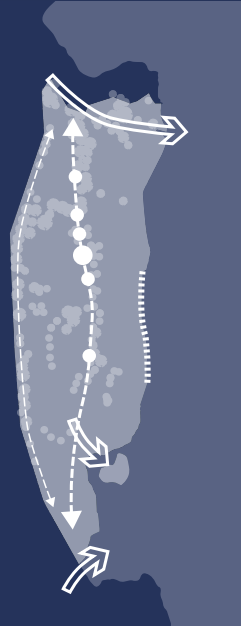
1. Embedding mana whenua values and mātauranga Māori



Enable mana whenua to exercise their kaitiakitanga for the land that comprises Karāpiro Lake Domain, to identify, protect, enhance and interpret significant values, features and viewshafts and to have a living connection with the Domain through:

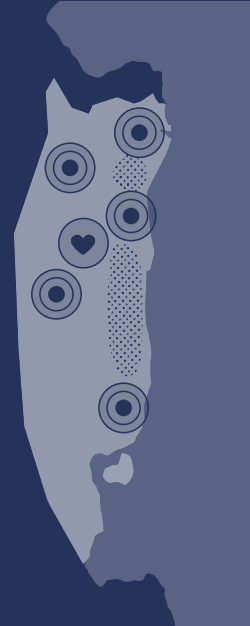
- Retaining the historic rocks (kōwhatu tapu), waharoa, and interpretation signage near the entrance to the Sir Don Rowlands Centre as a key focal point.
- Retaining Te Manawa o Matariki, the tangata whenua facility within the Sir Don Rowlands Centre, for the purpose of recognising and protecting the historic and cultural values of the site.
- Developing cultural interpretation opportunities at the main gates and throughout the site, potentially linking with a wider heritage trail to Taumatawiwi.
- Restoring traditional Māori names for natural features such as streams.
- Partnering with mana whenua during the detailed design phase to embed cultural values into infrastructure and landscape design.

2. Enhancing the environment



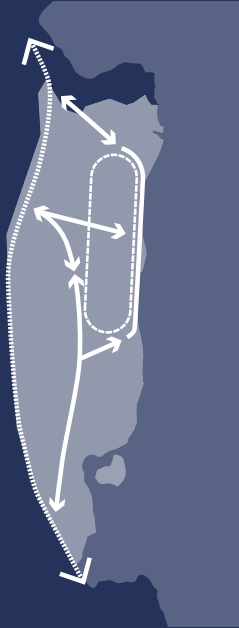
- Naturalising the Taipa Stream to the north and slowing and filtering stormwater through natural planting and other natural treatments before it enters the lake.
- Strengthening the central green spine with low-growing native vegetation, especially on steep banks, around facilities, and near stormwater outlets.
- Strengthening the Maungatautari Road green edge with additional tree planting.
- Enhancing ecological connectivity by reinforcing the District Plan's biodiversity corridor, linking Maungatautari to the Waikato River across the northern area of the Domain.
- Creating a consistent and cohesive native planting palette that reflects both natural ecosystems and cultural values.
- Maintaining significant mature exotic trees that contribute to the Domain's character.
- Undertaking necessary retaining wall upgrades to prevent erosion and protect the lake edge.

3. Developing multi-use, flexible zones and meeting operational requirements



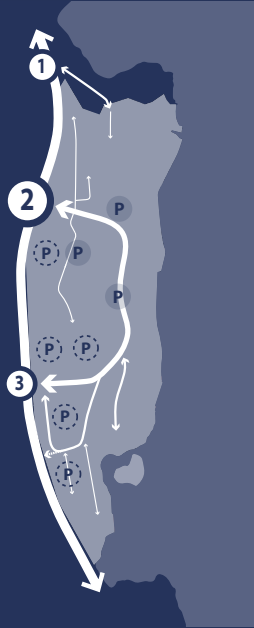
- Retaining flexible spaces such as the campground/rigging area, grassed open spaces used for informal recreation and temporary parking, and embankments used for picnicking and viewing.
- Encouraging amalgamation of clubs to better utilise space and enable shared facilities.
- Increasing boat storage
- Providing essential infrastructure to support management operations, including transitioning Flynn Cove into a dedicated operational zone and developing a new maintenance depot

4. Connecting people to the Domain and Lake



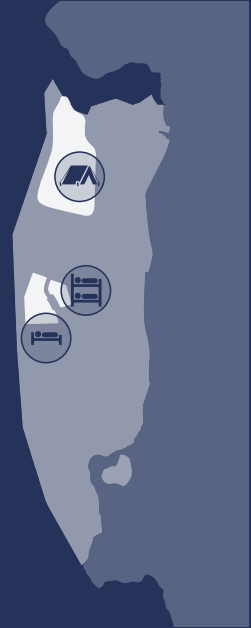
- Enhancing physical and visual connections to Lake Karāpiro and the Waikato River.
- Strengthening links between major destinations like the Sir Don Rowlands Centre, playground, café, accommodation, and carparks.
- Creating walking circuits that better connect the wider Domain, catering to both local residents and visitors.
- Enhancing universal access for all abilities.

5. Providing safe, accessible and easy to navigate vehicle circulation and parking



- Reducing unnecessary vehicle movement through the Domain and managing parking to prevent congestion during both event and non-event times.
- Continuing the two-way arterial route from Gate 2 to Gate 3 with improved southern-end traffic management.
- Enhancing safety at all gate entrances.
- Retaining maximum capacity for temporary event parking while managing impacts on the site.

6. Providing a range of accommodation



- Upgrading and potentially expanding existing infrastructure.
- Develop new affordable, universally accessible, and high amenity accommodation that improves and expands the accommodation offering.



Image: View of the spectator embankment and retaining wall from Lake Karāpiro during the Maadi Regatta

Activity Zones

Activity zones are essential to the Masterplan, organising the site in a way that balances sports, recreation, events, accommodation, operational needs and conservation. Clear zoning ensures that different activities complement rather than conflict with each other, supporting a safer, more enjoyable experience for visitors and athletes alike.

It allows the Domain to operate efficiently during major events, protect valuable green spaces and lakefront areas, and adapt to future growth. By defining these zones carefully, the Masterplan strengthen the Karāpiro Lake Domain's identity as a premier destination for both high-performance sport and everyday recreation, ensuring the site remains welcoming, functional, and resilient for the future.

Existing site photographs - Activity Zones



Informal Recreation Zone and Spectator Zone



Sports Zone and Sports Water Access Zone (start area)



Informal Recreation Zone



Events Zone / Camping Zone



Camping Zone

Karāpiro Lake Domain Activity Zones Plan

Legend

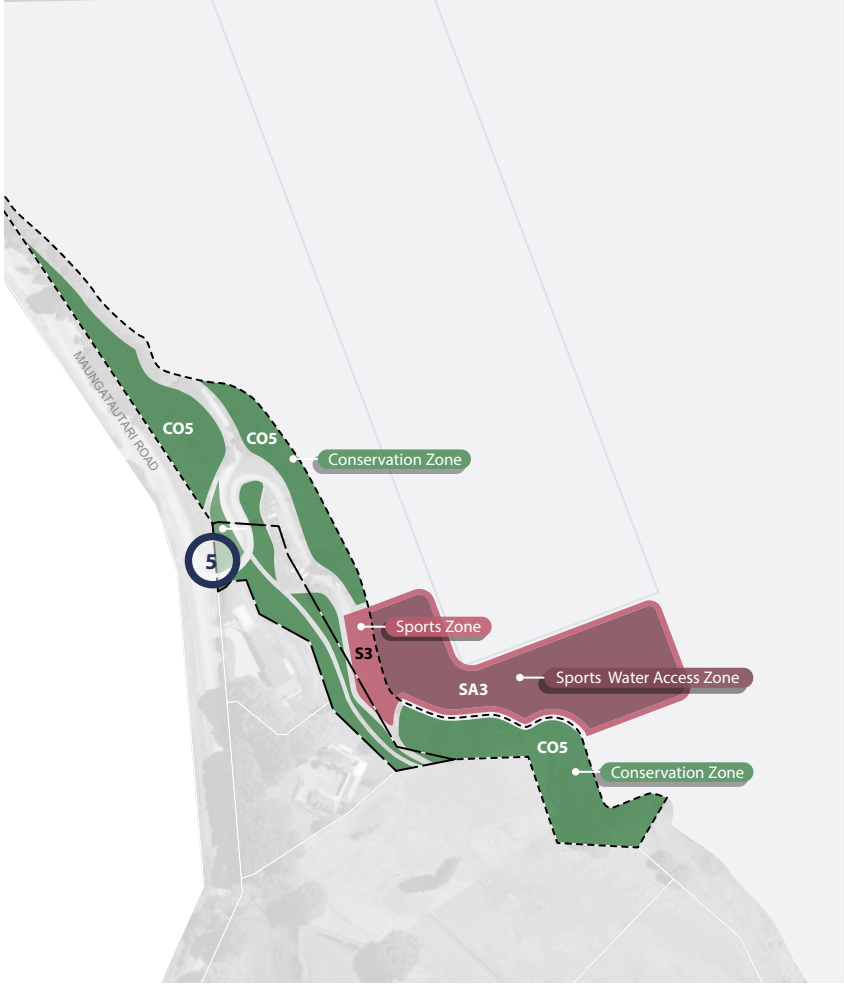
-  Site extent
-  LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
-  Lake Karāpiro
-  Main gate
-  Minor gates
-  Minor temporary event gate
-  Rowing events course
-  E1 Events Zone 1/ camping zone
-  E2 Events Zone 2 (Sir Don Rowlands Centre)
-  E3 Events Zone 3 (podium, tower, grandstand)
-  S1 Sport Zone 1 (local clubs)
-  S2 Sport Zone 2 (high performance / local clubs)
-  SA1 Sport Water Access Zone 1 (club pontoons/boat ramp)
-  SA2 Sport Water Access Zone 2 (High performance/club pontoons and boat ramp)
-  A1 Built Accommodation Zone 1 (potential location for refurbished and extended lodge or new lodge)
-  A2 Built Accommodation Zone 2 (chalets and new motel-style modular units)
-  C1 Camping Zone 1
-  C2 Camping Zone 2
-  R1 Informal Recreation Zone 1 (lake edge)
-  R2 Informal Recreation Zone 2 (cafe, playground, picnic area)
-  R3 Informal Recreation Zone 3 (picnicing, lake viewing area)
-  S Spectator Zone
-  G1 Domain Green Zone 1 (mutli-use grassed area community/temporary VIP event parking)
-  G2 Domain Green Zone 2 (mutli-use grassed area – community/temporary public event parking)
-  G3 Domain Green Zone 3 (mutli-use grassed area – community/temporary public event parking)
-  O1 Operational Zone 1 (Domain maintenance)
-  O2 Operational Zone 2 (Domain admin centre)
-  O3 Operational Zone 3 (KRI centre)
-  OA1 Operational Water Access Zone 1
-  PA1 Public Lake Access Zone 1 (boat ramp / motorised boat mooring zone)
-  PA2 Public Lake Access Zone 2 (swim / non-motorised boat mooring zone)
-  CO1 Conservation Zone 1 (Taipa Stream)
-  CO2 Conservation Zone 2
-  CO3 Conservation Zone 3 (Pukekura Island)
-  CO4 Conservation Zone 4 (Hauoira Stream riparian margin)



