







TARANAKI TRACKS AND TRAILS 2040 STRATEGY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In November 2017 The New Zealand Walking Access Commission engaged with Lincoln University Landscope DesignLab to develop a strategic vision and direction for the tracks and trails network in the Taranaki region. This work has been developed by Lincoln University's Landscope DesignLab, Sport Taranaki and the New Zealand Walking Access Commission, and has involved ongoing discussions and workshops with local councils, iwi, Department of Conservation, and local community groups.

This document proposes a strategic direction for the Taranaki region's tracks and trails network. The strategy utilises existing opportunities, addresses key challenges, and celebrates the capacity of journeys to inspire and connect us.

The strategy is underpinned by the following narrative, value and vision.

NARRATIVE

Taranaki's journey, from Tongariro and down the Whanganui, continues to shape this land and its people. Connecting with this journey creates opportunities to more deeply connect with this place.

VALUE

Taranaki, the mounga, embraces the whole region – from its summit and to the ocean. Wherever we are in Taranaki, we are always on the mountain and in its embrace.

OVERARCHING TRACKS AND TRAIL VISION

To invite everyone – local and visitor alike - to join in Taranaki's journey by making their own journeys around the mountain, along routes that are woven from mountain to sea.







EXECUTIVE SUMMARY —



This vision is realised through a series of nine projects which, along with key stakeholder groups, identify the next steps in the implementation of the Taranaki Tracks and Trails 2040 Strategy.

Principal Projects:

Project 1: The youngest children explore their place around the mountain

Project 2: Year 9-10 students travel together in a multi-day journey around the mountain

Project 3: A great walk from Mounga to Moana

Project 4: Biodiversity Trails

Project 5: Cycle trail

Project 6: Coastal Trail

Project 7: River Crossings

Project 8: Tourism Trail

Project 9: Historic Trails

Taranaki moves people.

The Taranaki Tracks and Trails 2040 Strategy sets out to create a movement of people around the mountain.

Elsewhere in the world trails make historic sites the focus of a pilgrimage. Here the promise of being connected to that which deeply belongs here – the mana of Taranaki – invites all people to share in a journey that shapes and changes people.

In this none of the nine projects is dominant. Each works to support the mana of the mountain in ways that enables Taranaki's presence to draw people to it, not just from the region, nor only Aotearoa, but also from around the world.

CONTEXT

The New Zealand Walking Access Commission along with Sport Taranaki engaged Lincoln University Landscope DesignLab to identify opportunities for a Taranaki's Tracks and Trails 2040 Strategy.

Lincoln University's Landscope DesignLab applied strategic and spatial design processes to identify relevant insights, opportunities and challenges to develop Taranaki's tracks and trails network. This process consisted of:

- Ongoing engagement with local councils, agencies and individuals identified who could assist with the projects direction and scope
- A site and desktop study of places, people and proposals relevant to the project
- Mapping studies which identify relevant landscape layers including narratives, pathways, infrastructure and locations
- Ongoing presentations of the draft strategy in draft form to a range of working groups including:
 - Council members from New Plymouth District Council, South Taranaki District Council, Stratford District Council, and Taranaki Regional Council

- Mayors and deputy mayors
- Iwi members and representatives
- Department of Conservation
- Key community group representatives
- Key community members

Out of this process, Lincoln University's Landscope DesignLab developed the following strategy for investment. This strategy identifies opportunities for collaboration, aligned decision making, and allocation of resources. The strategy consists of:

- A central narrative, value and vision to be used as the unifying kaupapa of the strategy
- Nine projects that enable implementation of the strategy and which can be led by different champions and phased according to key investments
- Nine scoping briefs for each project indicate the next stage in their development. Each brief identifies options for:
 - A local steering group

- An identified working group (to work in collaboration with steering group)
- Key phases and milestones
- Next steps







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1.0 VISION AND VALUES

VISION

THIS DOCUMENT PRESENTS A MULTI-STAKEHOLDER STRATEGY THAT ENSURES SOCIAL, CULTURAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL VALUES ARE SUPPORTED AND CELEBRATED THROUGH THE DEVELOPMENT OF TARANAKI'S TRACKS AND TRAILS NETWORK.

VALUES

THE FOLLOWING SIX VALUES UNDERPIN THIS STRATEGY:

VALUE 1
VALUING LOCAL SENSE
OF IDENTITY



VALUE 2
VALUING REGIONAL NATIVE
FLORA AND FAUNA, AND
CONSERVATION EFFORTS



VALUE 3
ENGAGING DIVERSE
STAKEHOLDERS WITH THE
TARANAKI TRACKS AND
TRAILS STRATEGY



VALUE 4
CREATING ENDURING SOCIAL
AND ECOLOGICAL VALUES



VALUE 5
SHAPING EFFORTS OF
KEY AGENCIES



VALUE 6
IDENTIFYING AREAS OF INVESTMENT FOCUS



VALUE 1: VALUING A LOCAL SENSE OF IDENTITY

Stories, memories, experiences and feelings of place are important cues to the relationships people have with their landscapes, and these landscapes have with them. Taranaki is a place rich in history, values, associations and stories, and this sense of local identity is a key component in driving an integrated tracks and trails network.









VALUE 2: VALUING REGIONAL NATIVE FLORA AND FAUNA, AND CONSERVATION EFFORTS

Biodiversity is a key theme throughout New Zealand. Taranaki's fostering of a 'Mounga to Moana' approach to biodiversity is expressed through a rich tapestry of riparian planting, revegetation outside the mountain ring, and the establishment of key conservation groups including Project Mounga and Wild for Taranaki.



