

Dog Control Policy 2016

1. Relevant legislation

- Local Government Act 1974
- Local Government Act 2002
- Dog Control Act 1996 (hereafter referred to as 'the Act')
- Enforcement Guidelines (under the Act), May 2009
- Dog Control Bylaw 2016

2. Policy objectives

2.1. Council recognises that the majority of dog owners in the Western Bay are responsible, and that most interaction between dogs and the public is positive. The approach taken by this policy seeks to achieve a balance between the control of dogs and recognition of the community benefits of responsible dog ownership.

2.2. The objectives of the policy are:

- To provide adequate opportunities to fulfil the exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners, including off leash exercise.
- To minimise the danger, distress and nuisance (of dogs) to the community generally.
- To minimise the likelihood for conflict between dogs and the public or environment, by restricting access for dogs to public places where appropriate.
- To avoid danger from uncontrolled dogs having access to public places which are frequented by children whether or not the children are accompanied by adults.
- To minimise, to the extent that is practicable, the public fear of attack or intimidation by dogs.
- To actively promote the responsible ownership of dogs.
- To actively promote public safety and education.



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3. General approach

- 3.1. The Act requires each local authority to adopt a Dog Control Policy in respect of dogs in its District and sets out the matters that should be addressed in the policy. The purpose of the policy is to set out Council's direction for dog control within the District.
- 3.2. Whilst there are statutory requirements under the Act which must be included in every dog policy, the Act gives local authorities some discretion in the application of the Act. A Dog Control Policy therefore provides guidance to Council, staff and the public and provides consistency in the application of the Act.
- 3.3. The Western Bay of Plenty District Council's Dog Control Policy was first adopted in 2004, and was reviewed in 2011 and 2016. The Dog Control Bylaw 2016 is used to give legal powers to implement the Dog Control Policy and determine what is considered to be an offence.

4. Definitions

- Areas of Ecological Sensitivity –These are areas which have been scientifically identified as environmentally significant and are listed in the District Plan. These areas are sensitive due to the vegetation, bird or wildlife in the area.
- Areas of Intense Public Use these are determined on a case by case basis and generally relate to areas which accommodate high numbers of people at any one time, particularly during summer months. They include popular beach areas and reserves.
- Dangerous dog has the same meaning as section 31 of the Act.
- Disability assist dog means a dog trained (or in training) to assist a person with a disability as defined under the Act.
- Dog Ranger means a dog ranger appointed under section 12 of the Act and includes a person appointed as an Honorary Dog Ranger.
- Dogs on leash areas Dogs are required on a leash at all times.
- Infringement Offence has the meaning given to it in Section 65(1) of the Act.
- Leash an adequate restraint held by a responsible person physically capable of restraining the dog.



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- Menacing Dogs means any dog the Council considers may pose a threat to any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal, protected wildlife due to observed or reported behaviour or dogs classified as menacing under Sections 33A or 33C of the Act.
- Neutering means a dog that has been spayed or castrated; and does not include a dog that has been vasectomised.
- Owner has the meaning as defined under the Act including every person who owns a dog; or has a dog in his or her possession; or the parent or guardian of a person under the age of 16 years who owns a dog.
- Prohibited Area These are areas where dogs are excluded at all times. Areas may be year round or seasonally prohibited.
- Public Places means a place that, at any material time, is open to or is being used by the public whether free or on payment of a charge.
- Reserve means any land under the management or control of Western Bay of Plenty District Council and set apart for any public purpose as described from time to time, in the Reserves Act 1977, including parks, gardens, recreation grounds, open spaces and foreshores.
- Search and Rescue dogs Dogs used in the search for and provision of aid to people who are in distress or imminent danger e.g. urban search and rescue dogs, mountain rescue etc. Dogs will be fully trained and certified and evidence of certification will be required in order to take up discounted dog registration fees.
- Working Dog as defined in the Dog Control Act 1996.

5. Policy procedures

5.1. Control of dogs in public places

- 5.1.1. Under the Act, Councils can designate public places where dogs are prohibited or permitted only when on a leash. These areas are enforced using the Dog Control Bylaw 2016 or subsequent amendments.
- 5.1.2. In public places where there are no designated restrictions, dogs must be under control at all times. Where a dog is causing or is likely to cause, danger, distress or nuisance it must be kept on a leash and under the control of the owner. Dog owners must carry a leash at all times.



