

6.1 Awanui Cemetery

Description

Location:	96 Awanui Street, New Plymouth
Legal description:	Part Lot 1 DP 5612
Size:	12.33 hectares
Reserve status:	Subject to Reserves Act 1977. Held for the purpose of a cemetery within the meaning of the Burial and Cremations Act 1964.
Reserve classification:	Local purpose (cemetery) reserve



Physical description

The boundary of the cemetery land starts in the west along the Te Henui Stream, rises steeply to the large flat area which is the main burial ground of the cemetery, and then rises again east of the ring road on a medium to steep gradient to the eastern boundary, a ridge line in the immediate area.

The sloped bank from the Te Henui Stream to the main burial area is planted in semi mature exotic and native trees. The large flat area has a ring road around it; the area has been leveled by a bulldozer in 1985. Two additional roads have been added as the cemetery has neared capacity. The first additional road was constructed in 2001 and extended burials in the cemetery to the northeast. A second road installed in 2009 rises up the slope on the eastern side to a piece of level ground which is the most recent development at the cemetery.

The earliest burials are located at the southern end of the cemetery, within the ring road area closest to the entrance and operations building, at the southern end of the cemetery. A Returned Services Area is located in the southwest area of the cemetery,

outside of the ring road where the older burials are. This area includes a flag pole and a 'Lest We Forget' memorial wall. The first burial in this area occurred in December 1987, resultant from the Returned Service Area at Te Henui reaching capacity.

The eastern part of the cemetery slopes up to a ridge which is occupied by houses beyond the cemetery boundary. This eastern area has recently been developed for traditional burials on a flat, centrally located area and the slopes below are to be developed as the first natural burial area in the district.

Awanui Cemetery has been designed as a 'limited lawn' cemetery. This is a development in cemetery style after the monumental and following lawn cemetery styles. The limited lawn concept originated in the 1940s as a means of reducing maintenance requirements at cemeteries, by limiting the memorial area and having large areas of grass.



Tangata whenua interests

This reserve is of historic and cultural significance to Te Atiawa and Taranaki Iwi and to Ngati Te Whiti, Ngati Tuparikino, Ngati Tawhirikura and Nga Mahanga-a-Tairi hapu.

Land status and acquisition history

Lot 1 DP 5612 comprised of Part Sections 85 and 86 Grey District and Part Section 197 Fitzroy District Block V Paitutu Survey District, purchased by the New Plymouth District Council on 23 August 1945 from Walter Barry Bishop.

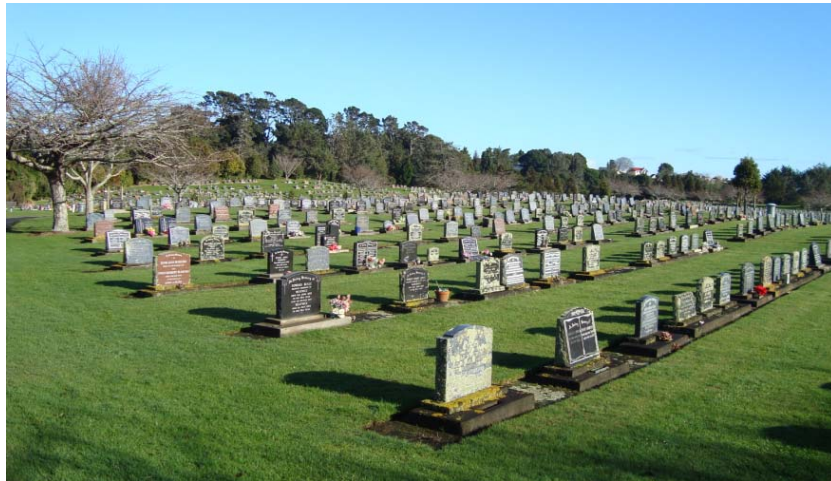
Over the period 1958-67, 24 residential properties were subdivided from the initial cemetery land, being the even numbered houses 42 to 88 Awanui Street.

A further part of the cemetery was deemed surplus and sold in 1991-2. These are the three residential sections adjacent to the cemetery entrance. Numbers 94 and 100 Awanui Street were sold in December 1991, with 90 Awanui Street sold in December 1992. In a gazette notice dated 13 October 1989 (Gazette issue 194), Helen Clark the Minister of Health pursuant to Section 21 (5) of the Burials and Cremations Act 1964, approved of the disposal of the three lots at Awanui Cemetery as not being required for cemetery purposes. Number 100 Awanui Street was originally set aside for the purpose of providing staff residence, which in May 1988 was declared not required, while numbers 90 and 94 held as cemetery, could not be used for burial purpose due to terrain.

The cemetery is currently not held subject to the Reserves Act 1977, and the Council proposes to declare this land as reserve, under this Act.

History and cultural values

Awanui Cemetery opened in 1958, the earliest burials in the cemetery are located within the ring road area nearest to the entrance gates. The cemetery was initiated due to Te Henui Cemetery reaching capacity. Te Henui Cemetery is quite close, being some 480m to the north and accessible along the Te Henui Walkway.