Start Zone Activity Zones Plan

Legend

-  Site extent
-  LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
-  Lake Karāpiro
-  Minor gate
-  Rowing events course
-  Sport Zone 3 (rowing start zone)
-  Sport Water Access Zone 3 (rowing start zone)
-  Conservation Zone 5 (Start Zone)



Event Zone

This zone is designed to host a wide range of small to large-scale, organised sport and recreational events. As a versatile, multi-functional space, it supports indoor activities at the Sir Don Rowlands Centre, accommodates temporary infrastructure, and facilitates boat storage, event staging, and spectator seating. When not in use for events, the area serves as a camping ground, enabling year-round activation. Strategically located in the northern part of the site, the zone minimises disruption to other park users while strengthening Karāpiro Lake Domain's role as a premier regional events hub.

Karāpiro Lake Domain



Start Zone



KEY DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR THIS ZONE:

Celebrate Cultural Heritage and Significance

Preserve and provide interpretation of the historic rocks, waharoa, and mahi toi in front of the Sir Don Rowlands Centre to support greater understanding of the area's significance to mana whenua.

Design for Flexibility and Scale

Provide a layout that can easily scale up or down depending on the size and nature of events. Ensure open areas are unobstructed and have level, durable surfaces to accommodate temporary infrastructure such as tents, marquees or boat racks.

Integrate Indoor and Outdoor Event Functions

Improve connections between the Sir Don Rowlands Centre and adjacent outdoor spaces to support combined indoor-outdoor events. Design external areas to complement the indoor facilities, allowing for fluid crowd movement and multi-zone programming.

Preserve Usability Outside of Events

Design the zone so it remains attractive and functional when not in use for events by retaining open grassed areas. Allow for camping, casual recreation, or overflow uses without compromising the quality of the space.

Manage Access and Circulation

Provide clear and logical vehicle and pedestrian access to support large crowds and smooth event operation. Design drop-off areas, parking, and pedestrian routes to reduce congestion and maintain safety. Include wayfinding that can be adapted for different event types.

Improve Event Seating Capacity and Comfort

Upgrade existing spectator seating to increase capacity, improve comfort, and enhance the overall event experience. Plan for a mix of permanent and temporary seating solutions to suit different event scales.

Accommodate Variable Lake Levels

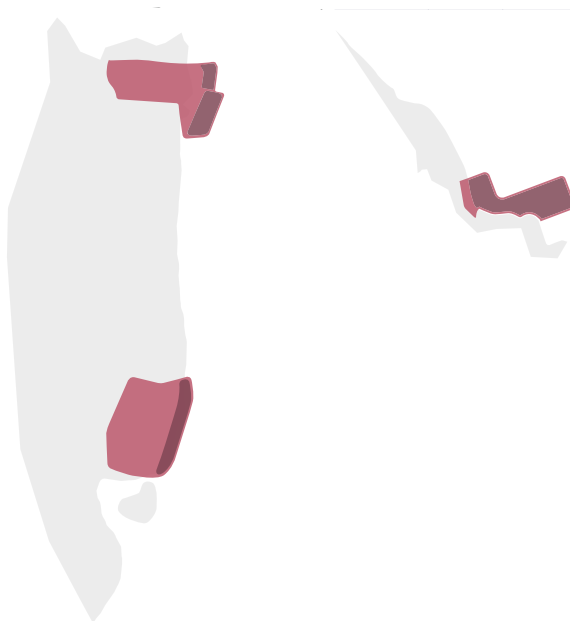
Ensure all future infrastructure is planned and constructed to accommodate fluctuations in lake levels enabled by Mercury's operational easement.

Sports Zone and Sports Water Access Zone

These zones support a range of water-based and land-based sporting activities, with facilities arranged to suit different user needs. Sport club activities are predominantly concentrated in the northern part of the Domain, while high-performance centres, some sports clubs and support services are located to the south. The layout ensures safe, accessible movement between storage areas, support facilities, and the lake. Dedicated pontoons, boat ramps, and purpose-built infrastructure provide appropriate water access for each sporting code, supporting both everyday use and major sporting events.

Karāpiro Lake Domain

Start Zone



KEY DESIGN OBJECTIVES FOR THIS ZONE:

Zoning and Spatial Organisation

Cluster club and school sport facilities in the north to form a local hub. Enable high-performance facilities in the southern sector to extend to meet future requirements and ensure developments and activities support an environment conducive to focused training and elite athlete preparation while also accommodating use by clubs.

Purpose-Built Multi-Use Club Facility

Rationalise individual club facilities to develop a new facility that incorporates specialised infrastructure such as boat storage buildings, changing rooms and showers, equipment maintenance areas, meeting spaces, kitchens and a larger clubroom that supports the varied demands of club and school group users in the northern Domain. Ensure facilities are scalable and flexible to adapt to changing needs over time.

Encourage Social Interaction and Community

Include communal indoor and outdoor spaces such as lounges, kitchens, and meeting rooms that foster group cohesion and encourage shared experiences.

Respect the Domain's Character

Minimise visual impact through thoughtful siting and architectural designed facilities that complement the landscape, maintain views and signal connection to the Waikato River and the significance of the area to mana whenua. Preserve existing trees and natural features

where possible to enhance amenity and biodiversity values and provide natural shade.

Safe, Accessible and Efficient Pedestrian Movement

Design clear, accessible pathways and event routes that enable safe, direct movement between boat storage, support facilities and the lake. These connections should accommodate pedestrians and athletes carrying equipment and boats without conflict or congestion with vehicles.

Water Access Infrastructure

Provide dedicated pontoons and boat ramps tailored to the specific needs of different sporting codes, ensuring safe and efficient launching and retrieval of boats. Design pontoons to accommodate peak use during major events and everyday training.

Accommodate Variable Lake Levels

Ensure all future infrastructure is planned and constructed to accommodate fluctuations in lake levels enabled by Mercury's operational easement.

Design Safe, Functional Vehicle Access

Create vehicle access and parking that supports daily use and events, minimises conflict with pedestrians and athletes, and includes separate routes for service vehicles and trailers. Ensure clear signage and safe turning areas throughout.

Built Accommodation Zone

This zone provides a variety of accommodation options, including a lodge, chalets and motel-style modular units. It supports extended stays, reduces off-site travel, and provides direct access to recreational and event facilities. This accommodation strengthens the Domain's role as a multi-day destination for sport and leisure for a wide variety of groups or individuals.

Karāpiro Lake Domain



Start Zone



KEY DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR THIS ZONE:

Provide Flexible and Adaptable Accommodation

Design and deliver spacious, multi-purpose accommodation with increased bed capacity, enhanced heating, and accessibility. The facilities should comfortably accommodate a diverse range of users, including families, sports teams, training camps, elite and adult athletes, international visitors, and community organisations.

Improve Accessibility and Connection

Enhance accessible pathways and wayfinding signage to support clear and inclusive movement from the lodge, chalets, and motel-style units to key destinations across the Domain. Upgrade drop-off zones and short-term parking areas to better accommodate visitor arrivals and departures, reducing congestion and improving overall circulation.

Respect the Domain's Character

Minimise visual impact through thoughtful siting and architectural designed facilities that complement the landscape, maintain views, signal connection to the Waikato River and identify the significance of the area to mana whenua. Preserve existing trees and natural features where possible to enhance visual amenity and provide natural shade.

Enhance User Safety and Comfort

Incorporate natural surveillance, appropriate lighting, clear wayfinding, and well-defined zones to support visitor safety and comfort, particularly at night.

