



Whakatāne Museum and Arts Collection Policy

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whakatane.govt.nz

1 INTRODUCTION

Whakatāne Museum and Arts (known as the Museum) is the guardian of cultural, natural and social heritage, primarily focusing on the Eastern Bay of Plenty. This Collection Policy provides guidelines for the responsible care, management and enhancement of, and access to, the collections held by the Museum and its role as an arts, culture, and heritage kaitiaki (guardian).

Since its origins in the 1930s, Whakatane Museum has developed a diverse, extensive and important collection relating to arts, culture, and heritage in the Eastern Bay of Plenty. Over the decades objects, archives and items of literary and artistic importance have been gathered for the Museum and conserved, studied, exhibited and shared. The well-regarded treasures within our collection include archaeological materials, Taonga Maori, colonial objects, items representing social history, photographs, rare books, newspapers, furnishings, industrial machinery/tools, government archives, and fine art.

Whakatāne Museum is the kaitiaki of a significant taonga Maori collection. Iwi in the District include Ngāti Awa, Ngai Tūhoe, Ngāti Whare, Ngāti Manawa, Ngāti Rangitihi, Ngāti Tūwharetoa ki Kawerau, and Ūpokorehe hapū. The Museum strives to work closely with iwi to develop partnerships that contribute to a greater understanding and sharing of knowledge about the taonga collection; to recognise the living relationships between iwi and taonga; and to ensure taonga are preserved for future generations.

Proper management and stewardship of these collections is essential for the satisfactory operation of the Museum and to meet the community's expectations. The Whakatane District Council, Museum staff and volunteers maintain professional standards concerning all aspects of collection management, custodianship, and kaitiakitanga. This Policy provides guidelines and criteria for Gift Acceptance, Acquisition, Exhibition and Education, Conservation and Deaccession.

2 POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Museum develops and cares for its collections to benefit present and future generations; and to promote the long-term understanding of local history and cultural identity. It preserves, protects and promotes the collections in ways that provide knowledge, inspiration, education and scholarship to the communities of the Eastern Bay of Plenty and its visitors; and enhance economic activity in our District and region.

Museum programming and operations aim to document, identify and share the cultural and natural environment of our region through interpretation, exhibition, outreach and community engagement. Embodied within the Museum's purpose and mission are the following key objectives:

- To make the Museum, its collections and expertise available to the community, and thereby encourage people to pursue knowledge and gain insight and understanding
- To foster an appreciation of, and respect for, the history and heritage of our region
- To recognise the multicultural nature of New Zealand's diverse communities and the importance of their collections within the Museum, and at the same time, acknowledge the special place of taonga Maori and the principles of partnership embodied in the Treaty of Waitangi
- To maintain the highest standards possible
- To strengthen and preserve the Museum collections for the benefit of the people in our community and New Zealand as a whole
- To ensure that all Museum staff, in carrying out their duties, apply the proper procedures and protocols in handling and care of items

- To allow opportunities for ongoing access to collections, while ensuring that their physical and cultural preservation is not threatened
- To consult with appropriate representatives of ethnic, social and cultural groups in the creation of exhibitions and programming, where appropriate
- To ensure that all items accepted by the Museum are acquired in accordance with adopted policies and established procedures, and are properly documented at the time of acquisition
- To ensure that items disposed of by the Museum are deaccessioned in accordance with adopted policies, and are properly disposed of at the time of deaccession.

3 PRINCIPLES

The principles and practices of Whakatāne Museum (known as the Museum) are guided by the Museums Aotearoa Code of Ethics, the International Congress of Museums Code of Ethics, and the policies of the Whakatāne District Council (known as the Council). The Museum is fully-owned, managed, and operated by the Council.

The Museum also seeks to carry out best practice by being aware of and working in accordance to the following legislative requirements: Conservation Act 1994; Copyright Act 1994; Health and Safety Employment Act 1992; Historic Places Act 1993; Privacy Act 1993; Protected Objects Act 1975/2006; Public Records Act; and the Resource Management Act 1991.

