

1.0 INTRODUCING TITIRANGI RESERVE

1.1 Introduction to Te Titirangi Maunga

Titirangi is a landscape in Gisborne, New Zealand considered sacred to tangata whenua and is recognised as being a significant icon for Gisborne City and the community as a whole. Titirangi is a culturally significant site to Maori and historically significant to the wider community¹.

Titirangi is considered to be a place of significance to the people of Gisborne, because it is rich in history with historical evidence of Maori occupation and European influence. Titirangi, and the area below it, is historically significant at a local, national and international level. Titirangi has played an important part and often been directly involved in the history of the area.

Titirangi is not only highly valued for its historic and cultural importance, but as a recreational and tourism resource with walking tracks and lookouts. Titirangi provides expansive views of Poverty Bay, Gisborne City, Poverty Bay flats and surrounding hills and has become a popular visitor attraction.

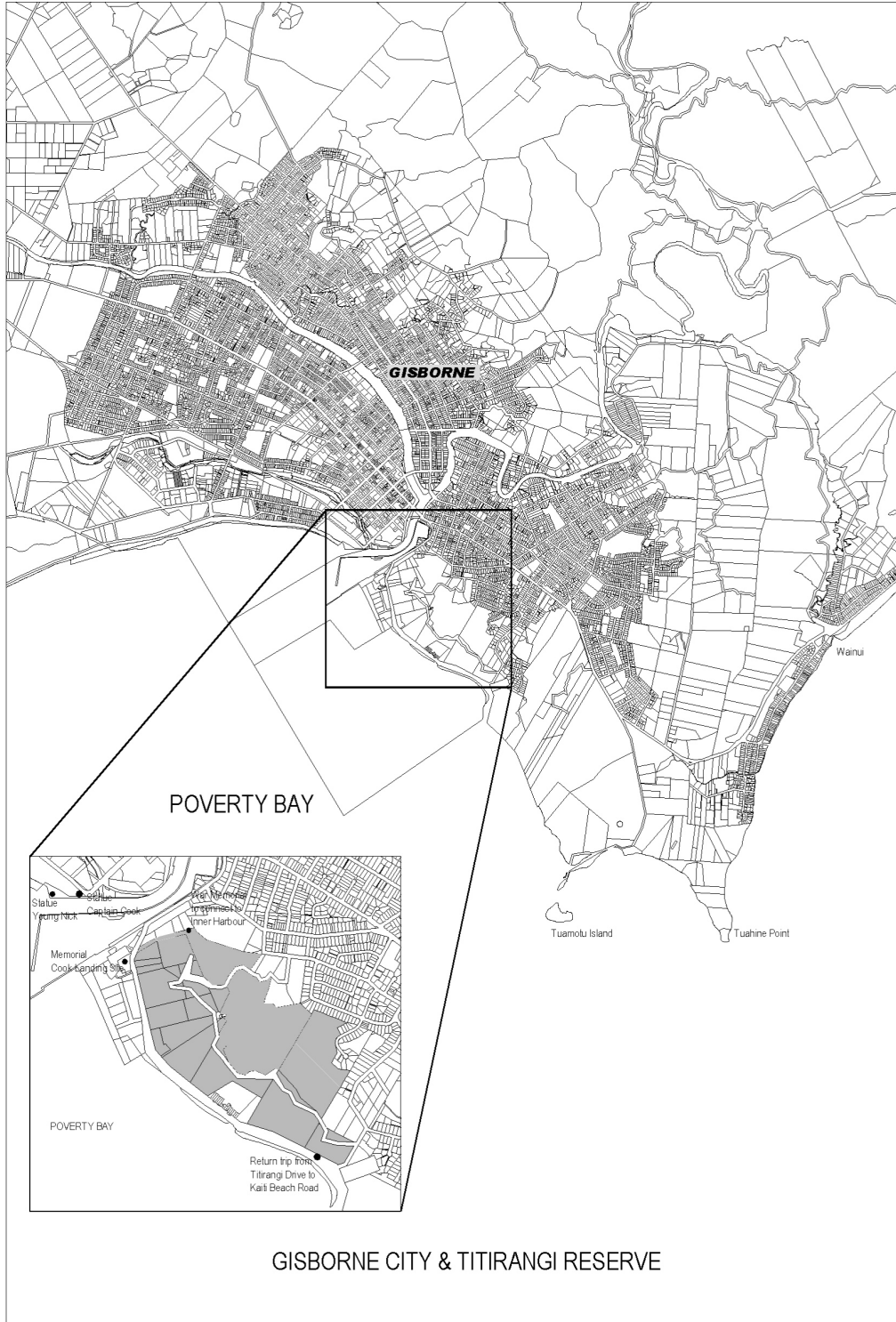
Titirangi Reserve includes approximately 33 ha of land that is classified as Recreation Reserve under the Reserves Act 1977. An additional 10 hectares of land is currently managed as part of Titirangi, but not classified under the Reserves Act 1977. This management plan has also taken two additional land parcels held in fee simple by Council, comprising 31 ha. A total area of over 70 ha has been considered as part of Titirangi and included in this management plan.

