

RAPIDS JET (2004) LIMITED

Environmental Impact Assessment TO LEASE PART OF ARATIATIA RAPIDS RECREATION RESERVE



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Aratiatia Rapids Recreation Reserve is located on a river terrace. The vegetation is predominantly grass. In 1993 12,000 native plants were planted. There is also 20 hectares of Douglas Fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) planted.

There are a number of plant pests including pines, Lupin, broom, gorse and Himalayan Honeysuckle. Animal pests include rabbits, hares and possums.

Nga Awa Purua Road is sealed and runs through the reserve. It provides access to the Nga Awa Purua geothermal power station which is a joint venture between Mercury Energy and Tauhara North No.2 Trust.

The reserve provides access to the Waikato River for fishing and kayaking.

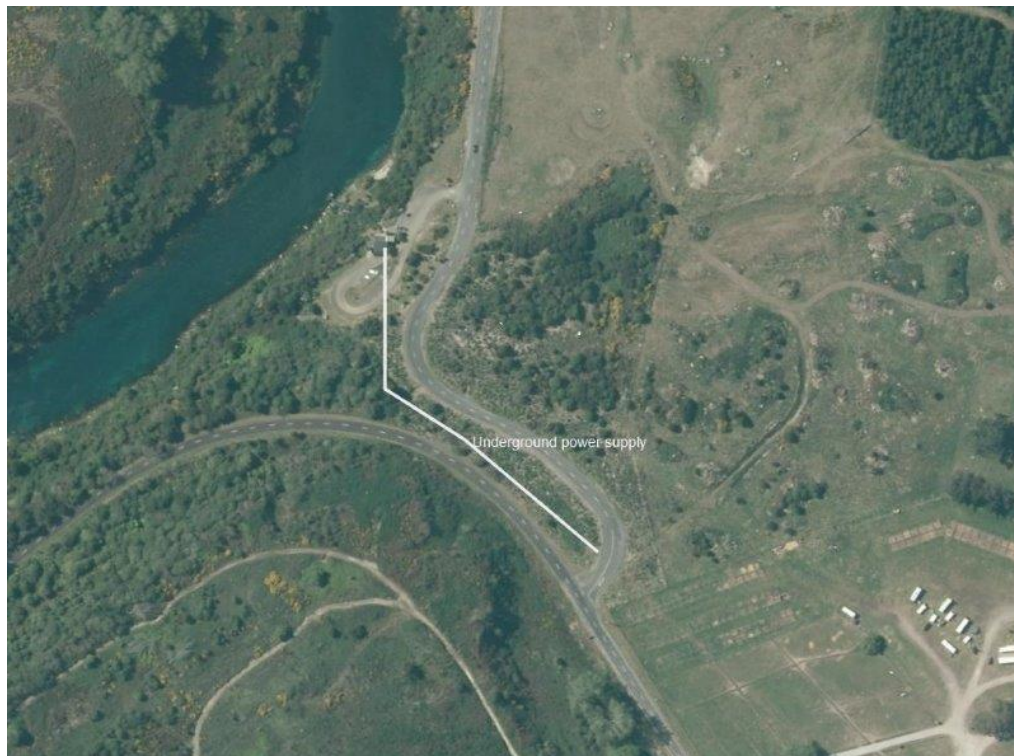
The Fiber Fresh National Equestrian Centre is located adjacent to the reserve. The Centre leases 39 hectares of the reserve to graze horses and locate jumps.

3.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE CONCESSION

The primary purpose of the concession is to lease 1 hectare of the Aratiatia Rapids Recreation Reserve to locate visitor facilities associated with a jet boat operation. The jet boat operation occurs off public conservation land on the Waikato River.

The current visitor facilities are;

- Gravel driveway and carpark.
- 141 m² visitor centre and deck.
- 31 m² fully contained 4-pan toilet block (all effluent is contained, pumped out and removed off site).
- 50 metre walking track from visitor centre to Waikato River.
- Underground power supply and phone line.



Location of underpower cable in proposed lease area

Note – the jetty used to load and unload passengers from the jet boats is located off public conservation land and is operated under a permit issued by the Waikato Regional Council.

In addition, it is proposed to;

- Install a 20 m² extension to the visitor centre to provide an office work space.
- Install a building for safe and secure boat and equipment storage. This shed will be located at the rear of the site to minimise any visual impact and will be 12 metres wide by 12 metres long (144 m²).
- Install a sign on the corner of Aratiatia and Nga Awa Purua Roads.
- Seal the driveway and carpark.



Proposed extension to the visitor centre



Proposed location of the new boat storage shed

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Location on public conservation land	Special feature or value	Potential effects of your activity on the feature or value (positive or adverse)	Methods to remedy, mitigate or avoid any adverse effects identified
Aratiatia Rapids Scenic Reserve	Native vegetation	Damage caused by walking on vegetation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Keep strictly on the formed track ➤ Avoid areas of sensitive vegetation
		Removal of vegetation to locate the storage shed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Locate the building to minimise the removal any mature vegetation
	Plant pests	Positive effect of controlling plant pests on the lease area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Weed spraying ➤ Physical control
	Animal pests	Positive effect of controlling pests on lease area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ongoing control programme
	Visual impact	Buildings impact on the natural environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use natural materials where possible ➤ Take advice from DOC staff on suitable colour schemes for buildings ➤ Locate storage shed at back of site and amongst existing vegetation
	Historic Values	Damage to historic sites including wahi tapu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Stay on existing paths ➤ Ensure that any interpretation is consistent with local values

	Cultural Values	Incorrect stories or history given about the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Undertake further training with Ngati Tuwharetoa ➤ Ensure that any interpretation is consistent with iwi values ➤ Educate clients and staff to respect cultural values and traditions
	Noise	Increased noise of vehicles and visitors on the reserve.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Educate staff and clients on the need for respect for other visitors and their quiet enjoyment of the area.
	Rubbish	Rubbish could be generated by staff and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All rubbish to removed and disposed of in an environmentally friendly manner outside of the park ➤ Encourage staff and clients to reuse and recycle ➤ Educate staff and clients on the Environmental Care Code
	Illegal activities	Monitor behaviour of other users including those dumping rubbish and camping illegally.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The presence of Rapids Jet on the reserve reduces the incidence of illegal activities ➤ If required, illegal activities are reported to DOC staff or police
	Toilets	Discharge to the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Use fully contained toilet system ➤ Remove waste from site and dispose at an approved sewerage treatment plant
	Fuel storage	Spillage onto the ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Only fuel required for daily use is kept onsite. No bulk fuel. ➤ Provide industry approved fuel containers ➤ Train staff in the correct methods for fuel transfer ➤ Provide fuel spill kits and train staff in their use

5.0 Summary

- The purpose of this concession is to lease 1 hectare of Aratiatia Rapids Scenic Reserve.
- Visitor facilities are currently located on the site.
- A 20 m² extension will be added to the existing visitor centre.
- A new storage shed will be constructed. This will involve minor vegetation removal and earthworks.
- A sign will be installed.
- The driveway and carpark will be sealed.
- The actual and potential effects of the proposal on the immediate and surrounding environment have been assessed as being no more than minor.
- The proposal is consistent with the Tongariro Taupo Conservation Management Strategy.