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- 5.1.3. The person in charge of a dog must remove any dog faeces that their dog produces and dispose of it in a hygienic manner. The requirement to remove dog faeces applies not only to public places, but also to land that is not their own land. The Dog Control Bylaw 2016 requires any person in charge of a dog to carry a means of picking up and removing any dog faeces when in a public place (e.g. a plastic bag).
- 5.1.4. Designated public places are classified as follows:
 - Prohibited Areas Dogs are not allowed in these areas at any time.
 Areas may be prohibited on a permanent or temporary (seasonal) basis. These areas are identified for one or more of the following reasons:
 - Children's playgrounds;
 - Areas of intense public use;
 - Areas of ecological sensitivity;
 - Dogs on Leash Areas Dogs are allowed on a leash at all times.
- 5.1.5. A list of all areas with restrictions is identified in Appendix One of this Policy and within the Dog Control Bylaw 2016. At the Chief Executive's sole discretion, temporary exemptions from restrictions may be granted in writing for specific events of less than 4 consecutive days duration. Requests to the Chief Executive must be made in writing at least 6 weeks prior to the event.
- 5.1.6. Council recognises that, as a result of future growth and recognition of areas of ecological sensitivity, there maybe a need for designated Dog Exercise Areas in order to balance the recreational needs of dog owners and their dogs with the aims of effective dog control. Therefore, Council intends to develop designated Dog Exercise Areas in the District, where there is demonstrable community support for such a facility.
- 5.1.7. Disability assist dogs are exempt from all public place restrictions identified in this Policy. Disability assist exemption requires written authorisation from the appropriate organisation.
- 5.1.8. Working dogs, except for those kept to herd stock, are also exempt from the restrictions specified. Working dogs must be working at the time to be exempt.



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5.1.9. In several parts of the District, Council land borders Department of Conservation land. For environmental/ecological reasons the Department of Conservation operates a range of restrictions for dogs. Local Department of Conservation offices can provide more information on dog access controls in these areas.

5.2. Fees and charges

- 5.2.1. The maintenance of a dog registration system is both a statutory requirement and an essential component of the efficient running of a dog control service.
- 5.2.2. Dog registration fees are set by Council resolution in accordance with the Revenue and Financing Policy. They are consulted on with levels of service through the Annual Plan or Long Term Plan.
- 5.2.3. The fees are used to cover part of the management and enforcement of the Dog Control Act and bylaw and cover issues such as welfare, dog control, education and ensuring dogs do not cause a nuisance in the community.
- 5.2.4. All dogs over the age of three months old are required by law to be registered. Registration must be undertaken by 1 July annually and penalties will be applied for late registration.
- 5.2.5. Discounted registration fees are applicable for the following dogs:
 - working dogs;
 - dogs domiciled on Matakana Island;
 - neutered dogs (proof of neutering will be required upon registration);
 - disability assist dogs (no registration fee).
- 5.2.6. Council intends to recover 80% of the total cost associated with dog control through registration and control fees and enforcement. General Rates funding is used to meet the remaining 20% of dog related costs, reflecting the wider community benefits of effective dog control.



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5.3. Education

- 5.3.1. Council believes that education is the best way to promote public safety and responsible dog ownership as defined under the Act and the Council's Dog Control Policy.
- 5.3.2. Council shall offer information and education to dog owners and the wider community on owner obligations, dog control laws, dog behaviour, bite avoidance techniques and the availability of dog obedience courses.
- 5.3.3. Publicity will also be used to promote public awareness of:
 - dog registration obligations;
 - owner responsibilities;
 - Council's Dog Control Policy and related bylaws including detailed maps identifying prohibited and "dogs on leash" areas as well as areas where dogs can exercise freely.
- 5.3.4. A copy of the Council's Dog Control Policy and related bylaws will also be available through the Council website. These publications will also be available on request in hard copy.

5.4. Microchipping dogs

- 5.4.1. Microchip regulations came into force in New Zealand on 1 July 2006. Dogs registered on or after this date, excluding dogs kept solely or mainly for herding or driving stock require microchipping.
- 5.4.2. Owners must provide permanent identification of their dog by arranging for the dog to be implanted with an approved microchip when the dog is:
 - registered for the first time;
 - classified as dangerous or menacing;
 - impounded.
- 5.4.3. Where microchipping has not occurred the Council may:
 - issue a warning or an infringement notice;
 - prosecute the owner.
- 5.4.4. Owners must provide proof of microchipping within two months of registration.



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5.5. Improving the welfare of dogs

5.5.1. Dog owners shall be required to keep their dogs in clean and hygienic conditions and maintain appropriate facilities in a good state of repair. Council may prohibit the keeping of dogs on properties where Council considers that a nuisance or a health risk may be generated by the manner in which dogs are being kept. The minimum standards for the care and keeping of dogs are defined in the Dog Control Bylaw 2016.

5.6. Minimising risk of distress and nuisance

- 5.6.1. Nuisance caused by dogs can include (but is not limited to):
 - barking dogs;
 - dog faeces;
 - roaming dogs.
- 5.6.2. In managing nuisance caused by dogs the Council will:
 - Educate owners about major nuisances associated with the ownership of dogs and how to avoid them.
 - Require owners to take steps considered necessary to abate dog nuisance such as removing faeces left by their dog in public places.
 - Provide appropriate deterrents against non-compliance with dog control laws by issuing warning or infringement notices, prosecuting where the offence or the effects of the offence are significant, or impounding roaming or unregistered dogs.
 - Control the number of dogs kept at a property. Occupiers of premises in any zone other than Rural (as designated in the operative District Plan) shall require Council permission to keep more than two dogs over the age of three months at any one time. Council permission will only be granted if Council is satisfied that the additional dog(s) will not create a nuisance.