VALUE 3: ENGAGING DIVERSE STAKEHOLDERS WITH THE TARANAKI TRACKS AND TRAILS STRATEGY

The region is managed, represented and experienced by many groups: iwi, councils, community groups, local trusts, not-for profits, and umbrella organisations. Overlapping areas of interest and spatial boundaries create an opportunity for diverse and rich engagement.









VALUE 4: CREATING ENDURING SOCIAL AND ECOLOGICAL VALUES

The current tracks and trails network is a rich resource that can unlock further long-term benefits. By expanding the use and scope of a track or trail, these pathways – which carry people, flora and fauna across space – can transform newcomers into locals and planting into corridor habitats. Through a process of scalability both these layers weave a connected system around the mountain and across time with potential to create a socially, culturally, and ecologically rich future.



VALUE 5: SHAPING EFFORTS OF KEY AGENCIES

A number of proposals are already underway or being considered across the region. These range in focus from recreation, through to biodiversity and the environment, and communities and families. To ensure effective investment clear decision-making structures are needed. This includes identifying where and when alignment of existing efforts and resources is beneficial, and where and when new resources are required to work as the catalyst to unlock a long-term vision.









VALUE 6: IDENTIFYING AREAS OF INVESTMENT FOCUS

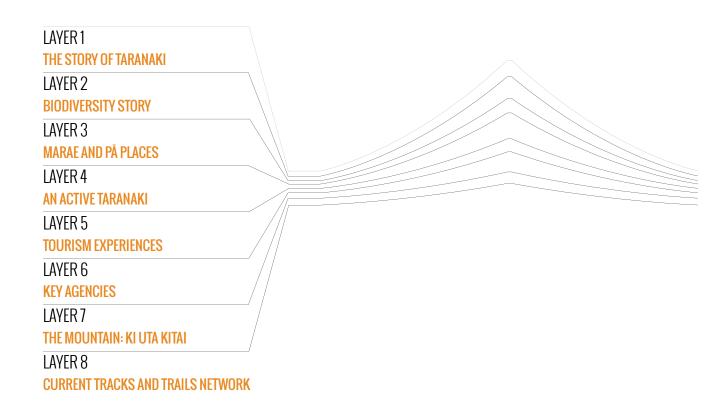
As Taranaki is already strong in resources (infrastructure, people, and ideas), the priority is to identify and enable projects that utilise a high proportion of what already exists, and which can also create a far-reaching, enduring, and transformative impact for the region.





2.0 KEY LANDSCAPE LAYERS

TO IDENTIFY THE SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL LANDSCAPE LAYERS IN THE REGION, DESIGNLAB UNDERTOOK A KEY DOCUMENTS REVIEW, SITE STUDIES AND DESKTOP ANALYSIS. EIGHT SIGNIFICANT LANDSCAPE LAYERS WERE IDENTIFIED THAT EXPRESS BOTH PLACE AND PEOPLE, INCLUDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH MOUNGA, MOANA, AND ALSO THE STORIES OF JOURNEYS THAT CONNECT THE PAST AND FUTURE POTENTIAL OF THIS PLACE AND IT'S PEOPLE.



LAYER 1: SENSE OF LOCAL IDENTITY

The story of Taranaki coming to the ocean begins with his disagreement with Tongariro, to leaving the islands center to journey down the Whanganui river, and the guiding of Taranaki by te toka-a-rauhoto to where Taranaki sits today. People came to the region, shaping the plains of the mountain to live, work and play on. In turn, the mountain shaped these people, in their everyday lives, their family's lives, and what it means to be 'from and of Taranaki'.









LAYER 2: BIODIVERSITY STORY

Taranaki is undergoing a region-wide transformation. Along many of its waterways native species are being replanted to create biodiversity ribbons across the landscape, connecting the mountain's peak to where it flows into the sea.

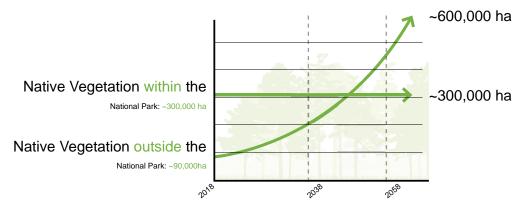
This transformation is being intentionally created by farmers, conservationists, and communities. And while the native vegetation within the National Park is at a fixed total of 300,000 hectares, the total native vegetation outside of the National Park has the potential to grow and eventually exceed this figure. Through the creation of Wild for Taranaki, Project Mounga and its' partnering with NEXT foundation, Taranaki is leading the way with a nationally significant restoration regime.