4 RESPONSIBILITY

These policies and guidelines are applicable to all Museum staff, Council officers, appointed advisory bodies, volunteers, lenders, borrowers, researchers and contractors: working for or with the Museum; involved in research or collections; or working in areas where the Museum presents programmes and activities.

The Whakatāne District Council's General Manager Community Services and Director, Museum and Arts are responsible for overseeing and monitoring this policy on a day-to-day basis.

This policy supersedes all previous museum collections policies and will be reviewed every five years.

5 DEFINITIONS

Acquisition: the legal transfer of title or ownership of an object (or objects) from an individual, institution or entity outside of the Whakatāne Museum (including the issue of guardianship relating to taonga Māori).

Accession: the formal acceptance of an acquisition into the permanent collection and recording the ownership or possession by the Museum.

Collections Curator: the person responsible for managing the Whakatāne Museum Collections, care and conservation of the collections, and collections information; currently Curator of Collections.

Deaccession: the formal process of removing an item from the Museum's permanent collection.

Director: the person responsible for managing the Museum and Arts unit, Whakatāne Museum staff, and the exhibitions and collections facilities; currently Director, Museum and Arts.

Disposal: the relinquishment of ownership or title by the Museum through gift, transfer, exchange, sale, repatriation, or destruction.

Museum Collection Panel: a body charged with reviewing and endorsing the acquisition and deaccessioning of collections items, comprising the Whakatāne District Council's General Manager of Community Services; Director, Museum and Arts; and up to two professional or community representatives.

Repatriation: the return or restoration of material culture or property to its country, place, or people of origin.

Rohe: a boundary, district, region, territory, area, or border of land.

Taonga: any item(s) of material culture linked to an ancestor; socially or culturally important objects linked to iwi and Māori communities.

6 POLICY

6.1 Collection Criteria

The primary role and responsibility of Whakatāne Museum is to preserve, protect and promote the natural and social heritage of Mataatua Waka (Mai ngā Kuri a Whareī ki Tihirau, Mai i a Maungapohatu ki te Moana nui a Toi) and the cultural, natural and social heritage within the Whakatāne District. The Collection, which began in the 1930s, comprises objects, archives, photographs, works of literature and art and materials representing events, places, organisations and people important to the District and wider region.

The Collection is selective and not comprehensive, and items under consideration for the collection are reviewed by Museum staff with respect to the following criteria:

- Provenance - the origin and/or subsequent history of the item(s) can be documented and authenticated
- Significance – items have historic, aesthetic, research, social or spiritual significance
- Originality - items are unique, rare or fine examples of their type
- Research value - items have high research value
- Display value - items have high display value
- Conservation qualities - items are suitable for long-term storage and preservation
- Educational value – item) support hands-on learning and interpretation.

6.2 Collection Scope

The Museum's collections are stored and displayed primarily at the Whakatāne Museum Collections and Research Centre and at Te Kōputu a te Whanga a Toi – Whakatāne Library and Exhibition Centre. Over the past eight decades, the Museum has built its collections in the below ten categories through bequests, gifts and donations, iwi partnerships, and active acquisition.

Category	Collection Description
Archives	Contains manuscripts, books, maps, plans, rare books, civic records
Social History	Contains household items, implements, industrial objects, costumes, and personal accessories that represent the history, heritage and human presence in the District
Fine Arts	Contains paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures, and original works of art
Ethnology	Contains items of Pacific, Asian, American and African material culture and anthropological interest
Photography	Contains negatives, prints, transparencies, films, videos and digital media that represent the history, heritage and environments in the District
Taonga Māori	Contains objects and material pertaining to Tangata whenua, Mana whenua iwi, hapū and whanau
Natural Environment	Contains rock, mineral, animal and plant materials that represent the natural environment of the District
Research Collection	Contains historical archives, journals, scrapbooks, rare books, and files for the purpose of research
Education Collection	Contains items for hands-on learning and interpretation; items that may be deemed disposable
New Zealand Design	Contains items representing 21st century New Zealand design, applied arts, digital media, graphical icons, built environment, and material culture; this is intended as a new area of collections focus and expertise.

