



The proposed Cathedral Coast Walkway (CCW) will run from Whitianga’s Ferry Landing to the unique habitat of the Hot Water Beach sand dunes, showcasing some of New Zealand’s most outstanding natural beauty along the way. The objective is to develop this walk as far north and south on the Eastern Seaboard as possible promoting towns and villages along the way as places to stay and visit for more than a day.

The proposed Cathedral Coast Walk is the first part of our Coromandel Great Walks project which will eventually link the whole district through a variety of great walks around the coastline and across the spine of the Coromandel. It is envisaged that the project will take ten years to complete and will be conditional, as this first phase is, on external funding.



ABOUT THE PROJECT

This is a collaborative partnership with Thames-Coromandel District Council, Department of Conservation and mana whenua, Ngati Hei to maximise the economic, cultural, environmental and social potential of several existing coastal tracks along the Eastern Seaboard of the Coromandel by linking them together, improving facilities for the increasing number of visitors, promoting the history of the area and providing opportunities for businesses.

The project will also manage and mitigate the increase of visitor numbers on existing communities and the environment.

THE ROUTE

Stage 1A and 1B of the Cathedral Coast Walk is approximately 10km in length from the iconic "Blowhole," at Te Pupuha Recreation Reserve at Hahei through to the Purangi Estuary at Cooks Beach. It takes in Public Conservation Land (DOC), Council reserve and Stella Evered Trust land, which is a public/private memorial park. In essence three additional walks have been created to compliment the Cathedral Cove walk and ease pressure at Grange Road.

The map of the route for Stage 1A and 1B is complete along with survey and quantity surveying work Frame Group, which is one of the country's leading structural designers has finished its scope for six platforms and cantilevered structures to be placed along some of the most breath-taking viewing spots along the walk. The cost for these structures is approximately \$500,000.



COSTS

The total cost for the construction of the walk is \$4.77m. Our Council has ring-fenced \$1.25m in our 2014/2015 Annual Plan and DOC is contributing \$250,000, so an additional \$3.2m will need to be sourced externally.

Running in tandem to investigating the build of the walk has been working on how we fund and manage it. Giblin Group, a consultancy specialising in major project funding has been working with us on a revenue generation strategy. This includes scoping out government investment, sponsorships and grants which will help pay towards the walk. We are submitting an application to the Central Government Funding which opened in late November. Giblin Group is also looking at other avenues to apply for sponsorship and grants.

PARKING

The only private section of land being negotiated currently is at Lees Rd as we look in the long-term to provide additional car parking for anyone wanting to walk all or parts of the route. We haven't been in a position to give specific details on this publicly because we've been negotiating with landowners. The proposed car park at Lees Road will be essential to the success of the walk as it is centrally located within the proposed route and will help offset any further congestion problems around Hahei village and Grange Rd.

Meanwhile the old Waste Water Treatment Plant at Pa Road is going to be converted into a 130 space car park to help manage visitors to Cathedral Cove. Construction is expected to be complete before Christmas 2015 and will be a Pay and Display Park for the Park and Ride to Cathedral Cove.



PROJECT TEAM

The Coromandel Great Walks Project Governance Group is currently made up of TCDC staff, Department of Conservation staff, Ngati Hei iwi, Mayor Glenn Leach and Councillor Tony Fox as a member of Council's audit committee. A joint management agreement is currently being worked through, which will allow a Trust to be formed.

One of the next steps also is now finalising the names of a working group for Proposed Cathedral Coast Walkway to be made up of permanent Hahei residents, non-permanent residents, the Hahei Business Association and Coastal Walkways. This group will be the major forum through which the Hahei community and stakeholders can table views and issues and report back to the Project Governance Group.

Other organisations, agencies, community groups, iwi and landowners will be included in similar Working Groups as the project develops around the Coromandel.

To contact members of the Project Governance Group for the Proposed Cathedral Coast Walkways:

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PROJECT TIMELINE

2014

December - Council on behalf of the Project Team will submit an application to the Central Government for Lotteries funding which opened in late November.

December - A Hahei working group is to be formed, made up of permanent and absentee ratepayers, business association and Coastal Walkways to contribute feedback and input to the governance group.

