

BUILDINGS, SHELTERS AND TOILETS

The importance of buildings, shelters and toilets

Built structures within our parks provide a range of amenities which support accessibility, comfort, education and enjoyment. The design and placement of these structures is critical, as these elements have a visual impact on the environment and can get in the way of an activity successfully taking place. Ensuring that built elements are sensitive to the surrounding landscape is also a key outcome. The implications of built forms, scale, materiality and choice of location can all impact on the green, open characteristics which define our parks. The development of these buildings should provide a positive contribution to parks, adding to the character, identity and heritage of a space while meeting the functional requirements of a diverse range of users.

Designing buildings, shelters and toilets

Ensure they are in a good location by:

- considering the location in the context of the whole park
- considering how an area can accommodate an increase in use and supporting infrastructure such as paths, vehicle access and parking. Buildings can increase the pedestrian and vehicular traffic in an area, placing a strain on sensitive environments and movement networks
- locating buildings into the landscape and avoiding locations on ridgelines, in order to minimize negative visual impacts
- combining or clustering structures as much as possible, to minimize the overall visual impact
- locating buildings, shelters and toilets against a backdrop of vegetation and low foreground vegetation to lessen the visual impact
- Locating buildings close to high activity areas, to encourage passive surveillance and optimise use
- ensuring safe and legible access to and from key destination buildings
- understanding how and when the public will use the building to ensure adequate transport alternatives or the necessary parking spaces are provided
- Consider the appropriateness of siting buildings on or near heritage or cultural features

Get the right built form by:

- ensuring the building responds to the particular park history, culture, landscape and local community
- using materials and forms that aid in interpretation
- carefully considering the cladding of buildings in relation to its integration with the surrounding environment and its resistance to graffiti
- identifying the range of user groups and their particular needs and requirements. Design multi-use buildings and structures where possible, to ensure the greatest possible use and maximize the sense of community ownership
- incorporating flexibility into the building design so that it meets a range of current or future needs
- designing buildings to be universally accessible to people of all ages and physical abilities
- directing views from buildings, shelters and toilet entrances out towards the landscape, to reinforce important vistas and view shafts
- providing minimum basic facilities including soap, toilet seats and hand dryers in all public toilets to support healthy communities

Achieve sustainable building design by:

- incorporating energy efficient design principles, using energy efficient lights, solar power and renewable materials
- using site generated power where possible and allowing for this within the budget (e.g. incorporating the cost of solar panels)
- incorporating sustainable water use features, such as low flush toilets, low volume shower heads, on-demand washbasin taps and bore or tank water outside of urban areas
- collecting rainwater for toilet flushing or irrigation
- incorporating green or living roofs for stormwater detention and filtration
- providing outdoor areas of shade and shelter

Ensure buildings are well maintained and managed by:

- enabling regular maintenance to be undertaken with ease, including easy access for service vehicles
- choosing construction materials that can be easily transported to the site
- using robust materials and strategies to deter vandalism
- incorporating non-solid surfaces to deter vandalism and add aesthetic value to buildings
- ensuring all built elements, materials and facilities can be serviced by New Zealand based contractors

Technical standards

- NZS:3604 2011 Timber-framed Buildings Standard and Handbook Set

Other resources

- Auckland Regional Council Muriwai Design Guide

Good practice examples

Scandrett Regional Park



Stonefields Park, Mt. Wellington

This toilet facility uses natural timber cladding to complement the surrounding landscape, and a living roof enables stormwater retention and filtration.



Auckland Botanic Gardens, The Gardens



Helensville Town Centre, Helensville



Sanders Reserve, Paremoremo

This building incorporates a large outdoor pavilion providing shade and an all weather outdoor gathering space.



AUT Campus Marae, Auckland Central