6.3 Acquisitions Objectives

The main acquisitions objective, in keeping with the Collections Criteria and Scope, is to acquire important material relevant to the natural and cultural history of the Whakatāne District and Eastern Bay of Plenty region – and in some cases to New Zealand as a whole.

All potential Museum acquisitions, either passive (by gift or bequest), or active (by purchase), will be reviewed by the Museum Collections Panel and staff before acceptance. Potential acquisition items that do not have documented provenance, are not able to be owned in full by the Museum, do not meet our ethical standards, or carry restrictions or covenants, may be considered ineligible for accessioning.

6.4 Acquisitions Ethics

- 6.4.1** The Museum serves as caretaker and guardian of taonga Māori and significant collections relating to Māori culture. Local Iwi will be consulted to ensure proper Kaitiakitanga and ongoing stewardship that is respectful and in keeping with cultural practices. The Museum will work in partnership with iwi, hapū or whānau when considering the acquisition of taonga.
- 6.4.2** The Museum will comply with the UNESCO Convention on the International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora 1975, to which New Zealand is a signatory. The Museum shall also adhere to the UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970; and the UNESCO Convention on the Protections of the Underwater Cultural Heritage 2001.
- 6.4.3** The Museum shall not knowingly or wilfully acquire objects by any means where there is reasonable cause to suspect that their recovery involved the unauthorised, unscientific or intentional destruction of ancient monuments, archaeological or geological sites, or natural habitats; or involved a failure to disclose the finds to the owner or occupier to the land, or to the proper legal, governmental or Iwi authorities.
- 6.4.4** The Museum shall not knowingly or wilfully acquire any object illegally exported from its country of origin, or illegally imported into New Zealand in breach of any law, in breach of sound conservation principles for the protection of the biota and environment, or by the unethical breaking of trust.
- 6.4.5** The Museum will not actively collect human remains.
- 6.4.6** To avoid conflicts of interest, no staff member may participate in dealing (buying or selling for profit, as distinguished from occasional sale or exchange from a personal collection) objects similar to those collected by the Museum. Staff wishing to work with, research or remove from storage items in the collection which are outside their area of responsibility must seek approval from the designated curator and registrar at all times. Any appraisal of items considered for acquisition should be done by an external specialist (this does not apply to in-house assessments of value for collection objects, for insurance purposes, traveling exhibitions, etc.).
- 6.4.7** In rare cases, exceptions to these ethical standards may occur at the request of the appropriate New Zealand or foreign government authorities, in respect to property seized by them, or where the preservation of specimens is of paramount importance.

6.5 Acquisitions Procedures

For All Whakatāne Museum Acquisitions

- 6.5.1** The Museum will only consider an item for acquisition and accession into the collections if it meets some or all of the below guidelines. The acquisition of items lacking provenance to our region will be considered where there is a strong case for the material to serve as an additional or complementary asset to the Museum's collections; for research or comparative purposes; or where there are aspects important to the culture and history of New Zealand as a whole. The Museum will retain its right to exercise institutional responsibility to make informed and reasonable judgments about the appropriateness of acquiring works of art, with these primary guidelines:
- The item meets parts of the Collection Criteria and Scope indicated in this Collection Policy
 - The item is unique or enhances existing collection strengths

- The item is in suitable condition or is deemed worthy of conservation for the collection, exhibition, or research
- The item can be adequately cared for and stored by the Museum
- The Museum is able to establish provenance and obtain clear legal ownership or title to the item at the time of acquisition
- Acquiring/owning the item does not violate any ethical concerns or conventions.

6.5.2 The Museum Collections Panel comprises the Whakatāne District Council General Manager Community Services, the Director Museum and Arts, and up to two professional or community representatives. It will meet annually (or as needed) to review pledges and gifted items, recommended acquisitions and loans, and matters relating to new collections items or opportunities.

Once endorsed by the Museum Collections Panel, proposed gifts or acquisition items will be acquired and accessioned by the Director, Collections Curator, or relevant staff.