November - Public meeting arranged to share with everyone where we're at with the Walks project and to discuss how to manage increasing visitor numbers and growth issues around Hahei and wider region long and short term.

September - Track route for Stage 1A and 1B from the Blowhole at Hahei through to the Purangi Estuary is completed.

June - Track route for Stage 1A and 1B from the Blowhole at Hahei through to the Purangi Estuary is defined by way of a full survey and quantity survey.

2013

November - A feasibility study and report on the Proposed Cathedral Cove Walkway is completed.

June - \$1.25m is ring fenced in the 2013/2014 Annual Plan to go toward the development of the Proposed Cathedral Coast walk. DOC pledges \$250,000. Both amounts are on the provision that external funding is also sourced.

2012

June - Money allocated in the 2013/2014 Annual Plan to go towards feasibility studies for the Coromandel Great Walks Project.

A Coromandel Great Walks Working Group established. This group is tasked with looking at viable options for some of the first walking tracks to be developed as part of the Great Walks project.

2007

An application to buy land on Lees road activated the Overseas Investment Office to approach DOC to investigate options for the development of a coastal walk that might link Cathedral Cove with a loop track through the Cathedral Cove Recreation Reserve which might also contribute to a coastal walk through to the Purangi. A route was mapped out and a budget prepared for consideration, this "fund", known as the Andlinger fund is held by the Department of Conservation. The proposed Cathedral Coast Walk links directly to this route first identified in 2007.

1990s onwards - A plan to link the existing coastal walks is discussed by the community championed by the Coromandel Peninsula Coastal Walkways Society.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

PARKING AND TRAFFIC ISSUES

Will the (proposed) carpark at Hahei (behind the Church) be a park and ride or pay and display?

A. The intention is to convert this land into a pay and display car park by December 2015 to manage in the short-term the increase in visitor numbers. We are currently working on the legal process of how this can be done.

Why is a carpark at Lees Road essential to the success of the walk? What research has been done to identify this is correct? Will Pay & Display be open all year around? What research has TCDC undertaken to confirm that such a facility would be utilised?

A. The Lees Road car park is considered important long-term due to its central location on the route and to provide additional access to the Cathedral Cove track via the Carter farm. The car park will further relieve Grange Road congestion. The pay and display is envisaged to be year round. The Miles report undertook research on additional parking. This document is available on the TCDC website www.tcdc.govt.nz/ccwalk

Can you explain the disconnect between Council saying the Lees Rd car park is essential to the walk, while the DOC draft management plan has a 6-year time plan for an opportunity to integrate any park and ride concessions and indicates Stella Evered as a parking area. Why don't these two processes match?

A. The future of the DOC car park at the top of Grange Road is currently being reviewed as part of the Integrated Management Plan. DOC are considering a number of possibilities including increased on site management, pay and display, drop off only with no parking, commercial opportunities and the possibility of the Great Walks Trust managing the car park. Any decision/s will align with the overall strategy to provide greater visitor management. More public consultation is to occur in the New Year. Short-term it may be TCDC takes over management of the car park until a possible "user pays," model is introduced (with space for disabled parking) along with a possible park and ride operation and shuttle service to Lees Rd. Longer term it could be trying to scale down parking at Grange Rd. All this is in discussion and has not been finalised.

Who will fund the required upgrade and sealing of Lees Road, and ongoing maintenance?

a) to the proposed carpark
b) and the Stella Evered car park option, and access, which is also proposed as a parking option.
A. TCDC has budgeted through the Ten Year Plan (TYP) \$600,000 to seal Lees Road to the proposed car park and \$400,000 to construct the car park, toilet block and kiosk. To date no discussions have taken place with the Trust that manages the Stella Evered reserve regarding the car park.

If parking is pay and display at a central location in Pa Road, how will this motivate visitors to not continue to park on Grange Road/Patricia Pl?

A. Signage will be put in place directing vehicles to the correct carpark. It is being proposed that the signs say "Cathedral Cove carpark."

Has any research been done on the impact the pay and display car-park system has had on businesses in Hot Water Beach?

A. No. However TCDC can investigate doing this work with support from the local businesses.

How will TCDC ensure timely road upgrading to standards required by projected traffic and public safety issues?

