

Attachment C

DRAFT VARIATION TO REGIONAL PARKS MANAGEMENT PLAN 2010

SPECIAL MANAGEMENT ZONE POLICIES

TAITOMO

Taitomo is an area of land at the southern end of Piha Beach. Its deep valley systems are contained by the steep slopes of the Te Ahu Ahu ridge to the south and east and terminate at coastal cliffs along its western edge. The land contains areas of mature native bush containing Kauri and endemic Kowhai and areas of coastal vegetation, including native forget-me-not and a herbfield of *selliera repens*, known as the 'tennis court'. Much of the northern coastal portion of the land consists of low scrubland infested with gorse, climbing asparagus and other weed species that are vulnerable to fire. The area contains a pleasant sandy beach known as 'the gap' and a coastal blowhole which is a unique visitor attraction. The area has high cultural significance to Te Kawerau a Maki who own the adjoining Taitomo Island, being the only remaining land in their ownership on the west coast.

Taitomo was purchased in 2014 as an addition to the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park in order to protect its wilderness qualities, high natural values and cultural significance and to provide a missing link on the Hillary Trail between Mercer Bay tracks and the Tasman Lookout Track at Piha.

Taitomo will be managed within the context of the policies contained in the Regional Parks Management Plan 2010, and in particular the policies contained in Section 17 relating to the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park. It will be managed in a manner consistent with the vision for the Waitakere Ranges Regional Park and the principles and purpose of Waitakere Ranges Heritage Protection Act 2008. Particular note will be taken of Section 17.19.5 Policies 1 – 48 to ensure the management of Taitomo is consistent with these policies.

The management of Taitomo will place emphasis on the protection and enhancement of its wilderness qualities and its natural features with limited and controlled visitor access to the 'gap', the blowhole, the 'tennis court' and the Hillary Trail which offers spectacular coastal vistas for key lookout points. Visitor infrastructure will be kept to the minimum necessary to facilitate safe access to key points of interest to visitors on the site and will be low key and constructed using natural materials.

1. As a priority, develop and implement a vegetation management and enhancement programme that;
 - a) Focusses on the control of pest plant species, with priority going to the control of fire prone species along track edges and property boundaries
 - b) Instigates revegetation in eco-sourced native plants suitable for a high risk fire coastal environment

- c) Maintain a representative and viable portion of the herbfield for its botanic and historic importance and as a visitor feature with appropriate levels of protection and interpretation.
2. Survey for the presence of Kauri dieback disease and develop and implement a programme in accordance with Policy 10.4.4.1 - 2 for kauri dieback prevention and control by avoiding tracks within the vicinity of the existing kauri trees and incorporating phytosanitary stations where necessary to prevent the spread of the disease.
3. Develop and implement protection measures for wildlife frequenting and breeding in the area, such as *little blue penguin* and *grey-faced petrel*.
4. Protect archaeological and cultural sites, and keep visitor activity and facilities away from Taitomo Island and other identified sites.
5. Undertake a staged track construct programme as shown in the concept plan that;
 - a) Completes, as a priority, the Hillary Trail link between the Mercer Bay Loop Track and the Tasman Lookout Track consistent with the objectives for the Hillary Trail (Refer Section 17.19.5 Policies 106-109)
 - b) Utilises previously disturbed alignments and in areas of low fire risk, including maintaining the existing service road as a pedestrian and service vehicle link only.
 - c) Ensures new track links are only constructed once the fire risk has been reduced through the replacement of weed species with suitable native plants
 - d) Constructs tracks from natural materials which reflects their natural settings and with the aim of low visual impact on the environment
 - e) Relocates the track between the 'gap' and the 'tennis court' away from the edge of the blowhole for safety reasons
 - f) Utilises boardwalks to reduce the impact on the herb field vegetation
 - g) Ensures safety barriers, boardwalks and lookout structures are installed only at locations shown on the concept plan using low profile and unobtrusive structures, such as post and wire fences, and materials consistent with the Piha Design Guidelines
 - h) Undertakes monitoring of the impact of visitor activity to ensure sensitive environments are not damaged and take appropriate action, such as temporary closures or redirection of visitor activity, when adverse impacts occur.
6. Monitor the need for additional parking to serve visitor activity at Taitomo and prepare a development plan for public consultation if a need is proved.
7. Prohibit dogs and mountain bikes in order to maintain the wilderness qualities and protect native wildlife species, such as *little blue penguins*.

8. Install visitor information, safety signage and interpretation of the natural and cultural features of the area at the main entrance points, at the entrance to the blowhole and at the 'tennis court' herb field.
9. Ensure Taitomo is conveniently served by toilet facilities by ensuring;
 - a) the location of existing toilets are clearly signposted at carparks and main track entrances
 - b) the need for additional toilet facilities is kept under review and that toilets will be constructed if a need is demonstrated
 - c) the additional toilet facilities are located in a discrete location and are designed and constructed of natural materials to blend into the natural setting consistent with the Piha Design Guidelines.
10. Develop and fire risk management strategy in consultation with the Auckland Rural Fire Service and install concrete water tanks for fire-fighting purposes in an area near the bottom of the existing service road.
11. Instigate protection in perpetuity of Taitomo by Order in Council under Section 139 of the Local Government Act 2002.
12. Maintain engagement with Te Kawerau a Maki on all matters relating to the management and development of Taitomo.
13. Coordinate pest animal and plant control programmes and vegetation enhancement programme with those of the Waitakere Ranges Local Board.
14. Maintain liaison with key community groups, such as Piha Resident and Ratepayers Association, Waitakere Ranges Protection Society, Piha Coastcare, and Protect Piha Heritage Society.
15. Facilitate a volunteer programme for pest animal and plant control, re-planting programmes and the management of the herb field.