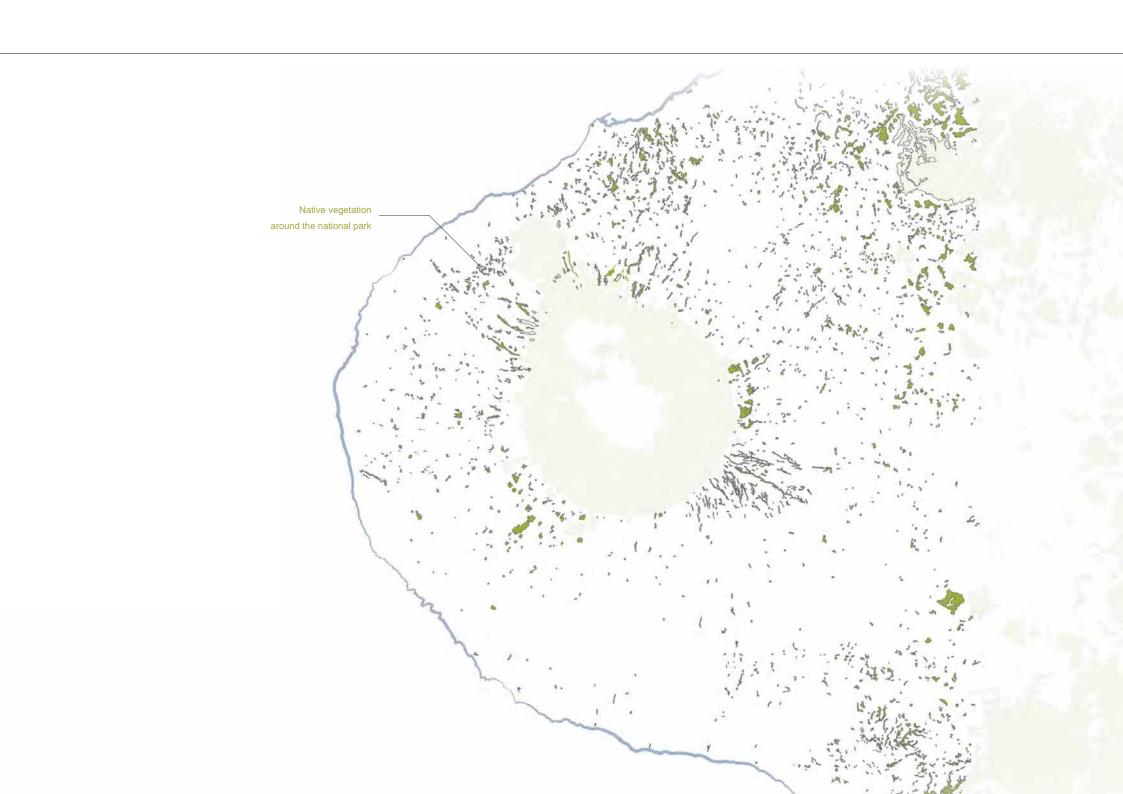












LAYER 3: MARAE AND PĀ PLACES

There are eight iwi within the Taranaki area. Together, they are kaitiaki of Taranaki, the Pouakai and Patuha ranges, Taranaki's plains, the coastal edge and seabed, as well as the many rivers, plants and fauna. Practices of kaitiakitanga, manaakitanga, whanaungatanga and mahinga kai are fundamental values for the ways people can shape and be shaped by Taranaki.

The values of Ngāruahine, Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Mutunga, Ngaa Rauru Kiitahi, Ngāti Ruanui, Ngāti Tama, Te Atiawa and Taranaki Iwi must underpin the regions Tracks and Trails strategy.







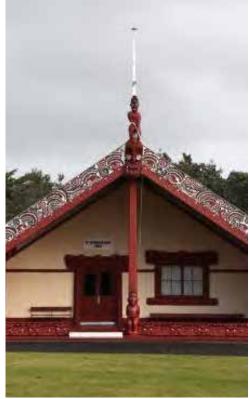














LAYER 4: AN ACTIVE TARANAKI

The region is alive with social, cultural and community events throughout the calendar year. Annual events are interspersed with events of celebration, gathering, workshops, conservation and recreation activities. Locals live, experience and interact with the mountain in their daily life.









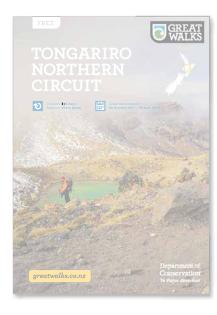


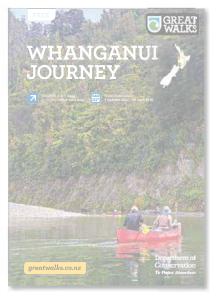
LAYER 5: TOURISM EXPERIENCES

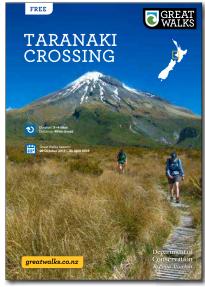
Tourism and visitor opportunities related to Taranaki are strongly represented in visual material such as booklets, brochures, and online material. Likewise, a range of activities across the region and around the mountain are digitally accessible through visitor sites including Trip Advisor and Google.

To improve what can appear as a mix of 'could-be-worthwhile' experiences, there is considerable opportunity to structure existing visitor nodes within a narrative of regional scale journeys.

Visual material:





















Top things to do on Tripadvisor:



Pukekura Park

1,393 Reviews

Gardens, Parks, Zoos



New Plymouth Coast.,.

1,310 Reviews
Scenic Walking Areas



Tawhiti Museum

304 Reviews
Speciality Museums



Points of Interest & Landmarks



Port Taranaki Walkway

109 Reviews

Points of Interest & Land...



Hawera Water Tower

•••••• 46 Reviews

Observation Decks & To....



Wind Wand

60 65 Reviews

Points of Interest & Land...



See all

See all

See all

Three Sisters

© © © © 25 Reviews

Points of Interest & Land...

Museums



Tawhiti Museum

304 Reviews
Speciality Museums



Govett-Brewster Art ...

6000 655 Reviews

Art Galleries



Taranaki Pioneer Villa...