The reserve has four main lookout areas, an astronomical observatory, World War II gun emplacement, six carparking areas, a playground area, a fitness course, a main picnic area and seating located at informal viewpoints. There is one main summit track, with 'nature tail' tracks leading off to different vantage points (see 'Walking Tracks' map – Appendix 2).

¹ Titirangi has also been known as Kaiti Hill. However, Titirangi is the name of the entire hill, where as Kaiti Hill is an informal name used for the first ridge that overlooks the City and Poverty Bay.

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1.2 Location Plan



1.3 History

“According to tradition, Titirangi was named by the first Maori settlers in remembrance of their ...(homeland)... in Hawaiki. These early settlers recognised the strategic importance of Titirangi and established kainga, whare wananga and an extensive pa on the hill. The top of Titirangi provided views of the surrounding land and sea, and the lower slopes supported cultivations due to favourable soils and springs²”.

Titirangi Reserve is the site of an ancient Maori pa. A number of pa existed between Titirangi, Tuamotu Island and Tuaheni Point (see 1.1 Location Plan)). These pa sites are amongst the first known inhabitants of Titirangi and surrounding area since the arrival of Horouta waka. Many notable Maori chiefs occupied the area since that time.

“Titirangi is the largest pa in Turanganui (Gisborne) and occupation was virtually continuous. The archaeological landscape within the reserve is part of a much wider cultural landscape. In fact it should be recognised that the reserve encompasses an integrated archaeological and cultural landscape and cannot be viewed as simply a collection of isolated features”.³

The reserve is in close proximity to significant historic areas, such as:

- The foreshore of the Turanganui River;
- Waihora - the landing place of the Horouta waka, and it is the place where James Cook first came ashore in New Zealand;
- Te Moana, Tokomaru and Hawea reefs;
- Te Toka a Taiau – a place of meeting of Maori and Europeans.
- Onepoto (Kaiti Beach) where Maori and European first met.

James Cook and his crew were the first Europeans to arrive when they landed at the base of Titirangi on 8th October 1769.

Tangata Whenua, Ngati Oneone, had a Pa site settlement at the time of early colonial arrival. Its centre was located where the Moana Pacific building is today. The burial grounds that lie across Hirini Street from these buildings mark the general location of the first church erected in the district. Extensive garden sites fringe the lower slopes of Titirangi down to the Turanganui and Waimata Rivers.

The desire to build the harbour, with the implementation of the “Public Works Act”, forced Ngati Oneone to move.

In 1854 the first settled European resident in Kaiti, Captain G E Read got a grazing right for sheep over the whole Kaiti Block (including Titirangi), approximately 1750ha out to the Hamanatua Stream, between Wainui and Okitu from local Maori Ngati Oneone.

² Preliminary Archaeological Survey, Ken Phillips, Feb 2002

³ Preliminary Archaeological Survey, Ken Phillips, Feb 2002

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The early trader J W Harris joined him in partnership a few years later and the two placed 200 merino sheep from Sydney on the block⁴.

The next European to arrive and settle in Kaiti was Archdeacon William L Williams. He had a cottage built in 1865 at a pa site called Waikahua, at the base of the western slope of Titirangi. He was not given the land, but was given permission to build on the site by Ngati Oneone. The cottage was used to provide a refuge for early settlers. It was also used as a military headquarters during the battle of Waerenga-a-hika around this time.

At the time when Archdeacon Williams settled on Titirangi there was some bush and the hills of Whataupoko were thickly clad with bush. Today the metre wide terrace and several fruit trees thought to be planted by the William's family signal the location of the Cottage.

In 1922 trees were planted and a monument dedicated to the comrades of the Kaiti freezing (meat) works staff who lost their lives in the World War I was erected on the northern face above the freezing works.

Earthworks on Titirangi occurred in 1928 when, following negotiations with the Gisborne Sheepfarmers Company, the Borough Council acquired land for the purposes of constructing a road up the hill. Initially the road was little more than a dirt track.

The Gisborne Returned Services Association began acquiring land on the summit of the hill in 1937 to create a Memorial Park. The Titirangi Domain Board was created and administered the land until 1959 when it was taken over by the Gisborne City Council.