5.7. Menacing dog classification

- 5.7.1. The Council may classify a dog as menacing if the dog:
 - poses a threat to any person, stock, poultry, domestic animal or protected wildlife because of any observed or reported behaviour of the dog, or
 - has characteristics typically associated with a prohibited dog breed or type.



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- 5.7.2. Central Government requires that local authorities must classify all dogs that are considered predominantly of American Pit Bull Terrier type or Brazilian Fila, Dogo Argentino, Perro de Presa Canario or Japanese Tosa breeds, as menacing.
- 5.7.3. In addition to all other obligations, the owner of any dog that is classified as menacing must:
 - ensure that the dog is muzzled in any public place;
 - ensure that the dog is micro-chipped within two months of classification.
- 5.7.4. Council requires mandatory neutering of dogs classified as menacing in accordance with the Act. Aside from preventing breeding, there is evidence that neutering reduces a dog's desire to roam, and may reduce possible aggression. Dogs must be neutered within one month of classification.
- 5.7.5. Dogs that have previously been classified as menacing will be required to be neutered within 12 months of this policy coming into effect.
- 5.7.6. If a dog has been classified as a menacing dog in another district, where it was not required to be neutered, it will be a requirement for the dog to be neutered within one month of residing in the Western Bay of Plenty District.
- 5.7.7. Council will waive neutering requirements for dogs classified as menacing where the owner provides a written declaration from a registered veterinarian that neutering the dog would be detrimental to its health.

5.8. Dangerous dog classification

- 5.8.1. Under the Act, dogs can be classified as dangerous where:
 - An owner of the dog has been convicted of a dog attack offence;
 - The territorial authority has sworn evidence that the dog has shown aggressive behaviour; or
 - The owner admits that the dog constitutes a threat to the safety of any person, animal or stock.
- 5.8.2. Where dogs have shown themselves to be menacing or dangerous, Council will:
 - Issue a warning or infringement notice.
 - Prosecute where the offence or the effects of the offence are significant.



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- Seize and retain in custody any menacing dog or dangerous dog that has committed an attack offence and where retention is required to protect public safety.
- Where a retention notice has been issued, require impounded dogs to be held pending a decision of the Court.
- 5.8.3. In addition to all other obligations, the owner of any dog that is classified as dangerous must:
 - Ensure that the dog is kept within a securely fenced portion of the owner's property (this must not be an area which people will need to pass through to gain access to the dwelling);
 - Ensure that the dog is muzzled and controlled on a leash in any public place;
 - Ensure that the dog is neutered within one month of classification;
 - Ensure the dog is microchipped within two months of classification;
 - Pay a higher registration fee; and
 - Not dispose of the dog to any other person without the written consent of the Council.

5.9. Impounding and seizing

- 5.9.1. The Act sets out certain provisions for the impounding of dogs. Where any dog is found at large in a public place in contravention of a bylaw or, on property other than the owners, it may be impounded.
- 5.9.2. Where any dog is impounded and the owner is known, Council will make attempts to contact the owner. The owner has seven days to recover the dog from the pound. If the dog is unknown Council must retain the dog for seven days. If the dog it not claimed, the Council may then dispose of or destroy the dog as Council sees fit.
- 5.9.3. Where a Dog Control Officer has reasonable grounds to believe an offence under the Act has been committed, including failure to comply with registration requirements, the dog(s) may be seized and impounded.
- 5.9.4. All registration requirements, fees and pound fees must be paid and the dog microchipped before a dog will be released from the pound.



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- 5.9.5. Under the Act Council can set fees for the impounding of dogs. Fees are set for seizure, sustenance and the destruction of a dog. These fees can be varied for registered and unregistered dogs and may be graduated for repeated impounding offences of the same dog.
- 5.9.6. If a dog has been impounded three times within any 12 month period, Council will require the dog to be neutered within one month of the date of the third impoundment. Where the owner fails to neuter the dog within the one month period, Council may seize and impound the dog.

5.10. Enforcement

5.10.1. The Act empowers Dog Control Officers to issue infringement notices which impose an instant fine on the recipient. Infringement notices can only be issued for particular offences and the levels of fines are set by the Act and range from \$100 to \$750. The Council has no discretion to alter these fees. These are listed in Appendix Two.

5.11. Probationary dog owners

- 5.11.1. When an owner is convicted of an offence under the Act or has received three infringement notices within 24 months, the Council may classify that owner as a probationary owner for the period of 24 months.
- 5.11.2. The probationary classification has the following impacts:
 - The owner is not allowed to own any other dogs than those owned at the time the classification was made:
 - The owner must dispose of any unregistered dogs; and
 - Council shall direct the owner to attend dog owner education programme or dog obedience course (or both) approved by Council, at the owner's expense.
- 5.11.3. A probationary owner has the right to object to the classification and the Act sets out a number of matters whereby the two year probationary period can be reduced.

