



Punangairi (Visitor Centre) looking toward southern car park. Source: Ngati Waewae and Department of Conservation

Seeking feedback on paid parking at Dolomite Point

The Department of Conservation is extending and improving car parking at Dolomite Point. We are seeking feedback on piloting paid car parking.

Introduction

The Department of Conservation (DOC) is piloting paid carparking at the northern and southern Dolomite Point car parks. We expect the pilot to run from October 2025 for nine months.

This is part of a pilot at three popular sites to help manage visitor numbers. Dolomite Point is one of New Zealand's most popular tourism sites. In 2018, approximately 500,000 people visited the Pancake Rocks walkway. Numbers dropped significantly during COVID but are now recovering towards pre-COVID levels. By paying for parking, visitors give back to the places they enjoy, helping create a more regenerative model to sustain New Zealand's precious biodiversity. This approach is already used at popular national parks and tourism sites in other countries.

The paid parking pilot at Dolomite Point includes two car parks, one north and one south of the visitor precinct. We will also extend and upgrade the southern car park. When complete there will be approximately 152 total car parks available.

The car parks provide access to the Pancake Rocks that attract visitors to Punakaiki.



Department of
Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

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o Aotearoa**
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Paid parking hardware

Introducing paid parking requires designing and installing specialist equipment to collect payments and monitor use. We have sought proposals from suppliers to design and install these. We expect to confirm a provider by August 2025.

Pricing

We will set pricing based on market research, data analysis and a pricing strategy. We are developing our pricing strategy and expect to share with the local community for feedback in August 2025. It will consider what is a reasonable rate, when rates apply and who rates apply to, including:

- A free parking period for vehicles making drop offs/pick-ups or short stays including post office box collection or picking up a take-away coffee.
- Fee structure options including hourly rates, fixed length of stay rates, daily rates and multi-day rates.
- Options for charging based on vehicle category that includes buses and motorbikes.
- When the pricing should be in effect, including off peak pricing options and time of day options.
- How to accommodate local use.

Southern car park improvements

As well as piloting paid parking, we will be extending and improving the southern car park. Improvements include: a sealed parking surface, marked car parking spaces, improving accessibility by re-levelling an existing steep section and increasing the number of car parks.,

We are planning the procurement of a contractor to complete car park construction. Timing will be dependent on seasonal weather conditions and minimising construction impacts during the peak visitor season.

Timeline

Action	Date
Initial stakeholder engagement	May / June
Draft pricing strategy	July
Share car park pricing structure with stakeholders	August
Stakeholders provide feedback	August
Finalise Dolomite Point paid car park pricing and advise stakeholders	September
Implementation of paid parking	October 2025
Seek stakeholder feedback during paid parking pilot	Time to be confirmed
Assessment of pilot and decision to introduce paid parking services at other DOC sites and continue paid parking at Dolomite Point	July 2026

Tell us what you think before 19 June 2025

We are seeking feedback from stakeholders on our approach to the pilot to inform decisions about introducing paid parking at other popular DOC sites and extending the pilot.

If you would like to provide any feedback, please contact the project team at paidcarparking@doc.govt.nz or call 0800 ASK DOC (0800 275 362).