A. Roading maintenance is planned and undertaken annually. If urgent work is required due to public safety this would become a priority and approved by TCDC's Roading manager.

There are open water drains and no footpaths on Hahei Beach Road from Dawn Avenue down to the beach front. Will this be remedied?

A. There are no plans to do this work in the short term.

How will parking along Lees Road be managed (e.g. to avoid freedom camping)?

A. As part of the upgrade of Lees Road, the no parking bylaw will extend to the car park in the first instance. The bylaw and associated signage may be extended to the end of Lees Road if it is considered necessary for safety reasons.

What signage is proposed along Lees Road for public safety, for information and to manage traffic?

A. This will be discussed with the Working Group once it is formed so we can get their feedback, along with input from TCDC's Roading department.

With the Park and Ride only running over the summer, what additional options are Council proposing for the other summer public holidays and increased number of walkers on the shoulder season?

A. The planned pay and display car park will help mitigate parking problems. Meanwhile we're looking to keep the Park and Ride car park open more days of the year. We are also considering keeping it open all year round once the proposed Lees Rd car park is constructed.

What plan is there for a traffic management plan for Hahei village and the surrounding area?

A. Every year our contractors Boese undertakes a traffic management plan for Hahei around the park and ride and pay and display areas.

Has TCDC considered limiting access to Hahei to residents and permit holders only during peak season?

A. No. There has been no discussion or research into this.

Has TCDC considered a parking area with shuttle service from other locations such as Link Rd?

A. No. There has been no discussion on this.

What is the plan for tour buses? Will they be banned from parking on Grange Road?

A. All vehicles are banned from parking on Grange Rd. Options on how to manage tour buses at the Grange Rd car park will be part of DOC's Integrated Management Plan, with support from TCDC.

DOC has a lot of data around visitor numbers but not vehicle numbers. Has DOC secured any facts on monitoring of vehicles entering and exiting the Cathedral Coast carpark? If so what?

A. Last summer DOC Rangers did a vehicle count over peak times at the car park, which has 45 car parks. It found during these times there were between 120 - 200 vehicles in and around the car park at any one time.

What can council do to make the parking fines along Grange Rd more restrictive? If the fines are greater, it stands to reason that Council could afford more enforcement officers over the peak.

A. Parking fines are set by government legislation and Council has no way to change that. Over peak summer TCDC will have enforcement officers patrolling this area twice a day.

Congestion on Grange Road/Patricia Place/Cathedral Cove car park is making things increasingly difficult for the emergency services – what allowances are going to be made for this?

A. The park and ride and planned pay and display car park will take traffic away from Cathedral Cove car park.

THE TRACK

The indicated cost is supposedly around \$5m. What does this consist of and what is the cost of the individual walkways?

A. The project budget is \$4.77 million. The breakdown is (approximate): design, survey, quantity survey, legal, consultancy 8%. Product (construction) 81%. Marketing 2%. Management (staff, admin, Project Management) 9%.

Do you believe that the walk will extend from the Blowhole to Hot Water Beach within the next 3 years?

A. If an access agreement can be reached with private land owners within this time, then extending to Hot Water Beach is possible.

How much land involved in the walkway is owned by local iwi? Where do local iwi live?

A. The majority of land on the proposed route is public conservation (DOC) land. Some land will be transferred back to Ngati Hei iwi post Treaty settlement. This land is currently managed by DOC and TCDC. Ngati Hei are the tangata whenua of Mercury Bay and the guardians of much of the Eastern Seaboard of the Coromandel.

What is TCDC's vision of how to develop a coastal walkway of national significance in light of inadequate maintenance of existing tracks to be included, and in light of the fact that Lees Road is not on the coast at all?

A. A coastal walkway around the Coromandel is not possible due to terrain and accessibility. While the vision is to create significant walkways covering both coastal and inland tracks, it must be remembered that the Cathedral Coast Walk is predominately on existing tracks and other proposed walks will also be existing tracks that will be linked up. These will be upgraded and maintained to DOC track standards.

Will toilet facilities and concessions for food and drink be allowed at the Lees Rd car park?

A. A toilet facility is proposed for Lees Rd car park. It is not envisaged that a food concession will be issued as the car park is on private property.

What feasible emergency services access plans are in place for the blowhole area and further along the coast from Cathedral Cove?

