



South Taranaki District Council

Hāwera water tower.

TOWER POWER HAS HĀWERA STANDING TALL

The people have voted with their feet: Refurbishing the Hāwera Water Tower was a fine idea.

The tower was reinforced, re-clad and re-opened to the public in 2004 and by August

2008 there had been nearly 20,500 visits by people keen to have a look.

The tower had been closed in 2000 because of safety concerns over falling concrete.

The South Taranaki District Council commissioned a conservation plan and refurbishment began in March 2004.

Some 3,000 townsfolk turned out to celebrate its reopening in October 2004, an occasion that culminated in a spectacular laser light show.

The \$1.1 million refurbishment project was funded by the South Taranaki District Council with support from the TSB Community Trust (\$263,000), the Lottery Grants Board (\$250,000) and Telecom and Vodafone (\$100,000 each).

The tower has Historic Places Trust Category I rating. It has national historic importance for the technical skill in design and construction, for both the way the structure is exposed with columns, brackets and tank readily visible, and the raw, off-the-boxing concrete.

Construction started in 1912 with the aim of improving water supply after two

devastating fires in Hāwera. Ironically, the advent of the Inaha water scheme meant the tower was never used for the purpose intended.

But it's become an enduring landmark for the district, surviving a number of calls for its demolition. After the 2004 project its future seems secure.

Among those happy about that is Miranda Cullen, who has lived within the shadow of the tower for most of her life. "It's an important link with those who've gone before us," she said. That's particularly important for Miranda, whose father Dr. Alastair Buist was a noted South Taranaki historian.

Like many in South Taranaki, she sees the tower as part of her identity.

It's also looking to be a significant visitor attraction. Of those 20,500 visits to the end of July 2008, nearly 3,000 were by overseas people and the rest were evenly split between locals and those from other parts of New Zealand. Never underestimate tower power.

7.3 WHAT IS THE STATE OF TARANAKI'S AMENITY VALUES?

Amenity values are those natural and physical qualities and characteristics that contribute to people's appreciation and enjoyment of the environment.

Taranaki residents and visitors enjoy very high levels of amenity values. Amenity values are characterised by the region's pleasant environment and the relative absence of noise, odours and dust. With well maintained and accessible parks and reserves, walkways, outstanding landscape features and community and recreational facilities, the region has an uncluttered rural feel.

People have different ideas about what constitutes a pleasant and enjoyable environment. This variation makes the management of amenity values challenging.

A survey of Taranaki residents carried out in July 2008 provided useful information about amenity values by asking what residents liked and disliked most about where they lived¹². (Table 7.4).

When asked what they liked most about the area they live in, New Plymouth residents cited the close proximity to sea and beaches (32%).

In comparison, Stratford and South Taranaki residents like the quiet, peaceful and relaxing environment, and the fact that they do not live in an overcrowded area (27% and 28% respectively). For all districts, the proximity to Mount Taranaki was one of the top three aspects residents liked most about the area they live in.



Rob Tucker

A quiet, secluded black sand beach.

12 Hastings, A, and Newman, N 2008. *Taranaki Community Survey 2008*. Report to the Future Taranaki Facilitation Group by the Nielsen Company.

LANDSCAPE, HERITAGE & AMENITY VALUES

Table 7.4: What people like or dislike most about where they live¹³

What people like most about the area they live in	What people dislike about the area they live in
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Close to sea/beaches • Quiet/peaceful/relaxing/not overcrowded • Close to mountain • Friendly/helpful people/know everybody • Close to town /city • Nice place to live/good area/like Taranaki • Weather/climate/good summers • Size of community (small, not too large) • Always lived here/born here/lived here a long time • Everything we need is here/have all facilities/amenities/services • Friends and family are here 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing (over 30% of respondents) • Weather/climate • Traffic issues (congestion, heavy transport, speeding, boy racers) • Roads/footpaths (poor condition, potholes)/road access • Concerns with council (unnecessary spending, poor decisions, infighting, lack of consultation) • Isolated/distance to travel to other places.