5.12. Disqualified owners

- 5.12.1. Any owner convicted of an offence under the Act, or who has received three infringement notices can be immediately disqualified from owning any dog.
- 5.12.2. A probationary owner who is convicted of a further offence, or receives three further infringement notices can be disqualified from owning a dog. It is not necessary for an owner to be classified as probationary owner before being disqualified.



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5.12.3. The disqualified owner must dispose of all dogs they own and cannot own any more dogs for up to five years. A disqualified owner has the right to object to the classification.

5.13. Bylaws

5.13.1. The Act enables Council to create bylaws to give effect to its Dog Control Policy. The Dog Control Bylaw 2016 gives effect to this policy.

Associated policies

- Western Bay of Plenty District Council District Plan;
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council Reserve Management Plans;
- Western Bay of Plenty District Council Community Plans.

Associated procedures

Fees and Charges – reviewed annually

Group	Policy, Planning and Regulatory		Contact (3 rd Tier Ma	nager)	Compliance and
	Services				Monitoring Manager
Supersedes	Dog Control Policy (adopted 2011)				
Creation Date	1 August 2016	Resolution Reference		Link to minutes	
Last Review		Res	solution Reference		
Date					
Review Cycle	In conjunction with review of the Dog Control Bylaw		Date		
	(bylaw to be reviewed no later than 25 August 2026)				
Authorised by	Policy and Strategy Committee		Date	1 August 2016	

Appendix 1

Public place restrictions

The following table identifies the areas with dog control restrictions. Maps should be viewed in order to determine the exact location of restrictions.

Restriction	Geographical Area	Timeframe
Prohibited	All children's playgrounds (soft play area)	Year round
Dogs on leash	TECT All Terrain Park, excluding the	Year round
	designated dog exercise area.	
Dogs on leash	Kaiate Falls Scenic Reserve	Year round
Dogs on leash	Ongaonga Scenic Reserve	Year round
Dogs on leash	Puketoki Scenic Reserve	Year round
Mixed approach	Huharua Park	Year round
(see definition below)		
	Omokoroa	
Dogs on leash	Omokoroa Golf Course: Walkway adjacent to	Year round
	the sandspit.	
Prohibited	Sandbars off Cooneys Reserve, Omokoroa	Year round
Prohibited	Area between Omokoroa playground and	Year round
	toilet block	
Mixed approach (see	Omokoroa Esplanade	Summer months *
definition below)		
Prohibited	Omokoroa Domain Foreshore	Spring – Autumn **
Dogs on leash	Omokoroa to Bethlehem cycleway, including	Year round
	associated berms and verges. For the	
	avoidance of doubt, the area at the end of	
	Beach Grove is a Dogs on Leash Area.	
Prohibited	The foreshore area between Cooneys	Year round
	Reserve and Lynley Park, adjoining the	
	Omokoroa to Bethlehem cycleway	
	Katikati	
Dogs on leash	In the town centre area on Main Street	Year round
	(between the Uretara Stream and Fairview	
	road) and Talisman Drive	
Dogs on leash	Uretara Walkway between the point where	Year round
	the Riverside Place walkway links onto the	
	Uretara walkway and Park Road Reserve.	
	Waihi Beach*	
Prohibited	Waihi Beach except for year round dog area	Summer months*
	(see definition below)	
Dogs on leash	In the town centre are on Seaforth Road	
	(between Dillon Street and Citrus Avenue)	
Dogs on leash Island View Reserve		Seasonal

		(Oct – March) ***
	Te Puke	
Dogs on leash	In the town centre area bounded by Queen Street, Boucher Avenue, Commerce Lane, Jocelyn Street, the railway line, King Street, Tom Blaikie Lane and Oxford Street. This includes all areas open to the public within this area.	
	Maketu	
Prohibited	Area between (and including) Park Road Reserve to Maketu Surf Lifesaving Club, Maketu	Summer months *
Prohibited	Maketu Historic and Local Purpose Reserve	Summer months *
Prohibited	Maketu Spit (stretching as far as the cut)	Year round
	Pukehina	
Prohibited	Pukehina Spit (Dotteral Point Reserve)	Year round

- * Summer months is defined as the period from the third Wednesday of December to the 7th of February (both days inclusive) between the hours of 9am and 7pm. Outside of these periods, dogs may run free provided it is under proper control at all times and owners carry a leash.
- ** Spring to Autumn restriction is defined as the period between Labour weekend and Easter Monday (inclusive).
- *** The Island View Reserve is restricted to dogs on a leash area between the months of October to March as a result of birds nesting within the reserve during this period.

Definitions

Mixed Approach – Huharua Park

The Park comprises some areas which are prohibited to dogs and some which are dogs on leash. There is also a large area where there are no restrictions. Please refer to the map for exact locations of the boundary restrictions.