A. In an emergency access over private property will be available. There will also be sufficient space for a helicopter landing. Access to the Cathedral Cove track via the proposed Lees Road car park on Carters Farm is to be upgraded as part of the plan for this area, this will provide quicker access for emergency vehicles.

Will the walkway along Lees Road be located within the existing public easement, but separate from the roadway (probably to be widened)?

A. Yes, access along Lees Rd is on road reserve utilising available side berms.

What happens at the Purangi estuary?

A. There are a number of options and individuals have presented ideas. How to get across the Purangi is still to be worked through.

How will dogs and bikes be managed?

A. This is a decision to be made by the Governance Group and perhaps the Trust. The starting point is no dogs or bikes. If that is the rule it will need to be enforced.

How will increased visitor rubbish be managed?

A. TCDC and when formed, the Trust will manage solid waste through existing contracts.

How are toilet facilities and rubbish removal for the blowhole walk going to be proposed?

A. At this stage it is not planned to have any rubbish bins on the Walk but at each entrance/ exit. Users are to be encouraged to carry their rubbish out. This is common practice on NZ walking tracks.

ROADING ISSUES

How will TCDC ensure that road upgrading and walkway development be coordinated?

A. Planned upgrades/maintenance to local roads in the Hahei area is in place. Any variation or additional work required will be dealt through TCDC's roading department.

How can Lees Road stakeholders most effectively be involved in the walkway development, and in further road upgrading efforts?

A. Lees Road residents are invited to have a representative on the Working Group to ensure their issues are tabled and discussed. TCDC has also budgeted through its Long Term Plan \$60,000 to seal Lees Rd to the proposed carpark.

How can upgrading/sealing of the remaining Lees Road portions be put on a definite and execution path?

A. Lees Rd is currently being dust sealed.

As part of the walkway project, does Council anticipate putting formed footpaths along the East end of Pa Rd to reduce the dangers of walking along a road with a number of hazardous blind spots?

A. The 2005 Community Plan specifically canvassed people on this issue and respondents did not want grass berms replaced with concrete footpaths or kerb and channelling. However this can be revisited when we construct the pay and display/park and ride car park. There is an annual footpath renewal budget, with priority set by the Community Board from feedback from communities.

ECONOMIC ISSUES

Neither the current walk to Cathedral Cove nor the walk to the Blowhole is one directional and with the multi walk options now proposed – can someone elaborate as to what shuttle programme will now be appropriate and what concerns (if any) that the proposal will no longer assist in minimising crowding issues?

A. The shuttle programme has yet to be discussed. Shuttle operators/stake holders will be consulted on best options.

What benefits will the walk offer to residents of Hahei already living there?

A. The Walks will generate greater visitor numbers, hopefully year round, who in turn bring disposable income. It is also up to the Hahei community to work with us to develop any opportunities. One forum to do this is through the Stakeholders Working Group.

Is there an opportunity for broadband to be approved within this area? Chorus isn't making any investment here yet.

A. We want to introduce interactive signage (QR codes and a Walkways mobile phone app) so we will be looking to work with all the Telcos and Chorus about upgrades and improvements to the Hahei region. Both Vodafone and Spark tell us there is reasonable coverage around Hahei right now but limited coverage at Cathedral Cove.

Will any revenue generated by the Walk reduce rates for Hahei residents?

A. No. Any revenue generated will be spent on maintenance and on-going development of the Walks project.

Will there be restrictions on further business development related to the walkway?

A. If the private sector choose to invest in Hahei, that is their choice. An alliance with commercial operators is essential to ensure visitors are informed about what to do and how to get there. Any process for setting up a business will have to go through and meet the appropriate consents.

Are there opportunities for bungy jumps or more dive operators? And will there be a limit on concessions/kayak tour operators out of Hahei?

A. There is no provision for bungy on the Walk. There's a limit of 5 concessions for Hahei, three at Hahei Beach Reserve and 2 at Wigmore Stream. Concessions are for three years and the current ones expire in 2017. A change to concession numbers can only happen through a change to the Reserve Management Plan for Hahei. (which requires public consultation).

Can additional restaurants or other food outlets be built on the walkway or near the current Cathedral Cove car park, Hahei Village or at the proposed Lees Rd car park?