Titirangi Reserve assumed a new role when World War II broke out. A gun emplacement and army barracks were constructed at the summit in 1942. This also brought about the construction of a road to connect the summit with Endcliffe Road. A command post, war shelters, a magazine, and an overhead gun cover supported the gun emplacement. Accommodation comprised eight buildings. Within six months of the gun emplacement being completed the perceived threat of coastal invasion had gone and by 1950 most buildings had been removed.⁵

Between 1951-52 Gisborne Jaycee's built the Gisborne City Lookout. This was a laborious job and become a large community undertaking with many volunteers helping to level the site and manually construct the lookout. Due to the steepness of the site machinery could not be used⁶. Other development during the Domain Board period included construction of the Poverty Bay Lookout. Upgrading of Queens Drive was undertaken for the impending visit by the Queen in 1954.

⁴ 'European Settlement Sites in Kaiti', Sir Robert Hall, 1989

⁵ Preliminary Archaeological Survey, Ken Phillips, Feb 2002

⁶ Gisborne Photo News, Issue 22, May 1956

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Further development of the area has been carried out since 1959 including upgrading and sealing Queens and Titirangi Drives to the Poverty Bay Lookout, construction of Cook Plaza, the Captain Cook monument and the bronze statue, replacing part of the gun emplacement with an observatory, and further tree planting.

The James Cook Observatory was built from an existing concrete bunker located behind the gun emplacement to celebrate Cook's association with astronomy. The observatory was opened in 1971. The appearance of Halley's comet in 1986 saw the observatory become popular again and in 1989 a 10" telescope was installed.

During the 1980's Titirangi was the stage for popular annual events such as the national Rothmans Rally and the local Trolley Derby. The 1983 royal visit saw His Royal Highness Charles and Diana, Prince and Princess of Wales plant Pohutukawa trees at Cooks Plaza.

During the 1980s further development assisted by a Government "Restart Unemployment Scheme" was carried out on the northern and western faces in the form of extending and upgrading the walking track network, including a fitness trail within the walking track network, installing a playground, providing a central picnic area at the location of the large oak tree, constructing the lookout above the historic cottage site, providing car parking areas along Queens Drive, installing signage and seating for the benefit of park users and still further tree planting.

During this time ancient Ngati Oneone burials were disturbed but with the help of the local marae "Te Poho-o-Rawiri" the work was able to continue.

The area known as the arboretum was established in 1990 with the planting of native plants on Titirangi's southern slope. In 1995 a large number of native trees were planted in the area known as Tane Mahuta.

1.4 Open Space Linkages

There are important linkages from Titirangi to the City and surrounding areas that need to be considered in the management of Titirangi:

▶ Historical Linkages

Titirangi itself has played an important part and often been directly involved in the history of the area. Nationally historic icons such as where the first canoes and Captain Cook sailed into the bay can be viewed from Titirangi. The hill and lookouts have an historical story to be told. These historical linkages are important and the development of these areas needs to be carefully considered in association with any surrounding development.

▶ **Pedestrian Linkages**

Recreational pedestrian linkages to Titirangi especially from the City via the Inner Harbour are strategically important to encourage use of the reserve and enhancement of the City as a whole. A walkway is proposed to connect the City to Titirangi, by creating a recreational/historic walkway around the Inner Harbour. This is one of three walkways identified in the Open Space Strategy that looks to build upon the existing city walkway.

▶ **Te Poho-o-Rawiri Marae Land**

Te Poho-o-Rawiri Marae includes approximately one hectare of adjoining native bush located on the north side of Titirangi behind the Marae buildings. Their intention is to create a predator proof bush walk through this area and introduce native fauna. This bush area adjoins the Plantation and Pasture Zone (see Management Zones Map – Appendix 1). The Marae also has land on the south side.

▶ **Tuaheni/Wainui Walkway Wildlife Corridor**

A large area on Tuaheni Point has recently been covenanted by the QEII Trust and is undergoing native planting. Increasing interest is being shown to create a high tide track from the end of Kaiti Beach Road along to Sponge Bay, Tuaheni and Wainui. Permission would need to be obtained from landowners to ensure a suitable track. The walkway would make a good community project, as it would be developed mostly over private land. It is envisaged that such a walkway could be planted with suitable native species to encourage wildlife corridors between Titirangi, Tuaheni and Wainui.

▶ **Visual Linkages**

Visual linkages from the hill have always been important. From the earliest pa, extensive views from this hill enabled its inhabitant's early indication of anyone approaching. Today lookouts and platforms provide viewing opportunities back over the City, Port and sea.

Titirangi is a dominant landscape feature and visual connection for anyone travelling to Gisborne City from the west. Within the City the Gisborne City Lookout is visible along Awapuni Road. Along Kahutia Street from Grey Street there are good sightlines to the War Memorial. From the beach end of Grey Street, Cook's Plaza is the centrally located position on the ridge crest. Future management or development of these key areas needs to consider how they are also viewed from the City.