30 Reviews
Speciality Museums



The Gables (Colonial ... 19 Reviews History Museums

Parks



Pukekura Park

1,393 Reviews
Gardens, Parks, Zoos



Tupare

OOOO 113 Reviews

Parks



King Edward Park

••••• 55 Reviews

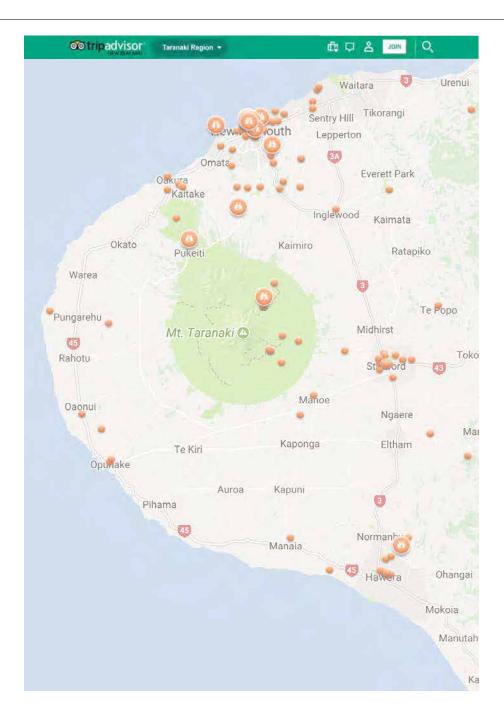
Parks



Kawaroa Park

OOOO 16 Reviews

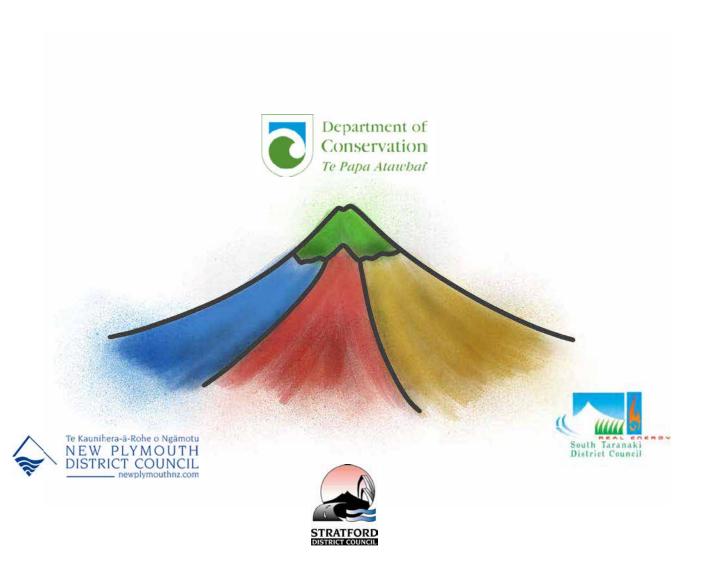
Parks



LAYER 6: KEY AGENCIES

The region is strongly represented through its three district and one regional council, eight iwi and also government agencies that includes the Department of Conservation. Here there is greater opportunity for coming together around the shared mana of the mountain, in that while New Plymouth District Council, South Taranaki District Council and Stratford District Council work across their respective boundaries, the top of the mounga once within the National Park area is principally left for the Department of Conservation to manage.

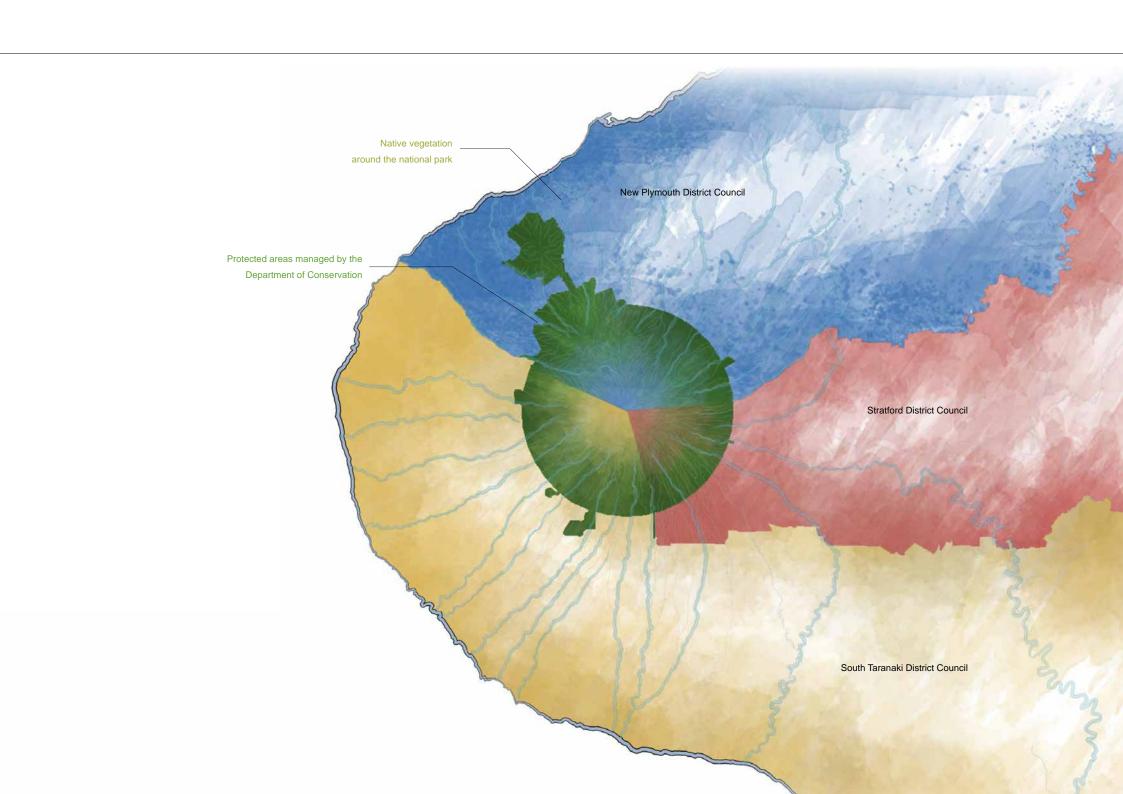
There are opportunities to further align common values, and foster investment and development across margins in a shared vision for people and place.