Encourage Social Interaction and Community

Include communal indoor and outdoor spaces such as lounges, kitchens, and meeting rooms that foster group cohesion and encourage shared experiences.

Support Operational Efficiency

Design for easy maintenance and management, including clear service routes, waste management, laundry facilities, and provisions for catering or group dining.

Camping Zone

This zone offers dedicated space for short-term, affordable campsite accommodation, catering to a wide range of camping experiences. Strategically located to take advantage of lake views and nearby amenities, it provides convenient access to sport and recreation areas while maintaining a sense of privacy and separation for overnight guests. The zone is designed for flexibility, with infrastructure that can be adapted to meet seasonal fluctuations and event-driven demand. Facilities support both individual campers and larger group stays.

Karāpiro Lake Domain



Start Zone



KEY DESIGN OBJECTIVES FOR THIS ZONE:

Provide for Flexible and Adaptable Camping Areas

Cater to a variety of camping styles, including tents, campervans, and group setups, with appropriate supporting infrastructure. Ensure the zone continues to be adaptable, allowing for increased capacity during peak seasons and major events without compromising the visitor experience.

Improve Accessibility and Connection

Improve access for all abilities to the main campground amenities and from the campground to major destinations within the Domain such as toilets and kitchen facilities, the site office, play space, lake edge and club buildings. Improve safe vehicle access into the campsites.

Respect the Domain's Character

Preserve and enhance existing vegetation, particularly large specimen trees to maintain visual amenity, provide natural shade and enhance the amenity between the campground and adjoining Maungatautari Road.

Enhance User Safety and Comfort

Incorporate natural surveillance, appropriate lighting, clear wayfinding, and well-defined zones to support

visitor safety and comfort, particularly at night.

Support Operational Efficiency

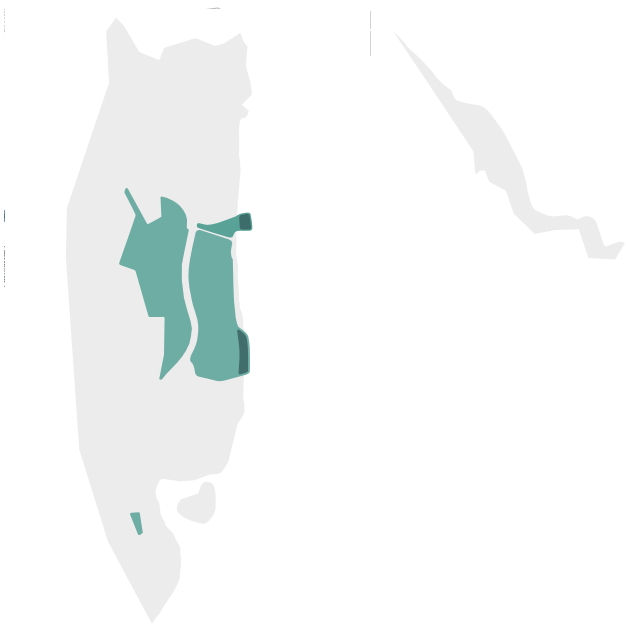
Design for easy maintenance and management, including clear service routes, waste management, laundry facilities, and provisions for catering or group dining.

Informal Recreation Zone and Public Lake Access Zone

This zone is designed to support everyday park use and unstructured leisure activities. This open, accessible space caters to a wide range of community members by offering opportunities for relaxation, play, casual exercise, and social connection. The zone is closely integrated with the adjoining Public Lake Access Zone, enhancing the community's interaction with the water for swimming, picnicking, and lakeside enjoyment.

Karāpiro Lake Domain

Start Zone



KEY DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR THIS ZONE:

Shade and Amenity

Retain significant mature trees to preserve natural shade and contribute to the Domain's amenity. Where additional cover is needed, especially around play and picnic areas, incorporate further specimen planting or shade structures that complement the landscape and provide relief during warmer months.

Picnicking and Seating

Offer a mix of informal and formal seating and picnicking options for both individuals and groups. Seats should be strategically placed throughout the zone, with emphasis on shaded areas and spots that offer views of the lake or key recreational features.

Informal Recreation Areas

Maintain open, flexible lawn areas for unstructured recreational activities such as casual sports, family activities, and quiet relaxation. Keep these spaces free of permanent obstructions to support adaptable use throughout the year.

Improving Connections

Establish clear, accessible pathways linking the informal recreation zone to key destinations such as the café, Sir Don Rowland Centre, playground, car parks, restrooms, and along the lake edge. Paths should be intuitive, well-marked, and constructed with materials that ensure mobility for users of all ages and abilities.

Improvements to Play Experiences

Introduce a broader range of age-appropriate, inclusive play experiences to create a destination play space. Consider nature-based play features, like timber climbing structures, boulders, and water play, that reflect the lakeside setting and encourage unstructured exploration. Investigate the opportunity to expand and enhance the high and low ropes course, the inclusion of new fitness equipment and a volleyball area.

Enhance Lake Edge Access and Safety

Improve access and safety along the central lake edge by replacing the deteriorating retaining wall and lowering it to meet Building Code requirements. Create a shared-use path closer to the water to improve accessibility, and add stepped access into the lake. Establish a designated swim zone at the southern end with a pontoon and accessible path. Include clear signage and cultural interpretation to guide and inform visitors.

Improve Boat Ramp and Trailer Parking Provision

Improve the functionality, safety, and aesthetics of the boat ramp area to better serve recreational and operational users including ongoing use by dragon boating and hydroplanes (which require a wider ramp).

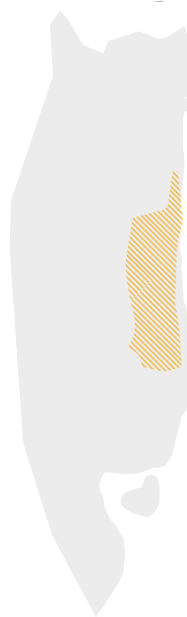
Accommodate Variable Lake Levels

Ensure all future infrastructure is planned and constructed to accommodate fluctuations in lake levels enabled by Mercury's operational easement.

Spectator Zone

The grandstand and grassed embankment at Karāpiro Lake Domain is the primary gathering and viewing area during major events and plays a vital role in shaping the visitor experience. As a multi-functional space, it must balance accessibility, comfort, sightlines and event use to meet the needs of a wide range of users. It should also integrate environmental enhancements and operational upgrades to ensure the space remains resilient.

Karāpiro Lake Domain



Start Zone



KEY DESIGN OBJECTIVES FOR THIS ZONE:

Flexible Use

Design the embankment to accommodate both passive recreation and large-scale events by enabling the installation of temporary infrastructure such as marquees, food vendors and grandstand seating, while maintaining the site's natural character and enhancing year-round usability through clearly defined zones for gathering, circulation and viewing.

Improve Accessibility

Overcome movement challenges posed by the sloping terrain by providing accessible connections to and along the lake edge. Link key amenities—such as rest areas, toilets, swim zones, lake access points, and primary pathways—using slip-resistant materials suitable for all weather conditions. Enhance seating opportunities through a mix of well-designed, permanent seating and flexible areas suitable for informal gatherings and event viewing.

Maintain Sightlines

Preserve clear views to the lake and between key event infrastructure for both spectator enjoyment and effective event operation. Any permanent or temporary features such as planting, shade structures/marquees, or seating should be carefully positioned to avoid obstructing these sightlines. Ensure any development of a tiered landform maintains views from multiple vantage points across the embankment.

Domain Green Zone

This zone preserves and enhances the premier park setting of the Domain through a continuous north-south green corridor. It provides a relaxed, versatile space for everyday park users, while accommodating temporary event parking during major gatherings. Parking is carefully organised to meet diverse needs—VIP, coach, and judge parking is accessed via Gate 2, with general event parking managed through Gate 3. This flexible arrangement optimises space use, limits event parking to what is necessary, and maintains the zone’s natural setting.

Karāpiro Lake Domain



Start Zone



KEY DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR THIS ZONE:

Preserve the Character of the Domain

Maintain and enhance the open, green landscape that defines the Domain’s identity. Reinforce the continuous north-south green corridor.

Support Informal Recreation

Provide a relaxed, flexible space that caters to everyday users—walkers, picnickers, families, and casual visitors. Ensure the landscape encourages passive recreation while remaining resilient for event use.

Manage Access and Circulation Effectively

Support a clear access strategy by directing VIP, coach, and judge parking through Gate 2, and general event parking through Gate 3. Ensure traffic flows are logical, safe, and separated from recreational areas wherever possible.

Optimise Space Use

Design the layout to efficiently accommodate multiple uses—recreation, overflow parking, and event support—without overdeveloping or hardening the space. Prioritise multi-functionality over permanent infrastructure.

Maintain Visual and Ecological Quality

Plan for future native succession shade and amenity tree planting that contributes to both amenity and biodiversity. Preserve clear views to the lake by undertaking canopy uplift of existing trees or ensuring future trees do not block key sightlines.

Operational Zone

This zone supports the day-to-day management and maintenance of Karāpiro Lake Domain, including the delivery of water-based events. It contains staff facilities, service areas, and storage for equipment, supplies, and waste—ensuring the efficient and unobtrusive operation of the Domain and its activities.

Karāpiro Lake Domain



Start Zone



KEY DESIGN OBJECTIVES FOR THIS ZONE:

Enable Efficient Daily Operations

Design the zone to support the smooth, safe, and efficient operation of Karāpiro Lake Domain, with well-organised facilities for staff, equipment, and vehicles. Layouts should prioritise functionality and ease of access.