6.5.3 For Gifts and Bequests

The Museum is entitled, but not bound, to accept any gift or bequest which conforms to the collection policy and meets criteria for acquisition. With some exceptions, the below guidelines are to be followed for objects and material under consideration for acquisition:

- 6.5.3.1** The donor must have legal title to the item in order to donate or bequeath it to the Museum. Gifts and bequests should be donated unconditionally, without restrictions, liens, or covenants.
- 6.5.3.2** The display of any item acquired by gift or bequest is at the sole discretion of the Museum.
- 6.5.3.3** The Museum retains the right to dispose of the item(s) it acquires, in accordance with the Collections Policy and procedures outlined herein.
- 6.5.3.4** Accepted gifts will be accompanied by a Deed of Gift and/or other written agreement, legally transferring ownership of the item from the donor to the Museum.
- 6.5.3.5** Accepted bequests will be accompanied by a copy of the relevant portion of the will and such other probate documentation as may be required by legal counsel to satisfy successful transfer of ownership.
- 6.5.3.6** Gifts and bequests may be accepted and sold without being accessioned or deaccessioned, by prior written agreement of the donor or notification to the estate. Such cases will be identified as “Sold by the Whakatāne Museum for the benefit of the collection”, and the funds realised will be used to purchase new items for the Collection, conserve items in the Collection, or for activity otherwise specified by the donor.

6.5.4 Appraisals

Museum staff may not provide donors with appraisals for objects, materials, or works of art, and the Museum shall not make arrangements for a donor’s appraisal, or pay for the appraisal. The Museum cannot act as a qualified appraiser, because of the inherent conflict with its role as a recipient of donations. When recommending qualified appraisers, staff will always provide more than one name. Upon request, the Museum should provide the appraiser with reasonable access to the object/work of art, images of the material, and basic cataloguing information. Museum staff shall not provide opinions on condition or quality for the purpose of appraisal, so as to avoid influencing the valuation of the material.

6.5.5 Promised Gifts

The Museum accepts irrevocable pledges of objects, materials and works of art, known as “Promised Gifts”, which shall be governed by the same policies and procedures as all other gifts. The Museum Collections Panel shall review all Promised Gifts at the time of the pledge, and again when the promise is fulfilled and the items are provided in full.

6.5.6 Provenance

The Museum will review the provenance of all proposed acquisitions, to ensure that it can acquire valid title and that there are no identified ethical or legal concerns. As part of this process, the Museum will make a rigorous effort to obtain all available information and accurate written documentation about the ownership history of the object, as well as any import and export documentation; undertake research to determine whether any ownership claims to the object are known; and identify any ethical or legal concerns relating to provenance, current ownership, or history of the item(s).

6.6 Deaccessioning

6.6.1 The Museum endeavours to continuously refine and improve its collection, and part of this process requires regular reviewing of the existing collection against the Collection Criteria and Scope.

6.6.2 If an identified item doesn’t meet the collection criteria, the Director and/or Collections Curator may make a recommendation to the Museum Collections Panel, which will consider the item(s) for deaccession, and may endorse subsequent disposal by the most appropriate means, or transfer to another institution’s collection.

6.6.3 The Museum Collections Panel will exercise care and caution in evaluating the merit of an item when it is considered for deaccession and disposal or transfer. The Museum Collections Panel may seek external advice where appropriate.

6.6.4 An item(s) acquired by the Museum through formal gift or bequest will only be disposed of once reasonable efforts have been made by Collections staff to notify the original donor, depositor (or their representative) – and after the Museum has made reasonable efforts to establish its legal right to dispose of the item(s).

6.6.5 The Museum will not dispose of item(s) directly or indirectly to elected officials, remunerated or non-remunerated staff, or families of the same.

6.6.6 The Museum will work in partnership with relevant iwi, hapū or whānau when considering the deaccessioning of any taonga from its collection.