Mixed Approach - Omokoroa Esplanade

The Omokoroa Esplanade is prohibited in Summer months (see above definition). However, dogs may pass through the area on leash, using the footpath opposite the Esplanade, as part of the Omokoroa to Bethlehem cycleway. Outside of the Summer months restrictions, dogs may run free on the Esplanade provided it is under proper control at all times and the owners carry a leash.

Waihi Beach year round dog zone:

The area which is available to dogs year round is identified on the Waihi Beach map. It is the area formed between a line 100m south of Albacore Avenue and a line 100m north of Pio Road.

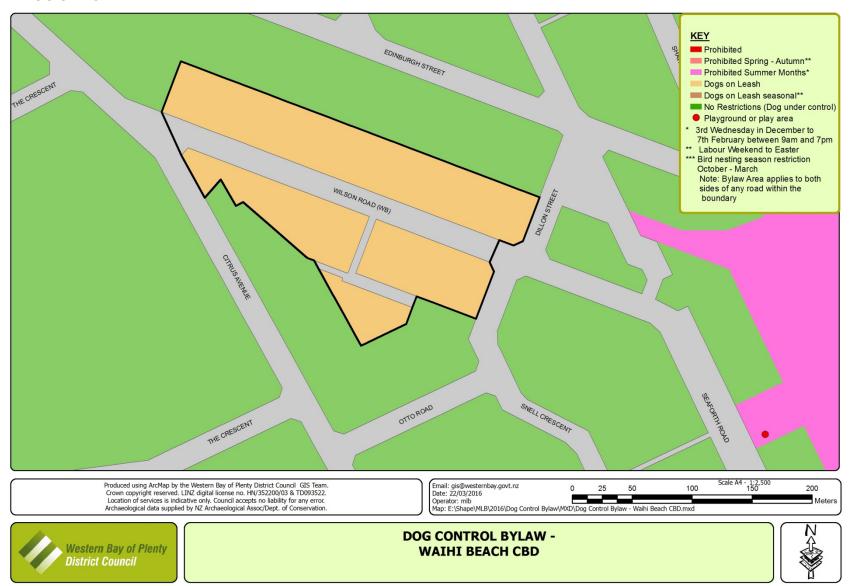


Appendix 2

Maps showing 'prohibited' and 'dogs on leash' restrictions



Waihi Beach CBD



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Waihi Beach



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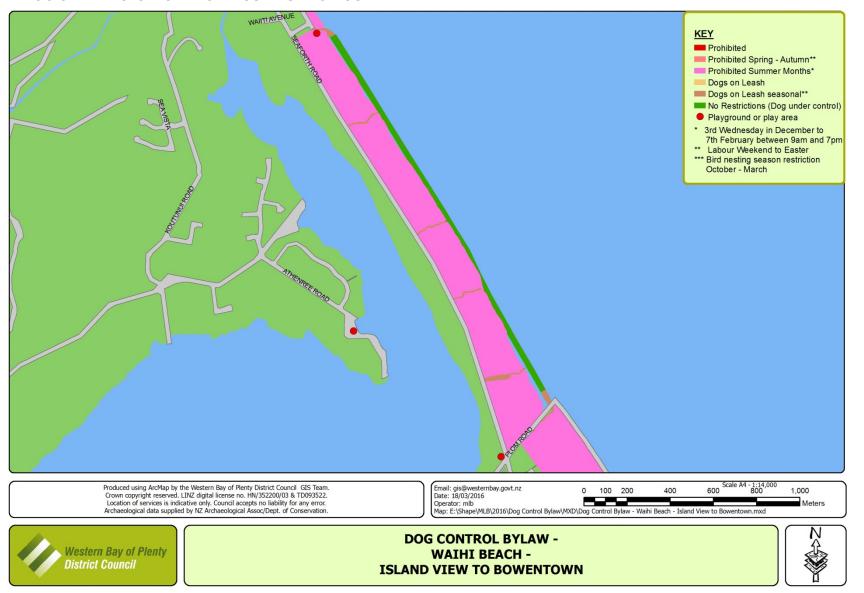
Waihi Beach - Island View



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Waihi Beach - Island View to Bowentown