On a positive note, around a third of residents in each district said there was nothing they disliked about the area they live in. Aside from the weather and climate, the most disliked aspect in New Plymouth District is traffic issues and the state of roads and footpaths (8% dislike these aspects the most). The shopping environment (lack of shops and/or late closing hours) is the most disliked aspect of the Stratford and South Taranaki districts (8% and 10% respectively).

A survey of the recreational use of the coast, rivers and lakes in Taranaki carried out by the Council in the summer of 2007-08 showed that 90% of respondents had visited a beach, river or lake in the preceding 12 months¹⁴. Common activities undertaken were walking, swimming, relaxing, scenic appreciation and picnicking. The main reasons for visiting these areas (after 'close to home') was the natural character of the area, the peace and quiet and suitability of the site for specific activities such as surfing.

(A) AMENITY VALUES OF THE NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT

The *New Plymouth District Plan* mentions a number of potential adverse effects on amenity values that it aims to avoid, remedy or mitigate. These include light overspill and glare, noise, dust, traffic effects and anti-social effects associated with liquor.



Pukekura Park and Poet's Bridge.

The community has identified the spacious, low-density character of rural areas, pleasant urban environments, the natural character of the coastal environment, vegetation and trees, landscapes (mountain, sea and bush) parks, reserves, walkways and other open spaces and recreational areas, traffic and pedestrian issues and public views as being important amenity values within the New Plymouth District.

The total number of trees recorded in the *New Plymouth District Plan* as 'notable trees' for protection exceeds 1,800. Many of these trees are

Table 7.5 Levels of public satisfaction with New Plymouth District Council services and facilities.

Service or facility	% satisfied	% not very satisfied	% don't know
The ability to drive around the district quickly, easily and safely	78	19	3
The quality and safety of footpaths	78	18	4
The quality of parks and reserves including the Coastal Walkway and Pukekura Park	93	5	2
The quality of sportsgrounds and playgrounds	90	2	8
The quality of the New Plymouth living environment is being maintained	87	9	4
The quality of entertainment, cultural and sporting events in the district and the venues they are held in	94	2	4
The maintenance and presentation of urban landscapes and streets	92	7	1

¹³ Hastings, A, and Newman, N, 2008. *Taranaki Community Survey 2008*. Report to the Future Taranaki Facilitation Group by the Nielsen Company.
¹⁴ Taranaki Regional Council, 2008. *Recreational use of Coast, Rivers and Lakes in Taranaki, 2007-08*.

good examples of their type, have visual or landscape value or heritage or botanical values that add to the amenity values of the district.

A survey of residents of the New Plymouth District carried out in 2008¹⁵ showed high levels of satisfaction with facilities or amenities as shown in Table 7.5.

VISTAS COME WITH HISTORY ATTACHED

A major refurbishment at a historic Taranaki property has extended its appeal beyond the attractive gardens and beautiful vistas it has long been known for.

Tūpare, on Mangorei Road at New Plymouth's outskirts, now offers an authentic taste of life in the mid 20th Century heyday of the two prominent and strong-willed men who shaped the property's original development.

James Chapman-Taylor, the renowned 'arts and crafts' architect, designed Tūpare's stylish house for businessman Sir Russell Matthews in 1932. Unusually for the architect, though, he relinquished control of its construction to Matthews, who had firm ideas about what he wanted.

The result was a unique stately home with the unmistakable Chapman-Taylor stamp but also reflecting the dreams and aspirations of the innovative Matthews, whose accomplishments included laying the first bitumen road in New Zealand.

Changes crept in over the ensuing years and now the property is owned and administered by the Taranaki Regional Council, which launched a renovation project in 2007 as it implemented a new management plan.

"We've taken out some of the later influences that have impacted on the house over the years," said the Council's Regional Gardens Manager, Greg Rine.

"Visitors can now get an authentic insight into the work of James Chapman-Taylor, the vision of Sir Russell Matthews, and the lifestyles of their era. It really cements Tūpare as a cultural and historical attraction.

"Experiencing what life was like for the Matthews family back in the 1950s certainly adds depth and character to the functions that the house is hired for."

The work on the house was part of a wider project at Tūpare, which also included major restoration work on the hillside property's landscaped garden containing majestic trees, a water feature and extensive plantings in different settings.