Support Event Delivery

Ensure Karāpiro Rowing Incorporated has sufficient space to meet its needs associated with facilitating water-based events and other large-scale activities including equipment staging, boat trailer access, waste management, and logistical coordination.

Minimise Impact on Visitors

Locate and design operational facilities to be discreet and unobtrusive, minimising visual and noise impacts on public areas. Use screening, planting, and building orientation to maintain the Domain's high visual amenity.

Ensure Safe Separation of Activities

Maintain clear separation between operational functions and public or athlete areas. Provide designated access routes for service vehicles that avoid key pedestrian and recreational zones.

Maintain Sightlines

Site any future buildings or structures to preserve open sightlines to Lake Karāpiro. Ensure that built form, height, and landscaping do not obstruct key viewshafts, maintaining the visual connection to the lake that defines the character and appeal of the Domain.

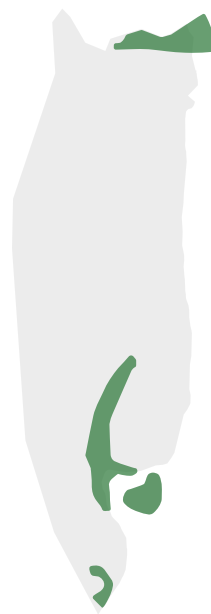
Accommodate Variable Lake Levels

Ensure all future infrastructure is planned and constructed to accommodate fluctuations in lake levels enabled by Mercury's operational easement.

Conservation Zone

This zone is dedicated to protecting and enhancing native habitats along waterways through and adjoining the Domain. It provides an opportunity to increase the range and number of indigenous flora and fauna and improve water quality flowing from and through the Domain.

Karāpiro Lake Domain



Start Zone



DESIGN GUIDANCE FOR THIS ZONE:

Protect and Restore Native Ecosystems

Prioritise the protection of existing native vegetation and habitat areas. Focus on ecological restoration using locally-sourced native plant species that reflect the natural character of the region. Design planting to enhance species diversity, support pollinators, and encourage natural regeneration over time.

Support Habitat Connectivity

Strengthen ecological links within the District Plan's biodiversity corridor connecting Maungatautari to the Waikato River across the northern area of the Domain. Extend planting along waterways where possible to support the riparian corridor along the Waikato River.

Incorporate Water-Sensitive Design

Use natural systems for managing at-source stormwater within the zone, such as swales, rain gardens and naturalisation of streams or overland flow paths. These should be designed to support water quality improvement, reduce erosion, and provide additional habitat.

Promote Community Stewardship

Support opportunities for iwi, local schools, community groups, and volunteers to engage with conservation through interpretive signage that shares the story of restoration and the species being protected.

Ensure Long-Term Resilience

Design for long-term ecological sustainability by considering future climate conditions, including increased rainfall variability and temperature extremes. Choose plant species and restoration approaches that build resilience into the landscape over time.



Image: Pukekura Island and Flynn Cove



Image: Looking towards Lake Karāpiro from the road leading from gate 3.

Pedestrian and Cycle Circulation

Planned improvements to pedestrian and cyclist circulation aim to enhance the visitor experience, address health and safety concerns, improve community health outcomes, and support sustainable transport goals. A new shared path will be developed from Gates 1 and 2 down to the lake edge, extending along the lakeshore to the southern end of the embankment and up to the Te Awa River Ride at the southern boundary. Further enhancements include new path connections to key destinations such as the café, accommodation and Sir Don Rowlands Centre and the relocation and redesign of internal road crossings to improve safety and legibility.

Targeted improvements at Gates 1, 2, and 3 will be made to enhance safety for Te Awa River Ride users and adjoining residents accessing the Domain by foot or cycle. Improved way-finding signage throughout the Domain will help visitors, locals, and event participants navigate easily between key destinations, parking areas, and facilities.

These changes are intended to provide well-designed, direct, and accessible routes that enable visitors and nearby residents to reach key destinations safely and easily, reducing pedestrian-vehicle conflicts and improving access to and along the lake. A new perimeter circuit pathway will increase recreational opportunities and may also highlight cultural, historical, and environmental points of interest. The new and improved paths will also support off-site event parking arrangements, offering safe walking access along Te Awa River Ride to the Domain.

In the future, when the Te Awa River Ride is extended southward, the upgraded network will also help attract users into the Domain, enhancing its profile and usability.

Existing site photographs - Pedestrian and Cycle Circulation



Lack of pedestrian and cycle routes leading from Te Awa River Ride to key Domain destinations including the lake



Pontoons



Temporary road closures during events serve as pedestrian pathways



Pathway to the playground and cafe



Existing pathway to the north of Sir Don Rowland Centre on the lake edge



Grassed pedestrian access along the embankment with retaining wall that requires replacement

Karāpiro Lake Domain Pedestrian and Cycle Circulation Plan

Legend

- Site extent
- LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
- Lake Karāpiro
- Buildings
- Proposed new buildings or building extensions
- Proposed northern redevelopment area
- Proposed central play and visitor infrastructure area
- Proposed accommodation development area
- Pontoon
- Podium
- Grandstand
- Main gate
- Minor gates
- Minor temporary event gate
- Te Awa River Ride (external)
- Shared pedestrian / cycle pathways
- Minor / connector pathways
- Minor shared road / pedestrian pathways
- Minor grassed route
- Existing / realigned open culverted stormwater drain (Taipa Stream)
- Proposed naturalisation of Taipa Stream (20m width)
- Proposed naturalisation of existing overland flow path

Investigate opportunity to develop new or realign existing pathways:

- 1** Improve access and install dedicated shared pedestrian and cycle pathways connecting to Te Awa River Ride at gates 1, 2, 3 and the southern Te Awa access including directional signage, and safe crossing points to separate users from vehicle traffic and promote active transport.
- 2** Develop a new shared accessible path through the centre of the site to provide direct access to key destinations such as the cafe, play space and back onto the Te Awa River Ride.
- 3** Develop a continuous shared accessible path along the lakefront, from the boat ramp to the Rowing NZ leased buildings. Replace the deteriorating

retaining wall and create a promenade at least 3 metres wide, located within 1 metre of lake level. This route will connect to the central shared path and include permanent seating for public enjoyment.

- 4** Develop new access pathways and infrastructure within and alongside the northern redevelopment area for safe access between the multi-purpose club and storage facility and the lake.

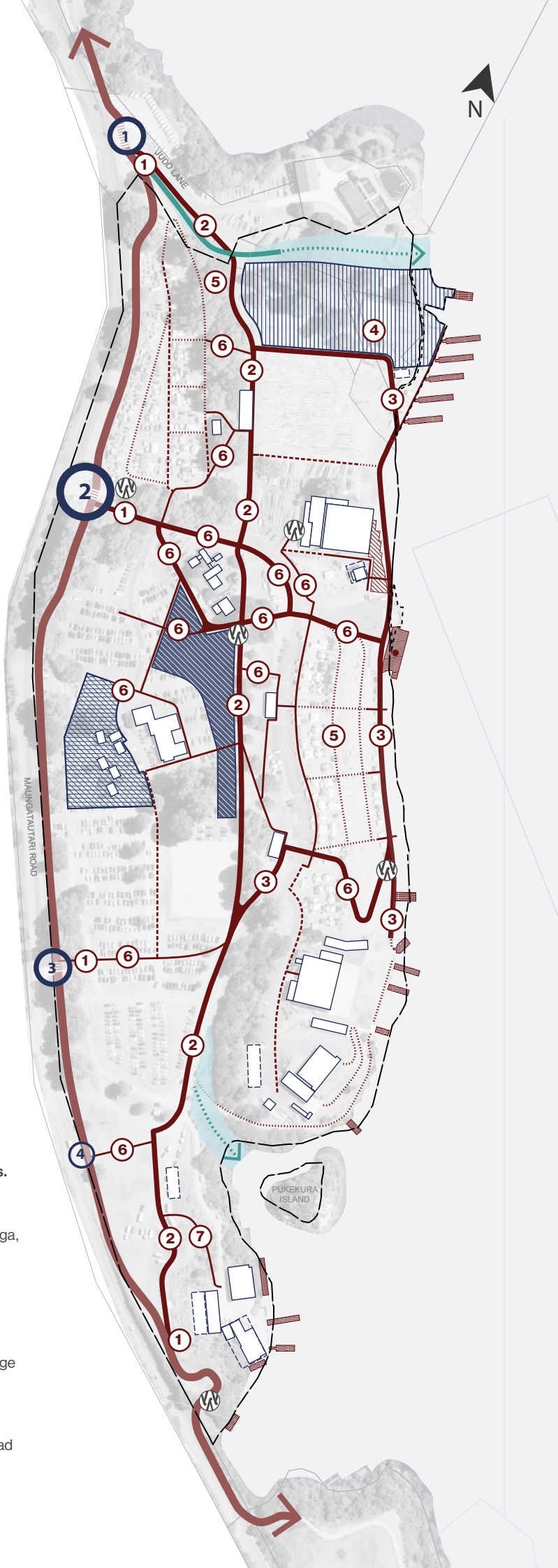
- 5** Continue to provide and enhance terraced, flat grassed areas on the spectator embankment to accommodate temporary event tents and marquees, while maintaining key viewshafts and public access. Retain informal grassed desire lines from the toilet facilities to the lake, and incorporate direct lake access via steps or ramps along these routes. Preserve the sloped grass areas for informal seating, with potential to introduce some sensitively integrated bench seating to support comfort and accessibility.