A. Under the Operative and Proposed District Plan any activities associated with the walkway will be treated the same as any other activity in the District. A cafe associated with the walkway would be subject to all the same standards as any other cafe seeking to establish in or around Hahei.

How will tourist be informed that to do water based adventures to Cathedral Cove they need to drive into Hahei or for walking, go down Lee's Road? Will signage need to be installed on private property?

A. We will connect with commercial operators about appropriate signage. If private landowners want to have signage along their boundary then we are more than happy to discuss this too.

According to the Miles Report there are to be 51 to 103 FTEs in new jobs. How many FTEs are there currently in the TCDC economic area?

A. The most recent Infometrics data (2013) shows 11,358 FTE in the Coromandel. Approximately 26% of work on the Coromandel is related to the tourism industry. (the next highest percentage for employment is the healthcare industry on 10.5% <http://ecoprofile.infometrics.co.nz/Thames-Coromandel%2bDistrict/Employment>)

We have a severe shortage of rental accommodation in Hahei and the local area for FTEs, where are they going to live?

A. This project is Peninsula wide and the walk from Cathedral Cove is planned to go further north past Whitianga. There are 27 communities on the Coromandel where people can choose to live.

How will this walkway effect property values in Hahei? Especially in Pa Rd?

A. This is a question for a real estate consultant as there will be differing views on property prices for a variety of reasons.

GROWTH AND PLANNING ISSUES

What are the estimated numbers expected to walk the proposed blowhole track and what is this projection based on? What percentage of these might already walking the Cathedral Cove track? Now that the walkway is not as per the original feasibility study (recommending a one way walk), have projected numbers been reassessed and is this study now being ignored?

A. The original figures presented by Miles Media are still considered to be accurate despite the Walk not yet connecting to Hot Water Beach. As with all projects such as this assumptions must be made until accurate research is available.

Will the DOC Integrated Management Plan document be going to public consultation as it is an addendum to the CMS.

A. Because it is an addendum to the CMS it will be publicly consulted on. This is expected to happen in the first quarter of 2015.

What research will DOC be doing this year to support the Integrated Management Plan document recommendations?

A. DOC are carrying out satisfaction surveys with at least 200 respondents to ensure there is a robust measurement. A similar survey was undertaken in 2010.

Will DOC/TCDC be undertaking reliable research/surveys this year to ascertain if visitors are satisfied with the current Cathedral Cove experience and determine what visitors think is needed and will use?

A. Yes. DOC is already working on research and reporting for this summer to address increase visitors to Cathedral Cove, managing current use and improving visitor satisfaction.

To clarify the seasonal trend what are DOC's visitor numbers by month for the past 12 months or from your reporting year?

A. DOC's Cathedral Cove track counter system counted 113,149 return trips in 2012/13 and 133,645 return trips in 2013/14.

How does the Coromandel Great Walks project fit in with the Proposed District Plan (PDP)?

A. There are submissions to the PDP about the Great Walk including zoning of land, providing for activities to support the walk and public access. There is also provision in the Plan to take esplanade reserves on subdivision creating lots less than 4 ha adjoining the coast and rivers and the opportunity exists to negotiate esplanade reserve on subdivision creating lots greater than 4 ha adjoining the coast and rivers.

Can Council give an absolute assurance that green reserve areas will not be required to be converted to parking in the future?

A. No current green reserve areas are targeted for additional parking.

How will council mitigate the effects of a large number of walkers in front of established properties bounding the reserve? Should be a distinction between a reserve and a formed walkway?

A. Public by right have access to all Public Conservation and Council reserves.

What are Council's long-term plans for investment of infrastructure in Hahei?

A. In our Long Term Plan we are looking at investing in the planned park and ride/pay and display car park in the 2015-16 year. The LTP is out next year for public consultation and people will be able to make submissions on investment into infrastructure then.

Is there any concerns about the safety and wellbeing of visitors to the Cathedral Cove Beach and Walking track being compromised and what discussions if any have been held with local emergency services including Civil Defence(Tsunami)?

A. As part of DOC's statute, safety precautions on all Conservation Land is governed by the NZ Emergency Response Programme which can be viewed at www.ready.gov/business/implementation/emergency.