LAYER 7: THE MOUNTAIN

The mountain's layers are rich in social, cultural, historical, temporal, and ecological values. These layers do not stop at the national park boundary, and instead are strongly represented along a 'ki uta ki tai' transect from peak to foreshore and seabed.







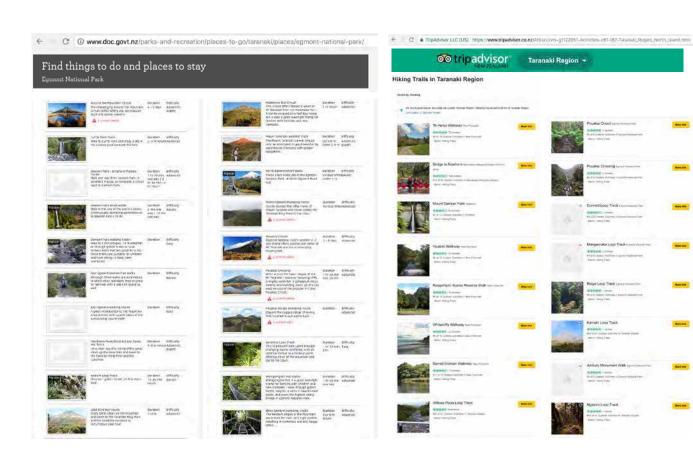




LAYER 8: TRACKS AND TRAILS NETWORK

There is a desire by communities to develop and/or maintain many of the tracks and trails in their area. Region-wide maintenance and track documentation can further support this opportunity for communities to be involved in maintaining access in their landscape. Wayfinding and coherence can be strengthened through:

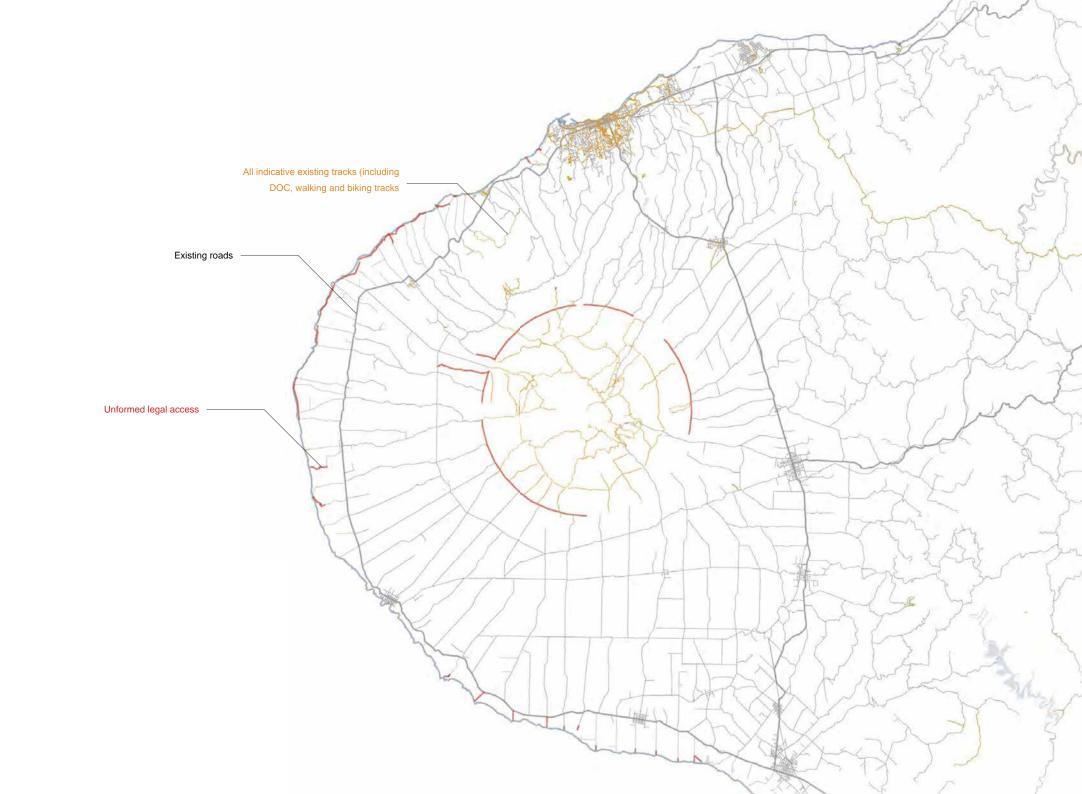
- A communication strategy that brings together a shared expression of values, connections and journeys across boundaries
- Itineraries that are multi-stops, multidays, multi-experiences













3.0 STRATEGY

The following section outlines the narrative structure and proposed Taranaki Tracks and Trails 2040 Strategy. It includes a series of projects that can both individually and together can support realisation of the strategy.

3.1 NARRATIVE, VALUE AND VISION

The study of landscape layers identifies a rich resource of existing tracks, stories, programs, proposals, groups, and potential for alignment. Also, stakeholder meetings throughout its development identified strong enthusiasm to consider such a strategy.

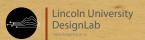
The strategy is underpinned by the following narrative, value and vision.