The cottage is now the interpretation centre for the property and a gathering point for garden workshops.

The project also included a new car park and gatehouse, new paths and lookouts and a new glasshouse.

In 2008, New Plymouth was judged the country's top town by *North and South* magazine, and the best place to 'live, love, work and raise a family'¹⁶. New Plymouth went on to win the 'best and most liveable community in the world (population 20,001-75,000) at the 2008 International Awards for Liveable Communities. Awards were also won for the coastal walkway, and community sustainability¹⁷.



Visitors explore the splendour of the gardens.



The fish pond is an original feature of Tūpare.



Tūpare has been restored to the original Matthews' style.

15 National Research Bureau Ltd, 2008. *Communitrak Survey: Public Perceptions and Interpretations of Council Services and Representation*. Report to the New Plymouth District Council
16 North and South, October 2008, ACP Magazines
17 New Plymouth District Council website: www.newplymouthnz.com

(B) AMENITY VALUES OF THE STRATFORD DISTRICT

The *Stratford District Plan* identifies a number of important amenity values in the district. The residential areas within the district have a high standard of amenity in relation to such things as spaciousness and access to daylight and sunlight, private outdoor space and off-street parking. The low-density development and ‘country feel’ of rural areas is an important aspect of existing rural amenity. Rural/residential areas are also characterised by a low density of development which contributes to a generally open landscape and an important buffer between residential and rural areas.

Within the commercial centre, the visual and physical linkages created by the pedestrian areas are important amenity features of Stratford.

The Stratford District Council has identified 223 notable trees for protection under the *Stratford District Plan*. They have significant historic value or are particularly good, unusual or rare examples of their type in the district. Such trees contribute to the overall amenity values of the district.



Lake Rotokare, South Taranaki District.

(C) AMENITY VALUES OF THE SOUTH TARANAKI DISTRICT

The *South Taranaki District Council District Plan* notes that the community places considerable value on the character and quality of the residential and recreational environments in the district. Reserves are seen as important for the enhancement of amenity values, and protection of natural values, ecology, landscapes and the margins of lakes and rivers. Other important amenity issues in the district are the control of the adverse effects of signs and the control of noise emissions and industrial development both of which reflect the amenity values of surrounding environments.

Seventy one notable trees are identified for protection under the *South Taranaki District Plan*. Equal numbers of native and introduced species are identified, selected for protection on the basis of their condition (health), amenity (community benefit) and notability (distinction).

A survey of residents of the South Taranaki District carried out in 2007 showed that 85% of residents were satisfied with the district’s parks and reserves, 81% were satisfied with local roads and 67% were satisfied with footpaths in the district¹⁸.

7.4 HOW ARE LANDSCAPE, HERITAGE AND AMENITY VALUES MANAGED IN TARANAKI?

(A) REGIONAL POLICIES AND PLANS

The *Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki* contains objectives, policies and methods relating to the management of landscape, historic heritage and amenity values. The objective in relation to landscape is to “protect the outstanding and regionally significant natural features and landscapes of Taranaki” and identifies some of these important areas. The *Policy Statement* also has as objectives to maintain and enhance the amenity values of the Taranaki environment and to protect the heritage values of the region. The Council’s regional plans and resource consent processes also recognise and provide for landscape protection and for protection of heritage and amenity values in relation to the Council’s functions and responsibilities.

The Council’s *Regional Fresh Water Plan*, *Regional Coastal Plan* and *Regional Air Quality Plan* all provide for the protection of outstanding natural features and landscapes and heritages and amenity values.

(B) DISTRICT POLICIES AND PLANS

The New Plymouth, Stratford and South Taranaki district councils are responsible for managing land use. They therefore play an important role in the protection of Taranaki’s natural features and its landscape, heritage and amenity values through provisions in district plans and related land use and subdivision consents. The district councils also provide information and are engaged in environmental education initiatives to raise awareness of these issues.

New Plymouth District Council

The *New Plymouth District Plan* identifies and lists outstanding and regionally significant landscapes in the district, heritage buildings and items (Category A), wāhi tapu and archaeological sites and notable trees. The plan provides criteria for or explanation of their selection and contains rules relating to structures, earthworks, outdoor storage of materials, vegetation and subdivision of land to provide for the protection of landscape, historic heritage and amenity values.



