



GREAT LAKE TAUPŌ

Taupō District Council

POLICY FOR ASSESSING COMMEMORATIVE MEMORIAL APPLICATIONS ADOPTED NOVEMBER 2014

1.0 BACKGROUND

The Council receives regular requests from the public to use public reserve land to commemorate departed family members or friends, or receive ashes or placentas. The types of requests received include:

- Erection of plaques/monuments/furniture
- To plant a tree (sometimes including a plaque)
- Spreading of ashes
- Burial of placentas

Commemorative memorials are requested by community members to celebrate the lasting legacy of deaths, births, special events and associations between people and places. They can also help the revegetation and enhancement of our parks and reserves throughout the district. However this needs to be balanced with the values of the wider public and the personal and cultural sensitivities surrounding this issue. The Council also faces other issues in relation to commemorative requests including:

- There is potential for proliferation of furniture, plaques and monuments on reserve land
- On-going maintenance is often not carried out by the original applicant and can be costly for Council to continue
- It is difficult to guarantee that monuments/plaques/furniture and trees will remain in place in perpetuity on public land
- The majority of the requests are for furniture along the edge of Lake Taupō. There is a limit to the availability of suitable sites on the number of seats that is needed. Erosion can also be a risk to the permanence of memorials in this area.
- Some members of the community feel that commemorative memorials “individualise” public land and give some community members a higher claim to the space than others.
- Requests may be highly emotional for the applicant, making it very difficult for staff to decline.

2.0 APPLICATION

This Policy applies to Council park and reserve land, with the exception of the Council Cemeteries which are covered by the Cemeteries Bylaw.

3.0 OBJECTIVE

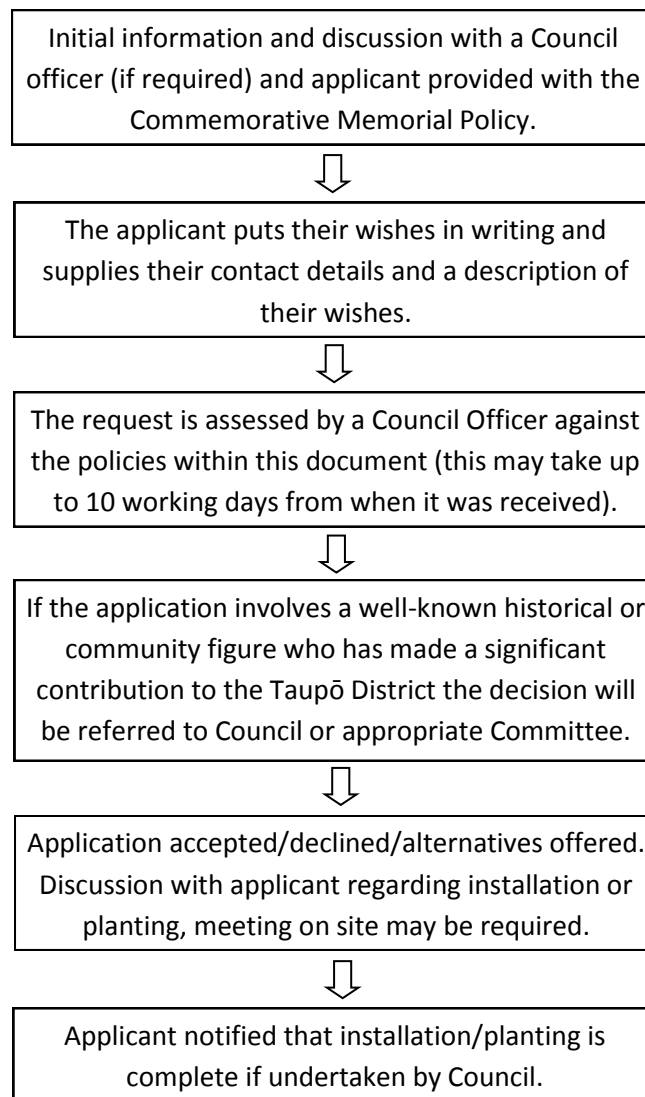
The primary aim of this Policy is to direct the approval, placement, management of commemorative memorials in Taupō Districts parks and reserves where they are consistent with wider public and cultural values. The objective of this Policy is therefore:

To allow for commemorative memorials in the District's parks and reserves where they are complimentary to the environment and the reserve's Asset Management Plan, while not compromising cultural values or "individualising" public spaces.