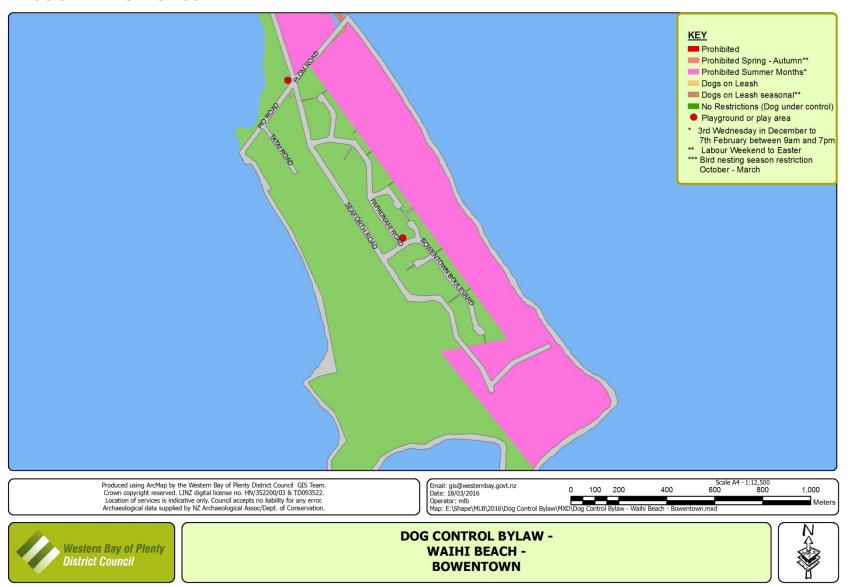


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Waihi Beach - Bowentown

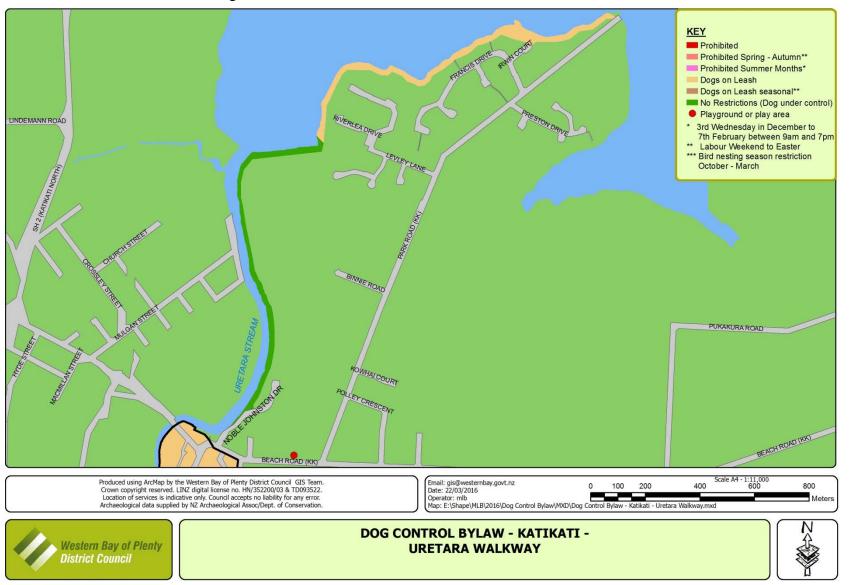


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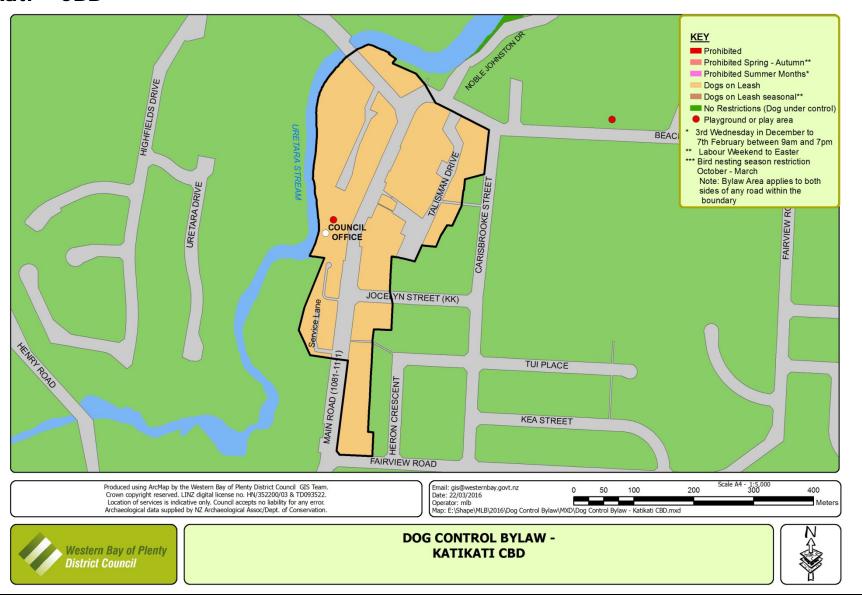
Katikati - Uretara Walkway