Bowl of Brooklands, New Plymouth, a spectacular outdoor venue.



Rob Tucker

The 'low density' character of the region is an important amenity value.

The New Plymouth District Council has established a heritage inventory and a heritage fund to provide financial assistance for the protection and maintenance of heritage buildings and items and notable trees. Between 1996-97 and 2006-07 the New Plymouth District Council approved 62 applications and more than \$430,000 in expenditure from the Heritage Protection Fund for work on buildings and other heritage items. This has included funding for maintenance work on St Mary's Pro Cathedral (see case study), the Combined Taranaki Club and the Bertrand Road Bridge. In addition, between 2003 and 2007, the New Plymouth District Council issued building consents valued at more than \$4 million for private landowners to undertake maintenance or upgrade work on historic buildings.

The New Plymouth District Council will also consider rates relief for protection initiatives. Other non-statutory provisions include education, provision of information and advice, and advocacy.

In relation to broad amenity values, the New Plymouth District Council has identified areas (e.g. industrial, open space environment areas) within their district plan and established standards for each area specifying requirements in relation to building height and coverage, light and noise, signage, landscaping, hours of operation, traffic generation and parking.

A coastal policy area has been defined to protect the natural character and amenity values of the coast.

Stratford District Council

The *Stratford District Council District Plan* seeks to control adverse effects on landscape, heritage and amenity values through rules and standards, and conditions on resource consents relating to structures, excavation, filling planting, noise, lighting and glare, vegetation clearance close to important heritage sites, and subdivision.

Other methods include a heritage fund to provide assistance for heritage protection, requiring financial contributions in the form of land for reserves, walkways, play areas and buffer strips, or cash for future acquisition of reserve land to enhance amenity values and rates relief for the voluntary protection of historic heritage resources. The Council also promotes awareness and encourages landowners and developers to take into account landscape, heritage and amenity values in the planning and design phases of proposals.

Over the past five years the Stratford District Council has issued building consents to the value of \$15,000 for work on heritage buildings, all in relation to restoration work on St Peter's Church, Pūrangi (see case study).

South Taranaki District Council

In relation to landscape and heritage resources, the South Taranaki District Council has adopted policies and methods, including rules, voluntary methods and rates relief for voluntary protection, to protect and enhance outstanding natural features and landscapes. Heritage inventories have been compiled covering the urban settlements and rural areas of the district. The *South Taranaki District Plan* includes a schedule of heritage items (buildings, objects and areas and notable trees) for protection and includes a range of regulatory and non-regulatory methods to protect the district's heritage resources. These include rules in the district plan, education and information, rates relief and the consideration of the waiving of fees for heritage order requirements that are lodged on the basis of community benefit.

Methods have been adopted for maintaining and enhancing amenity values. These include the use of district plan performance standards and requirements for landscaping, provision of yards and controls on noise, lighting and signage. The district plan also identifies a defined pedestrian area where standards encourage the development and retention of retail and business activities. The coastline and Lake Rotorangi have been identified as areas where significant amenity values exist and their protection has been addressed in the plan.

The restoration of the Hāwera Water Tower was completed in 2004 at a total cost of \$1.1 million with 40% of the funding coming from the South Taranaki District Council and the remainder from corporate and other sources. In the past five years there has also been considerable refurbishment work done on the Eltham Town Hall at a cost of approximately \$250,000, again with funding coming from various sources (see case studies). In June 2008 the steeple of St George's Church in Pātea was put back in place after the community had raised \$230,000 to have it restored.

Over the past five years the South Taranaki District Council and community boards have approved another \$70,000 for the protection of the district's heritage.



Eltham Town Hall.

ELTHAM ELEGANCE CAPTURES HEARTS

Nearing the grand old age of 100, she still captivates people – and there’s still plenty of life left in her.

‘She’ is the Eltham Town Hall. “Everybody refers to this building as ‘her’, and she’s a very elegant lady,” said Karen Christian. So elegant and captivating that Karen has not only written a book about her, but joined Don Drabble and other Friends of the Eltham Town Hall in putting countless hours into an ongoing restoration project for which about half a million dollars has been raised.