- 6** Improve and develop additional pathway connections to key destinations.

- 7** Develop an accessible path connection to the operational area for Karāpiro Rowing Inc.

Collaborate with mana whenua to develop a cultural trail or site-specific interpretation that connects to Taumatawiwi and incorporate mahi toi and/or tohu that highlight key sites, iwi narratives, and underlying themes.

- Considerations may include:
 - Preserving sightlines to maunga, awa, and wāhi tapu.
 - Integrating design elements that acknowledge significant historical events e.g. battle of Taumatawiwi.
 - Providing interpretation signage and wayfinding maps at key points.
 - Embedding mahi toi into built elements such as path and road surfaces, and key entrances.



Start Zone Activity Pedestrian and Cycle Circulation Plan

Legend

-  Site extent
-  LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
-  Lake Karāpiro
-  Pontoons
-  Minor gate
-  Rowing events course
-  Buildings
-  Te Awa River Ride
-  Investigate future extension to Te Awa River Ride
-  Minor connector pathways
-  Investigate opportunity for accessible pathway access to pontoons and start zone.

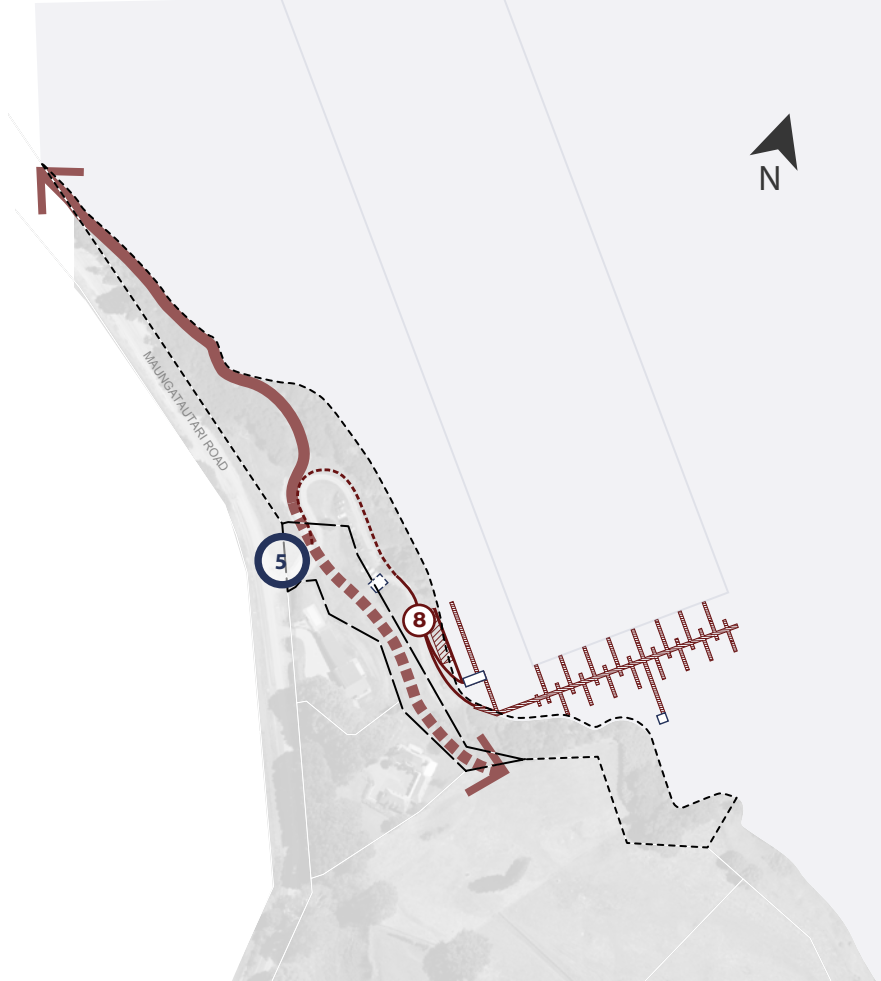




Image: View of boat ramp, finish tower, and major central road in foreground with Rob Waddell Lodge and chalets in the background.

Vehicle Circulation and Parking

The proposed changes to vehicle movements and parking across the Domain are designed to create a safer and more accessible environment for both everyday visitors and event users, to retain as much temporary event parking as possible and to minimise environmental impacts.

Improvements at Gate 2 will strengthen its role as the main public entrance. A new slip lane will provide more direct access to the campground, while upgrades to internal circulation and parking will enhance visitor experience at the café and accommodation areas.

A dedicated boat and bus pedestrian drop-off loop at Gate 1 will better manage larger vehicles, while a potential temporary event egress further south and a realigned road adjoining Gate 3 will ensure a consistent vehicle circulation pattern during both events and regular use. This will reduce confusion and ease event-related traffic congestion while supporting improved access for high-performance athletes based in the Sports Activity Zone 2.

Parking areas will be better defined to separate drop-offs, buses, operational vehicles, clubs, and public parking, reducing congestion and improving safety.

Additional formed public parking near the café will respond to increasing demand. Operational staff parking will be separated near the site office, allowing a new pedestrian and cyclist pathway to the café without requiring additional road crossings.

Way-finding signage upgrades will further reduce unnecessary vehicle movements, particularly between the Sir Don Rowlands Centre and the Rowing NZ facility, improving the overall experience and safety for visitors.

These changes align with broader principles of creating an accessible, welcoming, and environmentally sensitive space. By supporting clearer movement patterns and more logical site use while minimising the increase in impervious surfaces, they contribute to enhanced event management, day-to-day usability, and the protection of key environmental and cultural values.

Existing site photographs - Vehicle Circulation and Parking



Main entrance (Gate 2)



Judd Lane (Gate 1)



Temporary event traffic lane seal (Gate 3)



Permeable parking near the existing chalets



Temporary event parking



Temporary event boat storage within the Sir Don Rowlands Centre carpark

Karāpiro Lake Domain Vehicle Circulation and Parking Plan

Legend

- Site extent
- LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
- Lake Karāpiro
- Buildings
- Proposed new buildings or building extensions
- Proposed northern redevelopment area
- Proposed accommodation development area
- Pontoon
- Podium
- Grandstand
- Main gate
- Minor gates
- Minor temporary event gate
- External roads
- Major internal roads - public access
- Minor internal roads - public access
- Minor internal roads - controlled access
- Temporary event Gate 4 exit
- Internal road circulation
- Sealed public car parks
- Public Car Parks (Permeable Surfacing)
- Trailer car parks
- Internal temporary event parking - VIP / coach / judge Gate 2
- Internal temporary event parking - spectator Gate 3
- Internal temporary event drop off - buses, boats/ trailers/ competitors Gate 1

Explore design interventions to:

- 1 Strengthen the prominence of the main entrance (gate 2) for public vehicle access outside of events while discouraging use of secondary gates (1 and 3). Investigate a pull-off lane from Maungatautari Road for vehicles entering Gates 2 and 3.

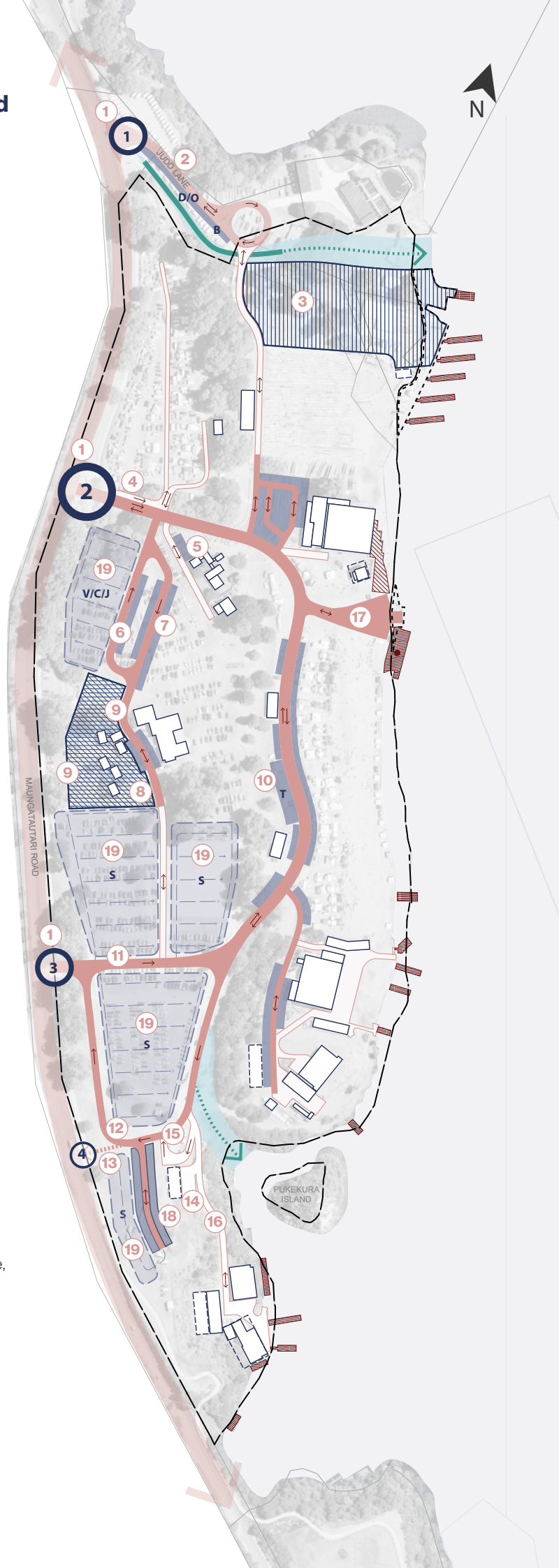
Investigate opportunity to develop new or realign existing roads:

- 2 Investigate the realignment of Judd Crescent to allow a lane for bus and visitor drop-off parking during events. Work with Mercury to explore formalisation of visitor parking on its land north of Judd Lane.