NARRATIVE

Taranaki's journey, from Tongariro and down the Whanganui, continues to shape this land and its people. Connecting with this journey creates opportunities to more deeply connect with this place.









Taranaki's journey began when he strongly disagreed with Tongariro, leading to Taranaki embarking on his journey ...

2 down the Whanganui River and out to the ocean...

3 coming to rest where he is found today.

VALUE

Taranaki, the mounga, embraces the whole region – from its summit and to the ocean. Wherever we are in Taranaki, we are always on the mountain and in its embrace.









OVERARCHING TRACKS AND TRAIL VISION

To invite everyone – local and visitor alike - to join in Taranaki's journey by making their own journeys around the mountain, along routes that are woven from mountain to sea.











4.0 KEY PROJECTS

The overarching narrative can be used to direct a number of program frameworks, which can also draw on existing resources, sites, places, experiences and people.

Nine projects underpin this strategy. Each provides tangible ways the overarching narrative can be incorporated into a scalable and transformative program for the Taranaki tracks and trails network.

The makeup of the nine different projects allows a range of opportunities to be implemented. Key benefits include:

- Each project provides different tempos of journeying around the mountain, both in terms of mode of movement and duration
- Different champions can support each project, bringing in a range of other locals through working groups, so that the projects express a range of voices
- There is a common focus on aligning current efforts around a shared valuing of the mountain
- Each project can be supported through different sets of resources including funding mechanisms

PROJECT1

YOUNGER CHILDREN EXPLORE THEIR PLACE AROUND THE MOUNTAIN



PROJECT 4
BIODIVERSITY TRAILS



PROJECT 7
RIVER CROSSINGS



PROJECT 2

YEAR 9-10 STUDENTS TRAVEL TOGETHER ON A MULTI-DAY JOURNEY AROUND THE MOUNTAIN



PROJECT 5
CYCLE TRAIL



PROJECT 8
TOURISM TRAIL



PROJECT 3

A GREAT WALK FROM MOUNGA

TO MOANA



PROJECT 6
COASTAL TRAIL



PROJECT 9
HISTORIC TRAILS



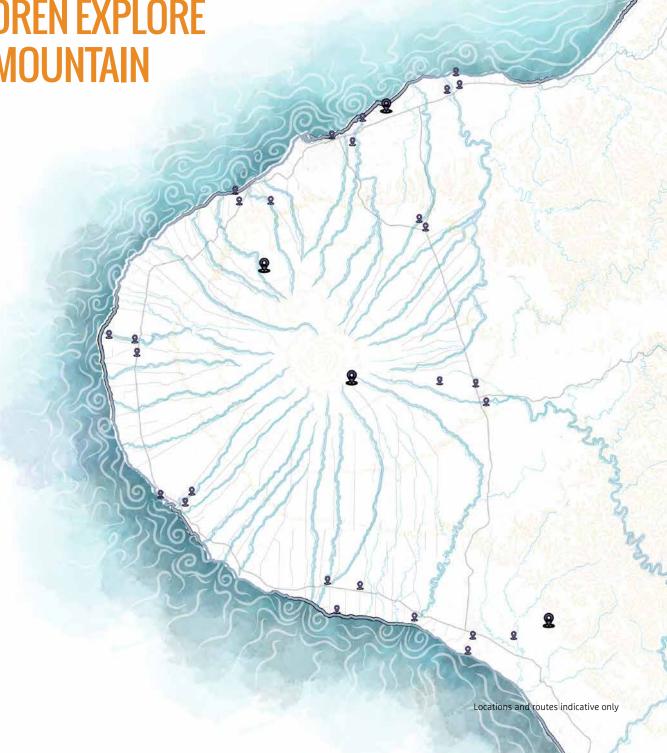


PROJECT 1: YOUNGER CHILDREN EXPLORE THEIR PLACE AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

Develop a program for the region's year 1-8 school children where each year they are involved in a key experience that together, over the 8 years involves them in an intimate journey around the mountain. The route can be set by each school and community so local places such as the local river, marae, beach, and forest is incorporated, along with a mix of more universal sites such as Pukeiti, Puki Ariki Museum, Dawsons Falls and Tawhiti museum. An indicative route beginning from a New Plymouth school's could include:

- Your beach
- Puke Ariki
- Your river
- Your Marae
- Pukeiti
- Tawhiti Museum
- Dawsons Falls
- Your forest

- Every child by year 8 has explored a series of sites and experiences that in combination have taken them around the mountain
- 2. Every child by year 8 has involved their friends, family and community in this journey
- 3. Each year they will spend at least a full day in this unfolding journey