Even after nearly a decade on the project, they marvel at the workmanship that’s gone into the building, designed in 1910 by Hāwera architect John Alfred Duffill and built in only six months by Manaia firm John A Ryan and Sons.

“She was built soundly and there’s got to be at least another 100 years in her yet,” said Don. “It’s amazing when you think the builders had none of the modern power tools. And they did it in such a short time.”

Karen points to the attractively curved proscenium arch that frames the big stage. “That was created using small widths of timber and shaped with plaster. And it’s still in original condition – it didn’t need renovating.”

Other features of the hall include a fly tower (so named because it allows curtains and scenery to ‘fly in’ from above) soaring more

than 12 m above the stage, and a fine dress circle. A grand tōtara facade fronts corrugated iron sidewalls and the floors are constructed of matai.

Besides being a venue for live drama, music and dance, the hall has served time as a movie theatre (Don was a projectionist), as a temporary hospital during the flu epidemic of 1918-19, and as the place where townsfolk gathered to hear big announcements about wars or elections – delivered from a balcony at the front.

The renovation effort began in earnest after a conservation plan was drawn up by Auckland conservation architects Salmond Reed in 2001, with Don contributing the historical introduction. The foyer has been renovated and rebuilt to Duffill’s original design, many of the original seats have been refurbished and re-covered, and storage areas and the manager’s office have been turned into display spaces and a home for the Friends’ group.



Friends of Eltham Town Hall Les Parish, Karen Christian and Don Drabble.

Now the Friends have their eyes on the stage area itself, and would also like to pay some attention to the frontage.

Big donors over the years have included the Taranaki Electricity Trust and the Lottery Grants Board. To the delight of the Friends, TSB Community Trust recently funded the purchase of a new waterfall curtain for the stage.

South Taranaki District Council has also supported the restoration efforts. And most importantly, so has the community. “At some stage, every community group in Eltham has been involved in this project,” said Karen. “That’s very significant.”

Supporters have included former movie patrons who have funded the restoration of their favourite seats in the dress circle.

The building has a New Zealand Historic Places Trust Category 2 listing. But it is no museum piece. The flat auditorium floor gives it versatility and it remains the venue for a wide range of activities including art exhibitions, performances, corporate meetings, even dinners. NZ Ballet and NZ Opera have performed there. Dave Dobbyn played there in 2007 and it was on the touring itinerary of Gary McCormick and Tim Shadbolt in 2008.

“What we’ve found since the renovations started is that users respect the building more now,” said Don.

There’s sure to be a big hooley when the Eltham Town Hall turns 100 in 2011 – with lots of love evident, as well as respect.



Parihaka International Peace Festival.

Other agencies

The Department of Conservation plays an important role in managing landscape, historic heritage and amenity values through its management of national parks and other conservation land in Taranaki. DOC manages 146,973 hectares of public conservation land in Taranaki (21% of the total land area of the region) under the Conservation Act, National Parks Act and Reserves Act. Management plans are prepared for these areas and activities within them controlled to manage natural and historic resources for conservation purposes or for purposes consistent with the National Parks Act or Reserves Act.

The Historic Places Trust, established under the Historic Places Act 1993, has a number of functions in the area of historic heritage. These include responsibilities to identify, record, investigate, assess, register, protect and conserve historic places, historic areas, wāhi tapu and wāhi tapu areas, to advocate the conservation and protection of these areas and to foster public interest and involvement in historic places protection. The Trust also manages historic places, buildings and other property owned or controlled by the Trust or vested in it.

All archaeological sites are afforded protection under the Historic Places Act and it is unlawful for anyone to destroy, damage or modify an archaeological site without first applying to the Trust for an authority to do so.

(C) DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES

All district councils have been involved in the provision, development or upgrading of community amenities and facilities within their districts. For example there have been continuing upgrades of business districts or streetscapes in New Plymouth, Stratford, Hāwera, Inglewood, Eltham, Kaponga, Opunake, Pātea and Waverley which have all contributed to improved amenities in these areas.



Sanford Events Centre, Opunake.