- 3 Develop new access roads to new multi-purpose facility
- 4 New slip lane into the campground from gate 2.
- 6 Realigned/new access road to public parking area including bus turnaround.
- 8 Develop new access roads to service new motel-style accommodation
- 11 Realign road at gate 3 as the main entrance for temporary event parking to improve vehicle circulation and flow, particularly on event days.
- 12 Establish a new one-way route through gate 3 to avoid conflicting vehicle flow during events and ensure priority access and egress for high performance athletes.
- 13 New temporary gate 4 exit.
- 14 New maintenance shed access road.
- 15 New designated turning area for maintenance vehicle rubbish collection.
- 16 Widen and seal existing access driveway for operational access.
- 17 Improve the functionality, safety and aesthetics of the boat ramp area.

Investigate opportunity to develop new or improve existing parking areas:

- 2 Develop bus and visitor drop-off parking along Judd Crescent during events.
- 3 Develop new parking areas to service the new multi-purpose facility.
- 5 Redevelop staff and VIP visitor parking area near the site office to allow for a shared pedestrian/cycle route through the centre of the Domain.
- 7 New formed visitor parking
- 9 New formed parking for lodge, chalets and motel-style accommodation
- 10 New formed, designated boat trailer parking
- 18 New permeable parking provision to service operational requirements.
- 19 Develop safe and efficient new temporary event parking areas.



Start Zone Vehicle Circulation and Parking Plan

Legend

-  Site extent
-  LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
-  Lake Karāpiro
-  Pontoons
-  Minor gate
-  Rowing events course
-  Minor internal roads - controlled access
-  Event staff / drop-off car - Gate 5

Investigate opportunity to develop new or realign existing roads:

-  Form and seal access to pontoon area to provide emergency access.

Investigate opportunity to improve parking for event officials and discourage public parking :

-  Create formed permeable parking area.

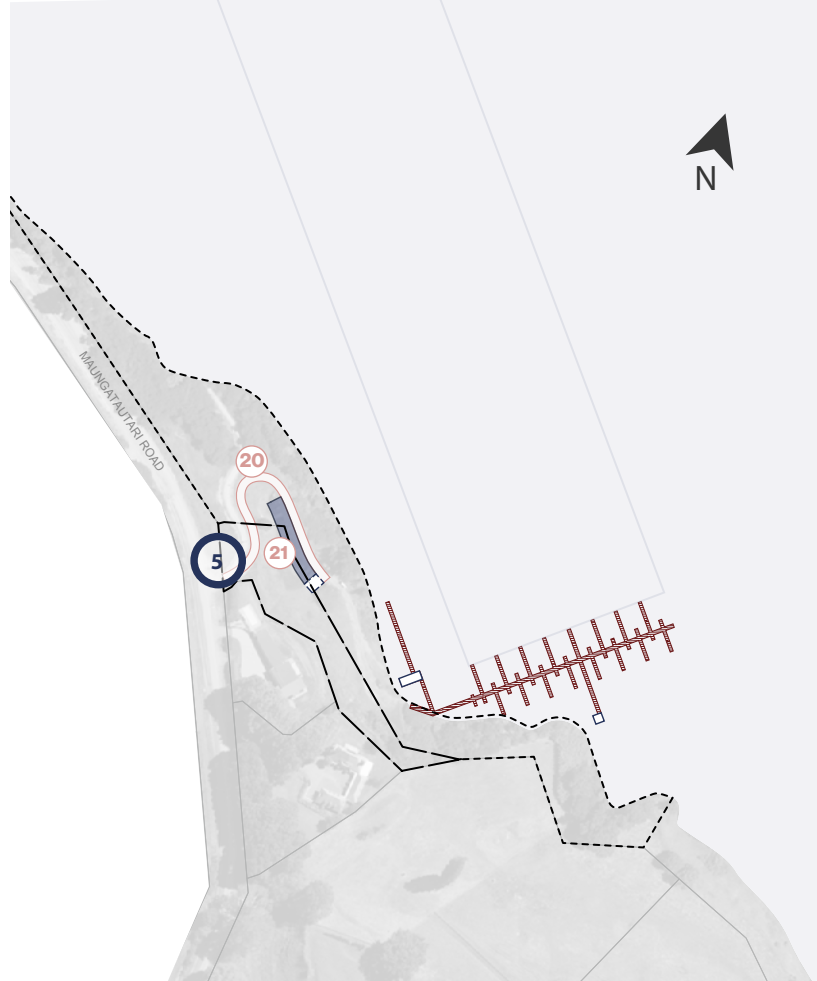




Image: Looking north across the spectator grandstand.

Buildings, Play and Visitor Infrastructure

A range of proposed built infrastructure developments will enhance the Domain's position as both a premier aquatic events venue and a valued lakeside community park. Key upgrades include extensions to existing leased facilities, a potential new multi-purpose facility in the northern area, additional pontoons, and expanded grandstand and finish tower facilities. Together with the retention of core amenities such as the public boat ramp, campground, and Sir Don Rowlands Centre, these changes will support both elite training and broader community participation in water sports and reinforce the Domain's status as the North Island's leading aquatic centre for non-motorised codes such as rowing, waka ama, canoeing and dragon boating.

Improvements to existing multi-purpose accommodation and the development of new, affordable motel-style options for smaller groups will allow a greater range of visitors to stay at the domain during events. Outside of these event periods, this accommodation will also cater to sporting groups, schools and tourists, providing an important source of revenue to reinvest in the Domain's ongoing

development.

The plan also broadens the Domain's appeal beyond sport by introducing a wider range of visitor experiences. Proposed additions include a destination playspace with a volleyball sand court, fitness equipment, a new public swim zone, and upgraded visitor infrastructure such as shelters, picnic tables, and seating. The aim is to create a more vibrant and inclusive community space that enables visitors to connect with Lake Karapiro and the Waikato River and each other.

Strategic relocations - including the maintenance depot, one sand court and the wastewater pump station - are essential to achieving the site's broader objectives. These changes will help rationalise space and group complementary activities.

Detailed design planning will ensure future developments align with the Domain's design principles, recognising the significance of the Domain to mana whenua, and protecting and enhancing the environment and visual character and improving the functional integrity and accessibility.

Existing site photographs - Buildings, Play and Visitor Infrastructure



Potential Northern building and redevelopment area (multi-purpose hub)



Existing lodge



Existing chalets



Potential grandstand and Finish Tower extension area



Potential future operational/maintenance area

Karāpiro Lake Domain Buildings, Play and Visitor Infrastructure Plan

Legend

- Site extent
- LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
- Lake Karāpiro
- Existing buildings
- Proposed new buildings, building extensions or relocations
- Proposed northern redevelopment area
- Proposed accommodation development area
- Proposed central play and visitor infrastructure area
- Proposed visitor infrastructure area (other)
- Buildings to be removed or relocated
- Existing pontoon
- Existing podium
- Grandstand
- Extension to grandstand or new pontoon
- Main gate
- Minor gates
- Minor temporary event gate

Investigate developing new facilities:

- 6** Multi-purpose club and boat storage facility and lake access infrastructure.
- 8** Built structure for events and community use.
- 15** New motel-style modular units
- 17** New public swim zone pontoon and visitor infrastructure redevelopment such as seating and picnic tables.
- 18** New Karāpiro Kayak building
- 19** New club pontoon
- 20** New maintenance area and yard
- 21** New picnic / seating area to capture views.
- 22** Karāpiro Rowing Inc. building extensions.

Investigate relocating, extending and/or improving existing facilities:

- 1** Removing maintenance shed and yard.
- 9** Improve campground amenity block
- 10** Finish tower extension

- 11** Grandstand extension
- 13** Redevelop the existing play area to reflect the cultural significance of the Waikato Awa and wider landscape and create a destination play space with visitor infrastructure such as seating, picnic tables and shelter structures to support extended family visits. Develop a single volleyball court and extend high and low ropes course.