This Policy aims to provide a consistent approach to these requests.

4.0 APPLICATION PROCESS FOR COMMEMORATIVE MEMORIALS

To ensure the consistent application of this Policy, the following process will be used for requests for commemorative trees and furniture:



5.0 POLICIES

5.1 Furniture

- i. Financial contributions/donations will be accepted for park and reserve furniture.
- ii. The location of furniture will be at the discretion of Council Officers and will generally be replacement of an existing piece of furniture or where there has been an identified need.
- iii. The design of the furniture will be in keeping with the Reserve Asset Management Plan or at the discretion of the Council.
- iv. Furniture which has been donated or received a contributed from an applicant will remain the property of the Taupō District Council.
- v. If furniture which has been donated or received a contribution from an applicant is damaged, vandalised or reaches the end of its useful life then its repair or replacement will be at the discretion of the Taupō District Council.
- vi. If the applicant donates an amount which does not cover the full cost of a piece of furniture the Council reserves the right to wait for sufficient funding to be received before installation.

5.2 Plaques

- i. Plaques will not be permitted on Taupō District Council parks or reserve land except in exceptional circumstances and where there is a recognised community benefit and is in keeping with cultural values.

5.3 Memorials

- i. Applications for memorials (any structure other than park furniture) on Taupō District Council parks or reserve land will be assessed by the Council or appropriate committee and will generally only be accepted if:
 - a. The memorial recognises an important community member or event
 - b. The memorial is in keeping with the purpose and environmental and landscape amenity values of the park or reserve
 - c. The memorial is in keeping with cultural values.

Explanation: Many people have made varying contributions to the Taupō community. It is not possible, or appropriate to commemorate all those that have made a contribution on park and reserve land. A balance needs to be met between ensuring the purpose of park and reserve land is maintained while finding appropriate ways to recognise those who have made a significant contribution to the community.

Hint: The Taupō Sculpture Trust accepts endowments towards sculptures. You can contact them via their website at www.tauposculpturetrust.co.nz.

5.4 Commemorative Trees

- i. Applicants can donate or purchase an approved tree (as per the Tree and Vegetation Policy) to be planted in pre-selected areas.
- ii. Areas selected for planting may vary from year to year.
- iii. Applicants will be required to meet with a Taupō District Council staff member to carry out the planting.
- iv. Depending on the number of requests a specified day may be set annually to carry out planting.
- v. If the commemorative tree dies, is damaged or vandalised its replacement will be at the discretion of the Taupō District Council.
- vi. A commemorative tree remains the property of the Taupō District Council.
- vii. The Council will not keep records identifying who sponsored specific trees.

5.5 Burial of Placentas

- i. The burial of placentas will not be permitted on Taupō District Council parks or reserves.

Hint: If you want to bury a placenta but are worried you might move property and therefore not be able to visit its location in the future then how about buying a pot and tree? You can bury your placenta in the pot, plant the tree on top and keep it in your garden. If you move properties you can take it with you.

Explanation: The Council cannot guarantee that the site where a placenta is buried will not be disturbed by gardening equipment, park maintenance machinery or animals. There are also cultural sensitivities around burial of placentas on public land.

5.6 Spreading of ashes

- i. Burial of ashes will only be permitted in a Taupō District Cemetery ash interment or burial plot, or at the base of an approved commemorative tree.

Explanation: Gardens in the Taupō District have been a popular place for spreading ashes. However the concentration of some compounds in ashes can have a harmful affect on plants. It can also be unpleasant for staff working in gardens. There are also cultural sensitivities around spreading of ashes on public land.

Informative note – Scattering ashes in the Lake:

Lake Taupō is not within Taupō District Council's jurisdiction. The Tuwharetoa Maori Trust Board is the governing body of the lake so all matters should be directed to the Board. However it should be noted that the water of the lake has cultural and spiritual significance to Tangata Whenua. One of the core values is the life giving properties of water. This value is compromised when human remains are deposited within it.

6.0 CONCLUSION

The issue of commemorative memorials on public land is a sensitive one. This Policy attempts to seek a balance by allowing some types of commemorative memorials where they will not compromise the values held by the public or cultural values held by Tangata Whenua. The Policy also seeks to ensure that management and maintenance of commemorative memorials does not create a burden on ratepayers.

To make an application for a commemorative memorial you can contact the Taupō District Council Parks Asset Manager.