There has also been ongoing community investment in recreational and cultural facilities over the reporting period including further development of the coastal walkway in New Plymouth, the Sandford Events Centre in Opunake, and investment by the Taranaki Regional Council in development of Tūpare (New Plymouth), Hollard Gardens (Kaponga) and Pukeiti Gardens.

Work commenced early in 2008 on The Hub, South Taranaki District Council's \$22.7 million vision for a multi sports, leisure and events centre at Hicks Park in Hāwera. These developments have followed significant community investment in major recreational and cultural facilities in the previous reporting period, including the Puke Ariki Library and Museum complex, Yarrow Stadium, and upgrades of the TSB Showplace, and Bowl of Brooklands in New Plymouth, the TET Stadium at Jubilee Park in Inglewood and the TET MultiSports Centre in Stratford.

The development of such facilities contributes to the amenities enjoyed by the people of Taranaki and visitors alike, and promotes the economic and social well-being of the community.

(D) SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Progress implementing regional objectives and policies on landscape, heritage and amenity issues is summarised in Table 7.6.

LANDSCAPE, HERITAGE & AMENITY VALUES

Table 7.6 Summary of progress: implementing regional objectives and policies on landscape, heritage and amenity values.

Issue	What do we want to achieve?	What are we doing about it?	Where are we at?
<p>Protecting our outstanding natural features and landscapes from inappropriate subdivision, use and development</p> <p>Having regard to other natural features and landscapes of importance</p>	<p>Protection of our outstanding natural features and landscapes</p> <p>Promotion of the protection of other natural features and landscapes of importance</p> <p>Increased awareness of outstanding and regionally significant natural features and landscapes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives, policies and methods included in the <i>Regional Policy Statement for Taranaki</i>. District councils have identified outstanding or significant features or landscapes and included provisions for their protection in district plans. Conditions are imposed on resource consents. Information and advice are provided. Advocacy and promotion to other agencies and to landowners is undertaken. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The region has high quality natural features and landscapes. There have been no significant changes in landscape qualities and values of outstanding or regionally significant landscapes over the reporting period. Some landscape change has occurred in the ring plain landscape unit in the New Plymouth District but it retains much of its natural character. Conditions are imposed on resource consents to protect landscape values. Information and advice are provided.
<p>Identifying and raising awareness of historic heritage and promoting its protection</p> <p>Managing the adverse effects of activities on Taranaki's historic heritage</p> <p>Promoting active management of archaeological sites and heritage buildings</p>	<p>Protection of the region's historic heritage values including buildings, structures features, places and areas of heritage value</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District councils have compiled lists of heritage sites. Significant sites are included in district plans and are protected by rules. Resource consents are issued to upgrade or maintain heritage sites. Conditions are imposed on activities to protect heritage sites or values. Funding is available to assist landowners to protect heritage values. Information and technical advice is provided. Investigations are carried out to identify heritage sites and values and to update records. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,345 heritage buildings, structures or items and 1,774 archaeological sites have been identified in Taranaki. 193 heritage buildings and items and 821 archaeological sites have been identified for protection in district plans. 150 heritage items are listed in the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Register. Funding has been made available to assist landowners to protect heritage values. The number of heritage items identified by district councils has decreased since 2003, and the number of archaeological sites identified and listed on the NZAA's Site Recording Scheme has increased since 2003. The condition of archaeological sites in Taranaki is variable and are affected by development and farming activities. Resource consents are issued and conditions are imposed to protect heritage values. Information and advice are provided.
<p>Maintaining and enhancing amenity values</p> <p>Adverse effects of activities on amenity values</p>	<p>Maintenance and enhancement of amenity values</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> District plans contain policies and rules to control bulk and location, noise, light, traffic and other aspects of amenity. District plans contain policies and rules to protect notable trees. Regional plans contain policies and rules to maintain amenity values. Information and advice are provided. Enforcement action is undertaken to maintain amenity values. Community facilities are developed and open spaces are provided. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amenity values are high in Taranaki. Public perception surveys show high levels of public satisfaction with amenity values and community facilities. 2,125 notable trees have been identified for protection in district plans. Information and advice are provided.