- 14** Refurbishment of existing lodge

Investigate removing facilities:

- 3** Karāpiro Water Ski Club leased buildings
- 4** Waikato Cycling Sports Academy leased storage building
- 5** Te Mana Visions Charitable Trust / Karāpiro Rowing Club rented storage building
- 7** Cambridge Rowing Club and Karāpiro Rowing Club buildings

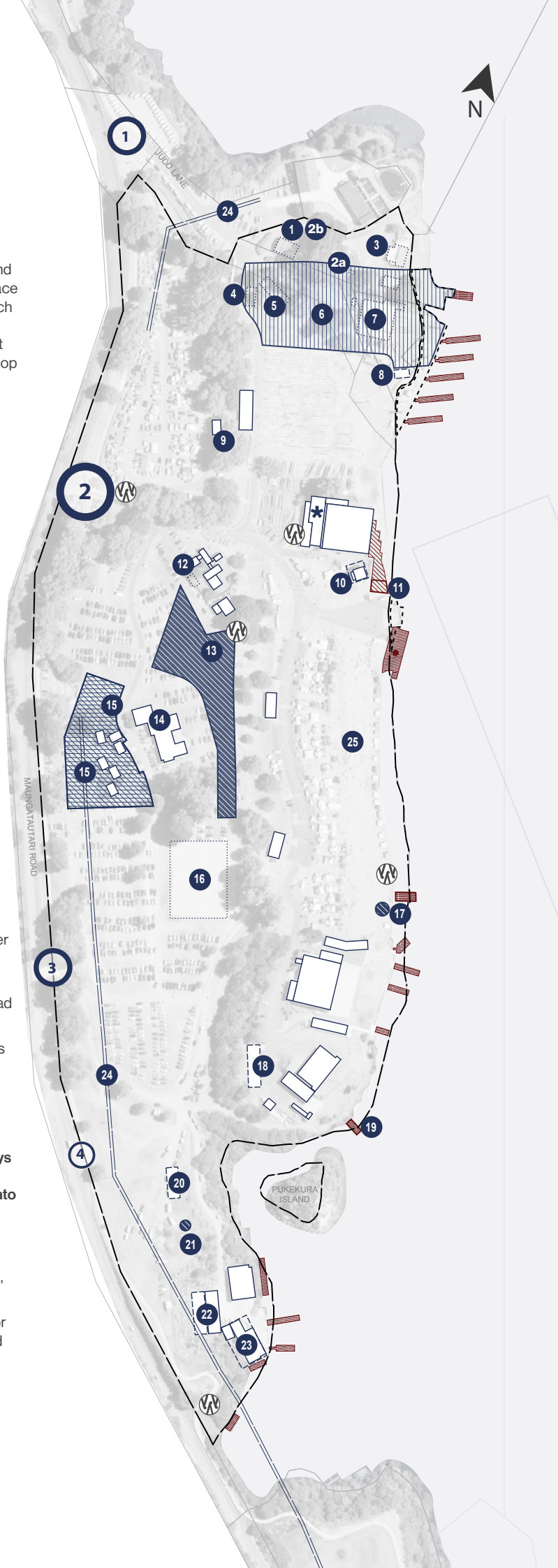
- 12** Site office storage building
- 16** Sand courts

Investigate upgrade, relocation or undergrounding of utilities:

- 2a** Determine the feasibility of relocating the wastewater pump station.
- 2b** Explore need to extend water treatment plant
- 24** Determine the feasibility of undergrounding the overhead electrical lines.
- 25** Provide underground utilities on embankment area to improve services for events.

Investigate the opportunity for improved wayfinding and interpretive signage including ways to strengthen the 'connection to' and the 'significance of' the Waikato Awa throughout the domain.

- Considerations may include:
 - improved wayfinding signage,
 - bilingual te reo Māori/english signage including the vision for the Waikato River in Maori and English, and
 - mahi toi along main gate 2 entrance/path/road towards the Awa.



Start Zone Buildings and Visitor Infrastructure Plan

Legend

-  Site extent
-  LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
-  Lake Karāpiro
-  Minor gate
-  Rowing events course
-  Existing buildings
-  Proposed new buildings
-  Existing pontoon
-  Extensions or new seating

Investigate developing new facilities:

-  26 New embankment seating
-  27 Extension to pontoon (aligners deck)
-  28 New toilet facility (event only)

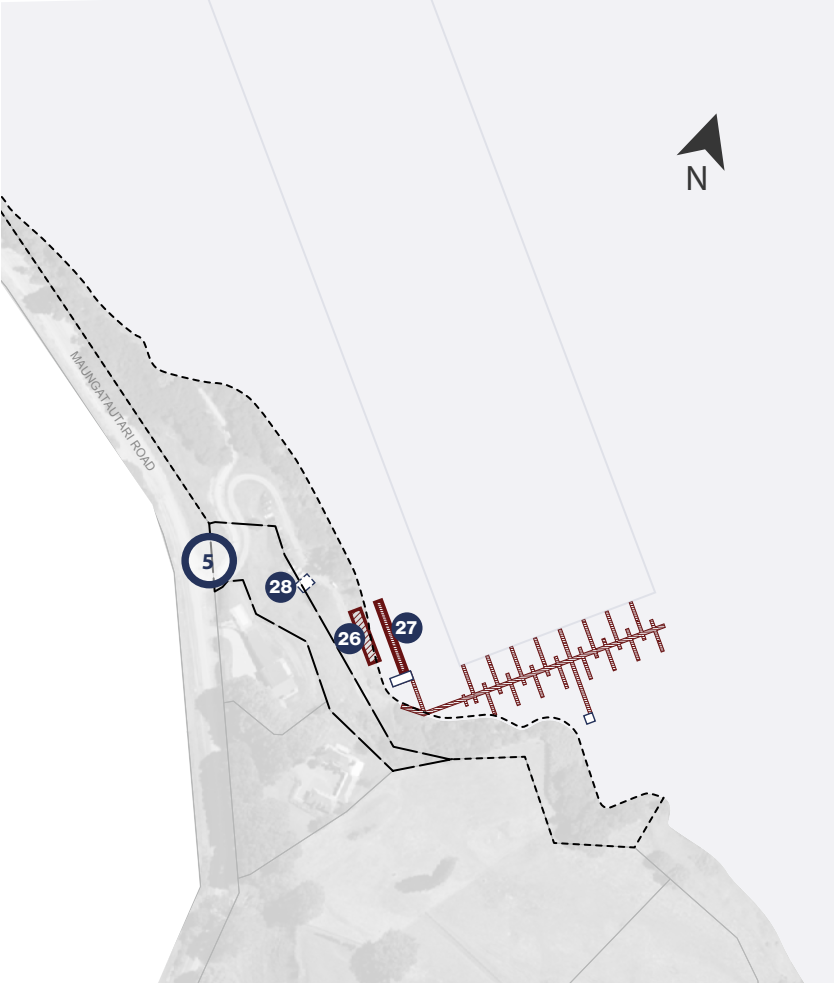




Image: Native revegetation on the embankment below the Perry Community Water Sports Centre.

Environment

The Masterplan seeks to enhance the environmental health, resilience, and amenity of the Domain through a series of integrated actions. A major initiative is either the relocation and naturalisation of the Taipa Stream towards the Northern boundary, which will slow and filter water entering the lake, provide for fish passage, increase native biodiversity, and significantly improve visual amenity. Moving the stream also creates a larger area of contiguous flat land, enabling more multi-use space in the lower campground, reducing flood risks, and distancing public access from the adjacent water treatment plant.

Further environmental improvements include succession planting of mature trees, enhancement planting and weed control on Pukekura Island and along key streams, and naturalisation of the southern lake edge using native species like oioi behind new retaining structures. Native amenity planting will feature throughout the Domain, strengthening habitat corridors and reinforcing a strong ecological identity.

Water management is a key priority, with future buildings to incorporate stormwater capture and reuse systems, and new swales or raingardens proposed alongside formed parking areas to filter runoff. Boat wash facilities will also be developed to prevent contaminants from directly entering waterways. Replacing the current retaining wall with lower, better-engineered structures will reduce erosion and further protect the lake edge.

Together, these actions will slow stormwater entry into the lake during high-flow events, improve water quality through native planting and sediment trapping, enhance biodiversity, create healthier fish passageways, and deliver a more visually appealing and environmentally resilient Domain for generations to come.

Existing site photographs - Environment



Mature exotic trees (Lake Karāpiro in the background)



Taipa Stream (Judd Lane open culvert)



Eastern section of Taipa Stream on the Domain



Pukekura Island



Retaining along lake edge and stormwater outlet into the lake below Rowing NZ



Elcorock sandbags below Canoe Racing NZ

Karāpiro Lake Domain Environment Plan

Legend

- Site extent
- LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
- Lake Karāpiro
- Main gate
- Minor gates
- Minor temporary event gate
- Existing mature trees (succession plan required)
- Existing native planting
- Investigate trees for removal to allow for multi-purpose facility
- Existing alignment of Taipa Stream

Investigate future planting opportunities including:

- Specimen / shade tree planting with a focus on suitable native trees where possible.
- Native low growing amenity entrance feature planting
- Native low growing amenity planting
- Native riparian planting
- Low growing native embankment planting between access points to the lake edge.
- 1** Enhancement planting and weed control on Pukekura Island.
- 2** Retain important viewshafts by ensuring native vegetation remains at a low height or a high canopy on specimen trees.

Investigate future stormwater improvements including:

- 3** Improvements to the open culvert within the Domain along the Taipa Stream.
- 4** Realignment, naturalisation and native riparian planting of the eastern end of Taipa Stream (as shown on the plan)

- 5** Naturalisation of overland flow path at southern end of reserve.
- 6** Improve at-source treatment of stormwater from road and parking surfaces through low impact design such as permeable surfaces, swales, raingardens or other stormwater filtration devices.
- Improve stormwater outlets
- 7** Investigate improving boat cleaning facilities.