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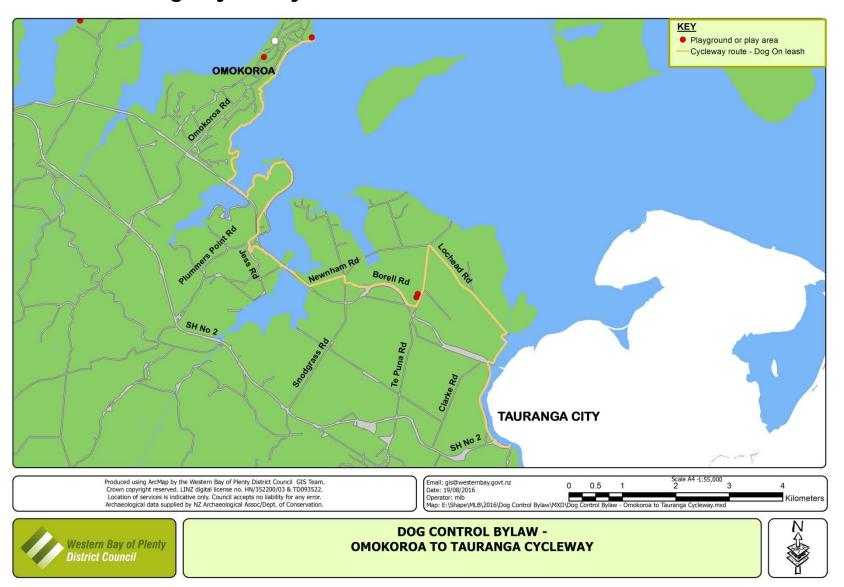
Katikati - CBD



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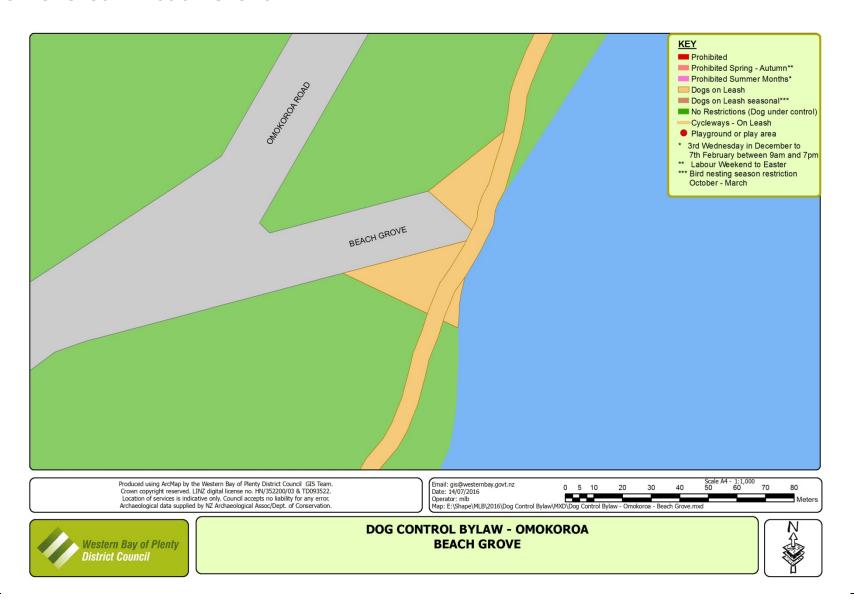
Omokoroa to Tauranga Cycleway



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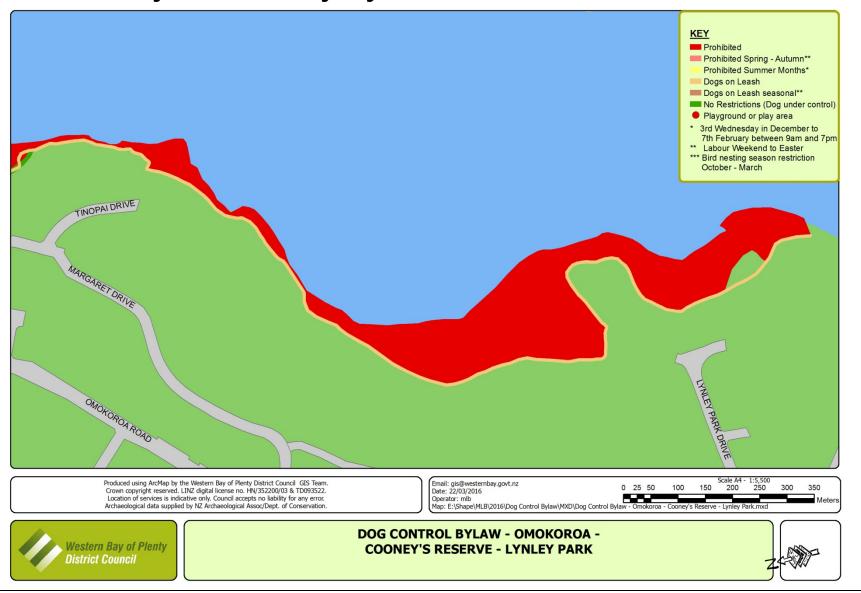
Omokoroa – Beach Grove