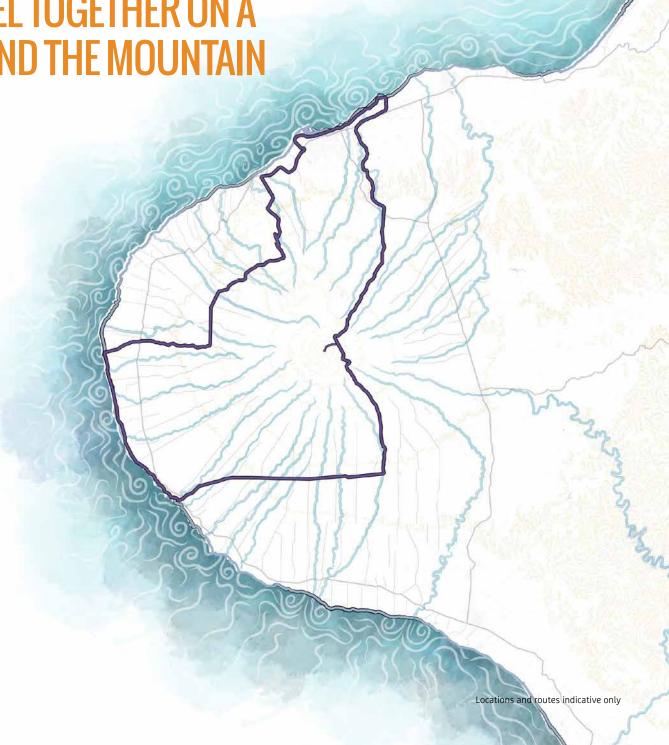




YEAR 9-10 STUDENTS TRAVEL TOGETHER ON A MULTI-DAY JOURNEY AROUND THE MOUNTAIN

For those in high school a journey around the mountain can become a personal challenge undertaken with their peers. As a rite of passage, they are inspired to plan and realise a single hikoi that takes them by foot, bike, kayak and other means on a complete journey around the mountain. The route can be set by each group, connecting key sites (including some of those from their years 1-8 experiences) and key values including manawhenua, kaitiakitanga biodiversity, history and discovery.

- 1. Every year 9-10 child has journeyed around the mounga
- Every year 9-10 child has connected their friends and community into a shared experience of moving across the landscape and around the mountain
- These arrival journeys involve the support of the school, whanau and local community organisations and businesses, with opportunities for shared camping and marae stays along the way





PROJECT 3: A GREAT WALK FROM MOUNGA TO MOANA

The Great Walk being implemented across the mountain invites local and international visitors to undertake a once in a lifetime journey. Huts, tracks and associated facilities will allow new audiences to discover overnight outdoor experiences. However there will be a need to balance the international tourism appeal of a 'Great Walk' on the mountain, with matching benefits and availability of access for locals. Ensuring that the journey 'around the mountain' is the authentic local's experience of the Mounga will lessen perceptions that international visitors on the Great Walk crossing is excluding locals from their connections to this special place.

- Locals can access, take part in, share, and benefit from overnight walks in the National Park
- Other sections of trail are maintained and have hut facilities to support the journey around the mountain narrative. These can provide cost effective overnight experiences for locals
- 3. Visitors having completed the Great Walk can be invited to extend their experience and journey to one that also takes them 'around the mountain' whether by continuing walking, or by other modes of transport that bring them outside the National Park. The latter can include sites and experiences that support local communities and economic activity outside the National Park boundary





PROJECT 4: BIODIVERSITY TRAILS

Strengthening biodiversity values can be achieved through using trails as a direct means to support predator free 2050 goals and native planting programs.

The existing tracks and trails network can be co-opted so local communities more strongly include biodiversity values in the establishment and maintenance of trails. This includes repurposing lesser used recreation trails within the National Park as biodiversity trails, and extending riparian planting programs outside of the park boundary wherever trails, tracks and roads cross a river.

- Existing biodiversity opportunities are extended and the scale of impact is increased
- 2. The role of people in improving biodiversity is expressly incorporated into a tracks and trails strategy
- 3. Sites for greatly strengthening kaitiakitanga, education and impactful citizen science are created





PROJECT 5: CYCLE TRAIL

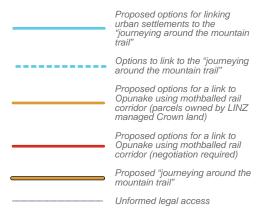
An around-the-mountain trail can be formed by linking connected routes, including lesser used roads, with cycle routes that utilise existing access opportunities along unformed legal roads.

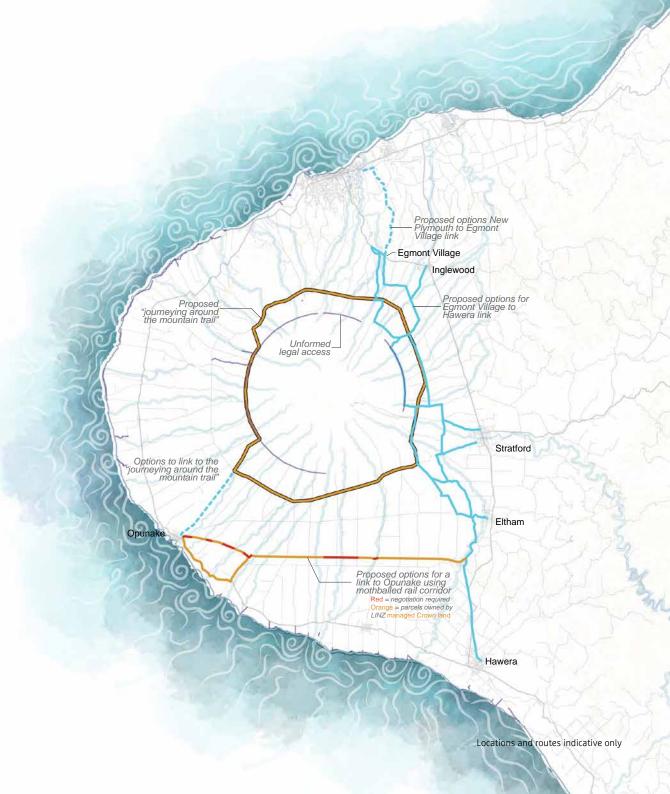
Key outcomes:

- 1. Opportunities to create regional scale value through using current unformed legal roads
- 2. Old and potentially soon to be retired rail links are considered
- 3. A first route primarily along backcountry roads can be developed with feasibility studies undertaken to determine the optimal routes

Project option updates:

9/7/2018 Updated to include possible NZTA options for Eastern link, and also possible options along former Opunake rail corridor







PROJECT 6: COASTAL TRAIL

There is long term potential for coastal trails to extend from south of Hawera to New Plymouth and into White Cliffs, with priority given to connections both along the actual coast, and on routes established along unformed legal roads, coastal marginal strips, esplanade strips and reserves. However, ongoing coastal erosion indicates this could be a costly trail to establish and maintain, especially given the dynamic way the coast is continuing to encroach inland. Further assessment is needed to determine which components of the route can be feasibly continued at low tide, along with those needing paths to be built to negotiate safe passage around headlands. Consideration can also be given for water-based versions of the trail that could include sea kayaks and other marine modes of transport.