Start Zone Environment Plan

Legend

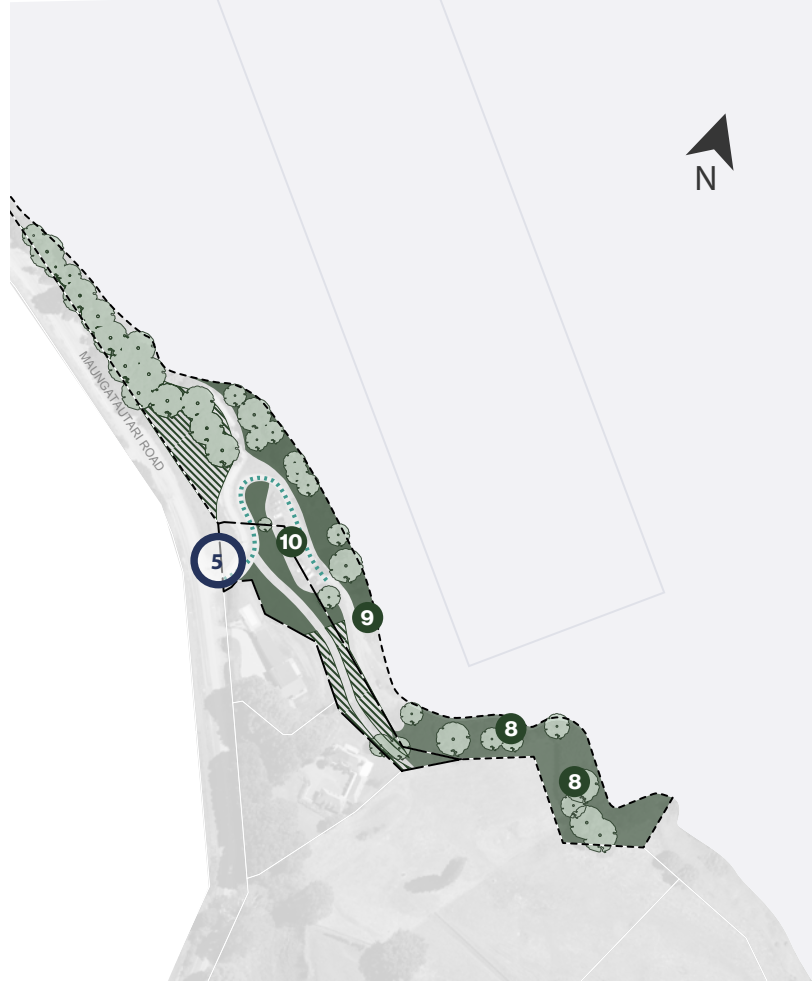
-  Site extent
-  LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
-  Lake Karāpiro
-  Minor gate
-  Existing mature trees (succession plan required)
-  Existing native planting

Investigate future planting opportunities including:

-  Native low growing amenity planting
-  8 Removal of gum trees and revegetation
-  9 Bank stabilisation with native planting

Investigate future stormwater improvements including:

-  10 Improve at-source treatment of stormwater from road and parking surfaces through water sensitive urban design such as permeable surfaces, and stormwater



Karāpiro Lake Domain Masterplan Overview Plan

Legend

- Site extent
- LINZ land included in Masterplan site extent
- Lake Karāpiro
- Main gate
- Minor gate
- Minor temporary event gate
- Te Awa River Ride (external)
- Shared pedestrian / cycle pathways
- Minor / connector pathways
- Minor shared road / pedestrian pathways
- Minor grassed route
- External roads
- Internal roads - public access
- Internal roads - controlled access
- Public parking
- Public trailer parking
- Overflow parking
- Drop-off parking
- Public boat ramp
- Buildings
- Campground
- Rob Waddell Lodge
- Chalets and motel-style modular units
- Public toilet
- Northern redevelopment area
- Proposed accommodation development area
- Pontoons
- Central play and visitor infrastructure area including destination playground, volleyball sand court and high and low ropes course.
- Visitor infrastructure area (other)
- Interpretive signage, wayfinding or mahi toi to strengthen the 'connection to' and the 'significance of' the Waikato Awa throughout the domain.
- Swimming zone
- Rowing course
- Existing amenity and shade trees
- New amenity and shade tree planting
- Trees for removal
- Native low growing amenity entrance feature planting
- Native low growing amenity planting
- Low growing native embankment planting
- Stream and stormwater improvements
- 1 Multi-purpose club and boat storage facility and lake access infrastructure.
- 2 Built structure for events and community use
- 3 Campground amenity block
- 4 Ngaati Koroki Kahukura room in the Sir Don Rowlands Centre - Te Manawa o Matariki
- 5 Sir Don Rowlands Centre
- 6 Grandstand
- 7 Finish tower
- 8 Podium
- 9 Site office
- 10 Podium cafe
- 11 Spectator embankment
- 12 Perry Community Water Sports Centre
- 13 Domain maintenance and operations area
- 14 Rowing maintenance and operations area



Start Zone Masterplan Overview Plan

Legend

-  Site extent
-  LINZ land included in masterplan site extent
-  Te Awa River Ride
-  Minor gate
-  Te Awa River Ride (external)
-  Minor / connector pathways
-  Minor shared road / pedestrian pathway
-  Internal roads - controlled access
-  Parking - event officials and staff
-  Buildings
-  Toilet (event only)
-  Pontoons
-  Existing amenity and shade trees
-  Native low growing amenity planting
-  Trees for removal
-  Embankment seating
-  Rowing - aligners deck
-  Rowing - pontoons
-  Rowing - start tower
-  Rowing course

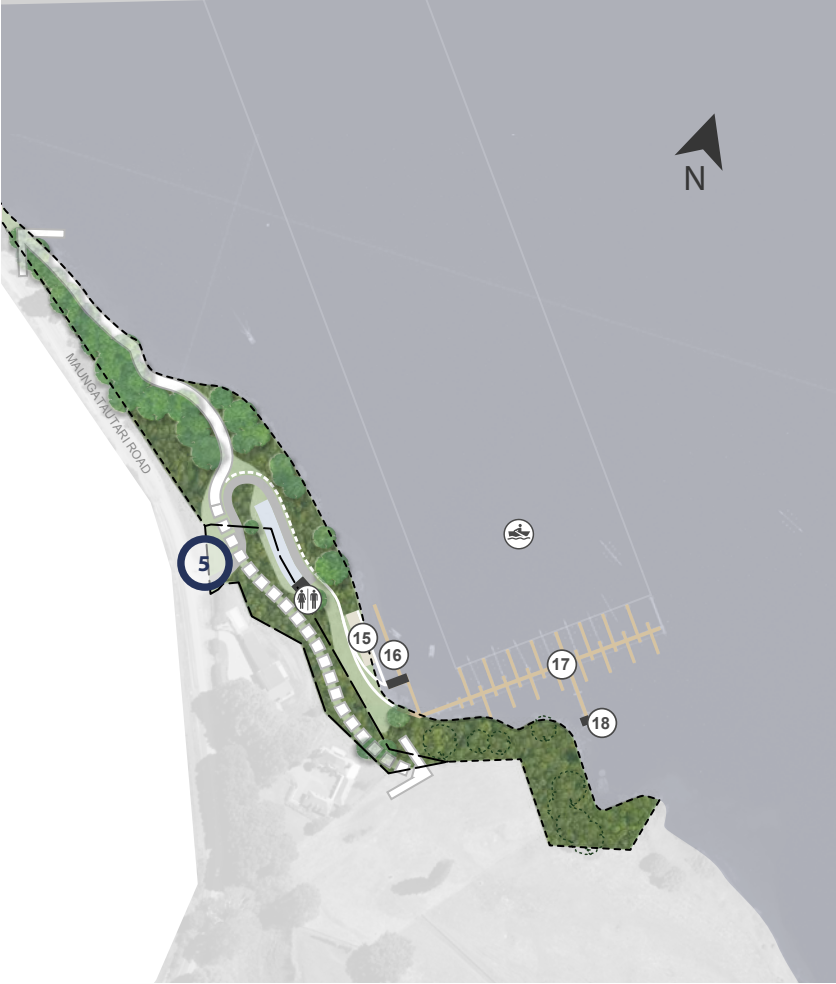




Image: Looking north across the Domain from above the rowing maintenance and operations area

3

Section Three

Masterplan Implementation

Implementation

Implementation of the Masterplan will occur through a staged and prioritised approach, ensuring projects are feasible, financially viable, and sensitive to the site's cultural, environmental, and recreational values.

Initial efforts will likely focus on developments along the lake edge between the boat ramp and Rowing New Zealand's building, planting and investigating the feasibility of developing the proposed multi-purpose club and boat storage facility and ancillary infrastructure.

Detailed design processes will be undertaken for each stage, involving mana whenua partners and lessee engagement, technical assessments, and refinement of concept elements. Resource consents and other regulatory approvals will be sought where needed. As each detailed design progresses, consideration will be given to minimising disruptions to current Domain activities and maintaining public access wherever possible.

Funding will come from a combination of sources, including Council's capital budgets, external grant opportunities, partnerships with mana whenua and/or key stakeholders (such as sporting bodies), and potential private investment where aligned with RMP objectives. Implementation will be flexible to allow for staged delivery based on funding availability, construction logistics, and evolving community needs.

Wherever possible, projects will integrate opportunities for early wins—such as habitat restoration, signage upgrades, and minor path connections.

Monitoring, review, and reporting processes will play a critical role in guiding the implementation of the Masterplan. Regular assessment against the Masterplan's design objectives will help ensure projects remain aligned with environmental conditions, community aspirations, and operational needs. These insights will also support informed decision-making about any necessary variations to the Masterplan over time.

This ongoing, adaptive approach will help realise the Vision:

Karāpiro Lake Domain, a wāhi tūpuna and a taonga to mana whenua, is a premiere event and training venue for primarily non-motorised aquatic sport and valued community lakeside reserve on the banks of a healthy Waikato River.

