



Part one Introducing the Plan and the Reserves

1.1 The purpose of this plan

This management plan has been prepared by Gisborne District Council to provide guidance for the administration and management of Rere Falls Reserve and Rere Rockslide Reserve, Rere, Gisborne.

The purpose of a management plan (Reserves Act 1977) is to provide a strategic framework for the management of reserves. This plan recommends a management aim and access and recreation policies, as well as goals to enhance the riverside environment through planting and, where possible, river management.

It should be noted that this management plan expresses Council policies. Funding of Council activities is directed through the Long Term Council Community Plan (LTCCP) and Annual Plans. Implementing policies in this management plan is subject to funding allocations in the LTCCP and Annual Plan process.

1.2 Rere

Rere is a small hill country settlement, which is part of the larger Ngatapa district. Rere is 45 km north-west of Gisborne; or approximately 40 minutes drive. These days there is a primary school, productive farming land and two Council reserves adjoining the Wharekopae River. In the past, Rere also had a community hall and store.

Rere Falls and Rere Rockslide Reserves are located 2 km apart along Wharekopae Road. Both reserves adjoin the Wharekopae River. Rere Falls has been known as Wharekopae Falls, after the river. Large numbers of local and international visitors come to the reserves each year to see the waterfall and the natural rockslide.

1.3 Location Map – Rere



1.4 Brief History of Rere

The Falls were the site of a small hydro electric power station which supplied power for lights etc. to the local hall and farming community. The intake and the concrete generator base are still visible. A local farm manager was killed while servicing the equipment in the 1920s. The unit was removed when mains power came to Rere in 1948.

Rere, as a district, had its first registered land deed in 1875 when a Maori family legally claimed ownership of a large area of land which stretched from Ngatapa to Rere and Wharekopae. In 1885 the Williamson family purchased a large block of land from the Maori family known as Okahuatui No. 1 block. Other settlers began to move in to the Rere and Wharekopae districts to settle and, by 1884, a small area by the Rere Falls was settled. The coach from Gisborne travelled as far as the settlement at Rere Falls. Passengers who travelled further had to go by horse – as the road finished at the Falls.

Life in the early 20th century was very harsh with bush to be cleared and tracks and roads often impassable in winter. Wool was packed into small bales to be transported on horseback to Gisborne. Fat lambs had to be driven on foot to the works in Gisborne.

The area is well known for the battles which occurred after the troubles of Poverty Bay and during Te Kooti's retreat to the Ureweras (Information provided by C Matthews, 2009).

It took several days to reach Gisborne by horse and buggy. A big improvement in the life of district was the opening in 1906 of the Rere bridge.



*Mrs P. J. Roberts, an early settler to Rere, opening the first Rere bridge in 1906.
Photo taken by W. F. Crawford, and supplied by Tairāwhiti Museum.*

In 1905 Mr O'Brian opened a store in Rere. Sometime shortly after Mr S G Glennie took over the running of the business. At this time Maori shearing gangs used to travel from the Ureweras to work in the woolsheds of Poverty Bay, and adjoining hill country farms. On their return they would stop at the Rere Store and spend their wages¹.

The Rere Hall was built in the early 1900's and by 1914 it was a classroom, and provided the first school for the Rere area. At that time it had a modest roll of nine pupils. A purpose built school was later built, and opened in 1925.

During the lifetime of the hall it was used for all sorts of community gatherings, indoor sports, functions and cabarets. When local mothers recognised the need to provide for pre-schoolers the hall was set up as a Playcentre. However, by 1982 the hall had fallen into disrepair. In 1982 the local Council and the Rere settlers agreed the hall should be demolished. To this day the location of the first and only Rere Hall is shown by the remaining concrete steps.

¹ Excerpt from The Gisborne Herald Weekend Extra, 10/03/1989

1.5 Introducing Rere Falls Reserve

Rere Falls Reserve provides access to Wharekopae River and the well-known Rere Falls. There is plenty of open space here for picnicking, swimming, and enjoying the picturesque surroundings of Rere Falls and the natural character of the rural environment. The Rere Falls is popular visitor destination, especially over the summer months.