6.7 Deaccessioning Criteria

6.7.1 The Collections Panel may endorse an item for deaccessioning from the collection and subsequent disposal or transfer based on one or more of the following:

- The item does not meet the Collection Criteria or Scope
- The item is relevant to another District or institution in New Zealand
- The item is a known fake, forgery, or copy
- The item is a duplicate of, or inferior to a related item in the collection
- The item is a secondary or lesser quality item that does not represent its specific area well

- The Museum is unable to adequately care for or store the item(s)
- The item places the Museum in disrepute
- The item is to be repatriated
- The item is of poor condition, has deteriorated beyond repair, or places the collection at risk.

6.7.2 Consideration of any item to which one or more of the above criteria apply carries no presumption that the deaccession or disposal will or must take place.

6.8 Disposal Methods

An item approved for deaccession, endorsed by the Collections Panel, will be disposed of using following methods:

- Offered by gift back to the original donor or their Estate; or
- Offered to an appropriate institution or external collection; or
- Physically destroyed and documented accordingly; or
- Be sold or offered for tender, with any resulting funds used for future collection acquisitions, conservation, or educational activities.

6.9 Repatriation

In the event that a party (or parties) seeks the return of an item under the guardianship of the Museum, the Museum will consult and seek guidance as appropriate and enter into discussions with concerned party(ies), in good faith. Any item that has been identified and approved for repatriation will be deaccessioned in accordance with this Collection Policy.

6.10 Loans

The Museum will consider, under the same Collections Criteria and Scope outlined in this Policy, items owned by private or institutional partners offered to the Collection as a formal loan. Objects and materials proposed for loan, and all terms and conditions governing the loan, will be documented and outlined in writing and presented to the Museum Collections Panel for endorsement. The Museum will provide a standard of care for all loans equivalent to the care of other items in the Collections.

6.10.1 Incoming Loan

6.10.1.1 In order to enhance or expand the Museum's exhibitions, research, or preservation efforts, an item may be borrowed by the Museum from public and private institutions, commercial galleries and trustees, from time to time.

6.10.1.2 Before accepting an Incoming Loan, the Museum will verify ownership or title with the owner and a loan agreement will be drawn-up and signed by the Museum and the lender.

6.10.1.3 The Museum will only accept loaned items if it is able to adequately care for and store them.

6.10.1.4 The loan agreement will contain the following:

- Insurance value
- Loan period
- Rights of use
- Condition report, including a description and images
- Any restrictions in the storage, handling or exhibition of the item(s)
- Lender's contact details
- Procedures for the end of the loan period.

6.10.1.5 Loans will be insured by the Museum, unless otherwise stated. The Museum will contact the lender if the loaned item is a risk to the collection or requires conservation. All incoming loans will be for a specified period, up to a maximum of five years.

6.10.2 Outgoing Loan

6.10.2.1 The Museum has a commitment to share its resources with institutions, researchers, and audiences outside the Collections building or District. To provide public accessibility, the Museum considers requests for the outgoing loan of objects and materials.

6.10.2.2 Such requests should be in writing and submitted at least six months before the start of the proposed loan period.

6.10.2.3 The written request should provide the following:

- Details of the required items
- Contact details of the Borrower
- Proposed period of the loan
- Purpose of the loan
- Description/ facility report of the exhibition or research venue(s), including environmental and security arrangements
- Insurance arrangements.

6.10.2.4 All outgoing loans will be made for a specified period, up to a maximum of one year. Terms and conditions relating to the Borrower's transport, insurance, care and use of the item(s) will be agreed by both parties in advance.

6.10.2.5 The Museum will provide an outgoing condition report for the item(s), including the display, environmental and handling requirements for the item(s).

6.10.2.6 All outgoing loans with a value of more than \$20,000 shall be accompanied by a Museum staff member during transit; all other items shall be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

6.11 Collections Use and Care

6.11.1 Access to Collections

The Museum endeavours to make the collection as accessible as possible to researchers, donors, students, cultural groups, educational institutions or others -- with due consideration to operational constraints, copyright, donor restrictions, collections care and tikanga. Access to the Collections and Collections storage areas will be overseen by Museum staff and follow Museum protocols. Access to the Collections database will be limited to prevent unauthorised modification of the database and inappropriate access to confidential details.