In 1985 the majority of available plots at Awanui were near to capacity. The option of recontouring the northern part of the cemetery, involving 16,000m³ of earthworks borrowed and relocated was promoted to expand the cemetery's capacity.

In 1986, plans to introduce areas for cremated remains were developed as Te Henui's capacity for ash interments were nearly complete.









Several different areas have been allocated within the cemetery for specific purposes, including a Returned Services Area, a Muslim Burial Area, Children’s Burial Area, Cremated Ashes Burial Area and the recent Natural Burials Area.

AWANUI CEMETERY

For further information please phone 06-759 6060
or search online at www.newplymouthnz.com



Key

-  Taps
-  Trees
-  Seats
-  Block Numbers
-  Stillborn Block Numbers
-  Memorial Plot Reference



Returned Services

A report to the Council in 1985, requested approval for a Returned Services area at Awanui Cemetery, with Te Henui’s Services area nearing capacity within a year. Space was then allocated at Awanui for 800 plots for burials and ashes, with commemorative plaques to be placed on the ground as opposed to upright headstones.



A War Memorial Monument was commissioned within the Returned Services area in 1989.

The Veterans Affairs is responsible for the provision and laying of headstones in this area and conduct annual inspections.

Muslim Burial Area

The cemetery although non denominational has had the recent addition of an Muslim burial area in the northern part of the cemetery. This burial area was resolved by the Council on 7 August 2000, following a request from the Taranaki Muslim Association for a dedicated burial area. This area is exclusively set aside for Muslim burials, involving a different practice for burials that requires approval from the Taranaki Muslim Association before a burial can occur in the area.

The Taranaki Muslim association providing clear instructions to the Council as to any specific burial requirements including the grave orientation for these plots is facing toward Kaba (Mecca).

Cremated ashes area

Cremated ashes have had plots allocated along the perimeter of the flat area of the cemetery.

A landscape upgrade was organised along the garden borders to the rear of the ash interment strips from 26 August 2002 for two months. This resulted in the removal of floral tributes, glass jars and some plantings that had accumulated over several years and posed safety risks to staff maintaining the cemetery. It also involved the installation of flower holders for each memorial plaque and a replanting with colourful shrubs and ground covers. This project drew ire from some related to those buried at Awanui, a petition containing 35 signatures opposing the project was received. However there was also positive feedback to the work being undertaken.

Children's Burial Area

In 1970 the Council decided to set apart an area for the burial of children known as the Children's Area. This area is for children under the age of nine years and is located in the northwest corner of the cemetery. The age restriction corresponds to the size of the plot provided for in this area.

Existing improvements

Numerous improvements have been added to Awanui Cemetery over its 60 years of existence, including an operations shed near the cemetery entrance with attached public toilet, 10 rubbish bins, 14 water taps, five seats, four major signs, a flag pole and markers at the start and end of each row.

Management and administration

Awanui Cemetery is managed by the Council.

New development area

The upper slopes of the cemetery along the northeast boundary had been grazed by horses belonging to the New Plymouth Group Riding for the Disabled. In 2008, after 12 years of leasing the land, the grazing was terminated with the development of the area.



The extension to Awanui Cemetery was approved by the Council on 27 May 2008. The extension envisages a further five years of use from the cemetery for burials.

As Awanui, being New Plymouth's main cemetery nears capacity, the initiation for the development of a new district cemetery in being progressed in 2010.

Natural Burial Area

A new development of a natural burial area on the slopes above the ring road is anticipated to open to the public early in 2011. This is a new concept for public cemeteries and enables the use of sloping land that otherwise would be unusable for traditional limited lawn burials.

Following the Council resolution on the 31 August 2010, this management plan will consider the options of memorialisation for the natural burial area at Awanui Cemetery.

Management objectives and specific policies

- This cemetery is managed as an open cemetery and includes part of the Te Henui Walkway in the western portion of the cemetery. The ongoing use of the western portion of the cemetery reserve for walkway purposes is anticipated.
- The sloped ground between the Te Henui Walkway and the burial part of the cemetery will continue to be maintained in a mixture of exotic and indigenous vegetation.
- Markers are to be installed to identify the differing blocks in the cemetery. Blocks are a collection of burial plot rows, identified into a rectangular grouping. The markers will assist with the locating of plots.
- Development of a new cremated ash plots including concrete path access is to be undertaken for the sloped turf area behind Blocks 14 and 15.
- Development of the children's area in the northwest part of the cemetery is to be undertaken, with garden planting and seats.
- Use of eastern slope area to be developed for natural burials
- The cemetery is non denominational except for the designated Muslim Burial area.
- Installation of additional seating to be investigated, including consideration of more seating around the road edge.
- Touch screen kiosk linked to the Council website is proposed to be installed on site near maintenance building near entrance at a cost of some \$9,000.
- Those wanting a memorial for interments in the natural burial area, have the option of installing a plaque on a cremated ashes plot at their cost.