- Important access, including the use of informed legal access roads, to places of stories, history and practice is secured and maintained in a long-term vision
- 2. Places of history are incorporated into a locally-focused access plan





PROJECT 7: RIVER CROSSINGS

Each Taranaki river is a direct link both to its source in the mountain and its connection with the sea. Each crossing is an opportunity to acknowledge that wherever we are, we are always within Taranaki's embrace. This project focuses on celebrating key river crossings, whether as a destination when travelling on a path, route or road. Communities can be supported to express their connection with the mounga through tree planting and foot bridge making, as well as design interventions that increase these places' amenity and cultural value.

- 1. Acknowledge each river crossing as part of fostering a unifying journey around the mountain
- 2. Implementing a program for expressing local identity





PROJECT 8: TOURISM TRAIL

A tourism trail can be readily conceived and communicated that bases visitor itineraries and experiences around a narrative of journeying around the mountain. This has strong potential to extend visitor's stays, economic activity and generate a structured network of sites that further optimises visitor numbers and flows around the regions. This can also strengthen opportunities to funnel visitors through a set of key destinations, for example Pukeiti, Opunaki, North Egmont Visitor Centre.

- 1. Sites are considered as providing nodes that support an overarching single narrative
- Tourism destinations can be located within an overarching narrative of journeying around the mountain. For example, Venture Taranaki booklets can present the region's gardens and walks in sequence so that together they build to form a visitor's journey

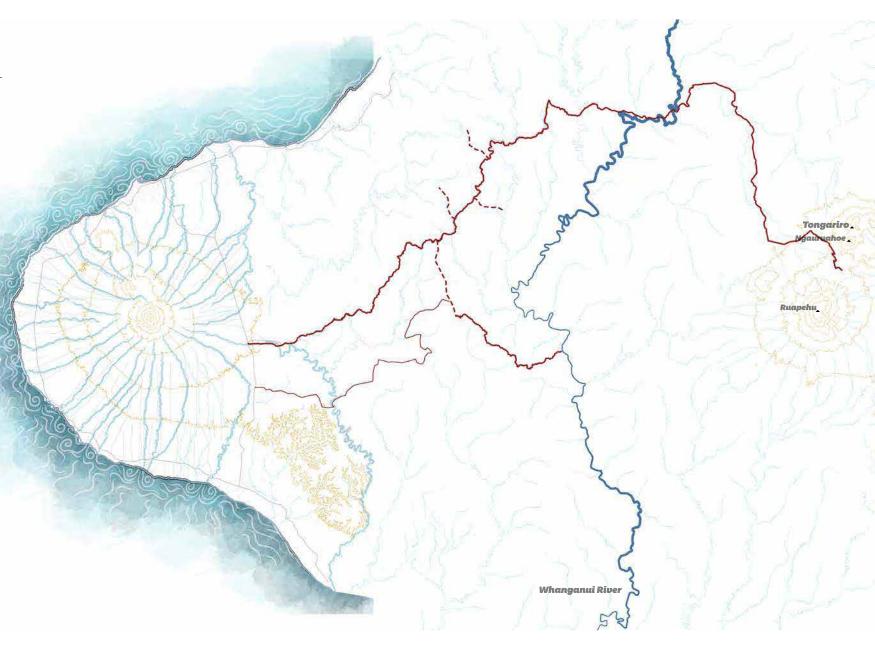




PROJECT 9: HISTORIC TRAILS

Historic trails along the Forgotten Highway provide a direct link to Taranaki's Journey from Tongariro, and the Matemateāonga Track provides a matching direct link to Taranaki's journey down the Whanganui River. Each provide options to present Māori and settler histories in ways that engage locals and visitors.

- Extending walking options along the Forgotten Highway so more time is spent travelling in the region and can increase bed nights and local economic activity
- Cycle and walking options that connect Whangamomona with the start of the Matemateāonga track can be incorporated to further support these connections.











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DRIVEN BY QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR CONNECTION WITH NATURE

PROJECT PARTNERS

INDUSTRY AND GOVERNMENT PARTNERS INCLUDE:





































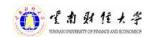


UNIVERSITY PARTNERS INCLUDE:

















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SELECTED RESEARCH PROJECTS 2014-2018



Vision for Avon-Otakaro

The AVON-OTAKARO offers an opportunity to reconnect ALL OF THE CITY to its natural heart and celebrate the river's entire ...

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Eden Project Aotearoa New Zealand 2017

http://www.designlab.ac.nz/wp-content/uploads /2017/10/Eden-Report-201708-DRAFT-highres.pdf https://youtu.be/tkbF7z62dgQ https://youtu.be/X611Qx4N7BM ...

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Punakaiki Living Lab

When people are asked what activities they do in public conservation lands they talk of walking, camping and sightseeing. Yet ...

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Kiwi Ranger

The Kiwi Ranger Programme was developed as an interactive programme for children at all ages, it was implemented across 16

lead More







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