The entrance to the reserve encapsulates the rural setting; a narrow driveway crosses a cattle stop and then winds down a small hill, large trees on one-side, to an area near the foot of the water fall.

Near the foot of the falls there is a set of swings, and a picnic area with tables and bins. Further to the south there are more large trees and open space for informal recreation, and extra car parking during busy periods. Public toilets are located at the top of the hill, near the entranceway to the reserve. The facilities at this reserve are generally tired and need upgrading.

On the western side of the River is another large reserve area, this includes a small, stock paddock. Access to the stock paddock is available from Wharekopae Road. Access to the remaining reserve is available from a public road that runs along the western boundary (at the moment this appears as a private driveway). These areas adjoin the Wharekopae River and offer lovely views of the Rere Falls. Access to the foot of the waterfall can be provided with the development of steps.



*Rere Falls - Photo taken by Mr William Crawford in the early 1900s
(storage sheds and the original bridge are visible in the background)*

Rere Falls Reserve – Aerial Plan



1.6 Introducing Rere Rockslide Reserve

Rere Rockslide Reserve is a reasonably large reserve (approximately 1.5 hectares) on gentle rolling countryside located between the Wharekopae River and Wharekopae Road. Steep hill country and Makaretu Reserve (administered by the Department of Conservation) provide a pleasant backdrop.

The rockslide is a natural feature of Wharekopae River. Over thousands of years water has worn a smooth rock-face to create a 60m long waterslide, ending in a large swimming hole. This activity has elements of risk and adventure, which appeals to a number of visitors.

Some facilities, such as carparking, signage, picnic facilities and a public toilet are provided. The car parking area provides for approximately 20 cars. A further area along side is leased from the adjoining neighbour to provide additional car parking over summer months. The terrain places limitations on the area available for car parking. Car parking is a concern especially over the summer holiday period where there can be hundreds of visitors. If vehicles cannot find parking within the reserve they park along side the road. This creates risk to visitors and drivers alike. Other facilities at this reserve include picnic tables and public toilet. These facilities require upgrading to meet visitor expectations.





"It's one thing to slide down a grassy hill on a piece of cardboard (remember that as a kid?), whooping with excitement as your corrugated ride gathers bouncing momentum. But it's another to slide at high speed down 60 metres of rock. However, this isn't just any rock face — it's not a craggy shard of menacing dimensions that should be left to abseilers. Rather, it's a wild ride made smooth by a coating of constantly running water. Located approximately 50 kilometres from Gisborne on the Wharekopae Road — heading toward Eastwoodhill Arboretum — this natural rock slide is a part of the Wharekopae River. Most age groups could give this rock slide a go, however, a little care is suggested. So is using a boogie board, inflatable mattress or inner tube to replace the traditional cardboard vehicle. Just one word of warning — don't mistake the Rere Falls for the rock slide! It may look like a gush of water that begs conquering, but these falls are better captured via photography. You'll also find a great swimming holes and picnic area here. And if Rere Waterfall remains too compelling to ignore, you could always try walking around its cascading curtain to slide from the rocks behind into the water below".

(AA website – Top 101 Things to do in New Zealand)

1.7 Legal Description of Reserve Land

Reserve Name	Area	Certificate of Title	Legal Description	Status	Background
Rere Falls Reserve	2.1296 ha	GS5C/372	Section 5 & 6 Block XII Ngatapa Survey.	Recreation Reserve	Waikohu County Borough declared the reserve to be for the purposes of recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, gazetted on 31 January 1980.
Rere Falls Reserve	1899 square metres	GS5C/346 (proclamation 1151)	Part Lot 2 DP 1128.	Recreation Reserve	Declared as recreation reserve on
Rere Rockslide Reserve	1.5780 ha		Section 1 SO 8920.	Local Purpose (esplanade) Reserve	Pursuant to section 116(1) of the Public Works Act 1981 declared this portion of road to be stopped which, pursuant to section 345(3) of the Local Government Act 1974, shall become esplanade reserve vested in the Gisborne District Council. This declaration occurred on 6 April 2000.