6.11.2 Copyright and Reproduction

Use of images from the Museum's collection for research, publication, films, education, merchandise and promotional purposes serves to share the Museum's collection with a wider audience. The reproduction of an images from the collection will adhere to any copyright. The Museum will notify and attain permission from the lender prior to any reproduction of a loaned item(s). The Museum will make every effort to notify and attain permission from iwi, hapū or whānau for the reproduction of images of any taonga.

6.11.3 Disaster Management

The Museum shall maintain a Collection Disaster Management Plan that enables timely and effective reaction to disasters, emergencies and evacuations. This will be evaluated every three

years and will be informed by Council Policies. To ensure ongoing safety of the collections and facilities, the Museum will employ physical security measures to protect items and exhibitions against theft, fire, or other hazards.

6.11.4 Insurance

The Museum will maintain insurance cover for all items in its collection and care. Valuation of items and materials will be based on fair market value, and reviewed every three years.

6.11.5 Conservation

The Museum will undertake preventive conservation of the collection to maximise the life of items. The Museum will engage professional conservators, when possible, who adhere to an internationally accepted code of professional conservators' ethics and standards of practice, to undertake conservation of items. The Museum will work in partnership with iwi, hapu or whānau in the conservation of taonga.

6.11.6 Environment

The Museum will endeavour to provide a stable environment that conforms to museum guidelines established by the International Council of Museums and/or Museums Aotearoa. Temperature where items are stored or displayed should be maintained at 20° (+ or – 2°), and relative humidity kept between 50 - 60% (+ or – 5%). Exceptions will be made for items that require special environmental conditions for their long-term preservation. Controlled light levels will be maintained to minimise deterioration.

6.11.7 Pest Control

A pest inspection and fumigation schedule will be maintained on a regular basis. All items received by the Museum will be inspected for signs of insects and if necessary will be bagged, frozen, quarantined and/or fumigated. The Museum will practise sound house-keeping at all times, including no food or drinks in collection storage and work areas, the regular disposal of all rubbish, and the periodic cleaning of all collection storage and work areas.

6.11.8 Hazards

Flammable liquids and chemicals will be stored in a separate fireproof and lockable storage unit. Any firearms in the Collection will be kept in a lockable storage unit. Taonga Māori will be stored and cared for following the advice of relevant iwi, hapu or whanau.

6.11.9 Security

The Museum will maintain secure facilities and employ physical security measures to deter theft, tampering and wilful damage, and to protect collections and exhibitions at all times.

7 APPENDICES

7.1 Related National Legislation

- Privacy Act (1993)
- Official Information Act (1982)
- Local Government Act (2002)
- Health & Safety in Employment Act (1992)
- Archives, Culture and Heritage Reform Act (2000)
- Arms Act (1983)
- Arms Amendment Act (1992)
- Arms Regulations (1992)
- Conservation Act (1987)
- Copyright Act (1994)
- Film, Video and Publications Classification Act (1993)
- Historic Places Act (1993)
- Hazardous Substances New Organisms Act (1996)
- Human Tissue Act (2005)
- Health and Safety in Employment Act (1992)
- Privacy Act (1992)
- Protected Items Act (1975)
- Resource Management Act (1991)
- Reserves Act (1977)

7.2 Related National and International Guidelines

- Museums Aotearoa Code of Ethics (2013)
- International Council of Museums Code of Ethics for Museums (2006)
- New Zealand Conservators of Cultural Materials Code of Ethics (1995)
- Office of the Auditor-General, Management of heritage collections in local museums and art galleries (2006)
- The Mataatua Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1993)

7.3 Related Policies and Strategies

- Whakatāne Museum and Arts Disaster Management Plan
- Whakatāne Museum and Arts Strategic Plan 2014-2018
- Whakatāne Museum and Arts Gordon Ellis Trust Policy 2016
- Whakatāne Museum and Arts Kawa Policy 2001