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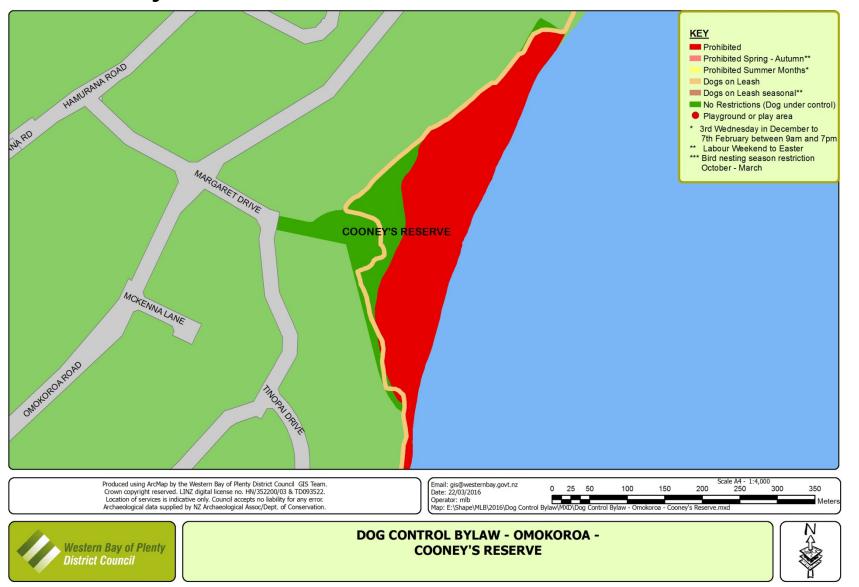
Omokoroa – Cooney's Reserve to Lynley Park



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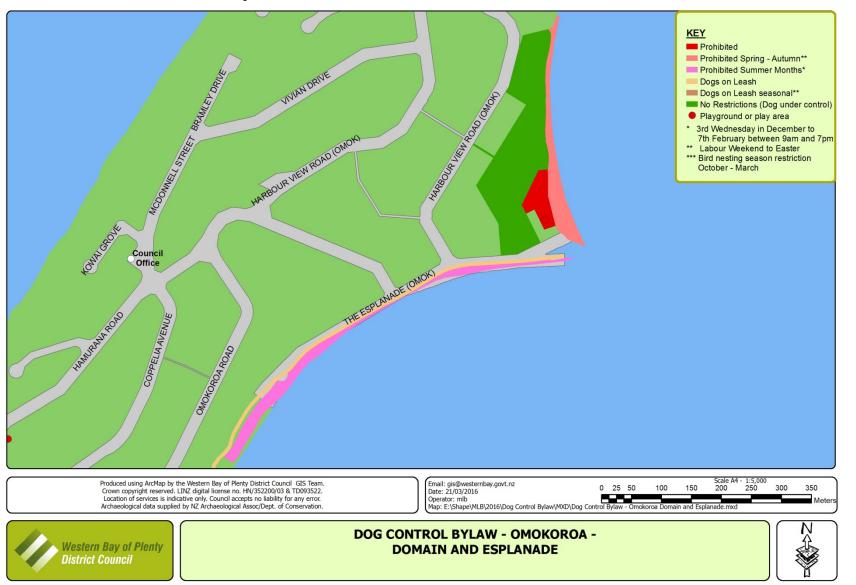
Omokoroa – Cooney's Reserve



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Omokoroa – Domain and Esplanade



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Omokoroa Golf Course

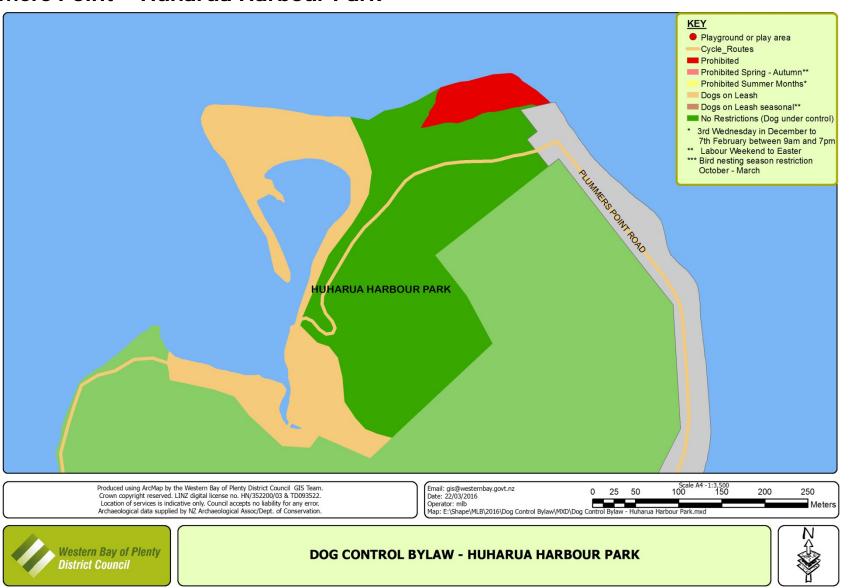


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Plummers Point – Huharua Harbour Park

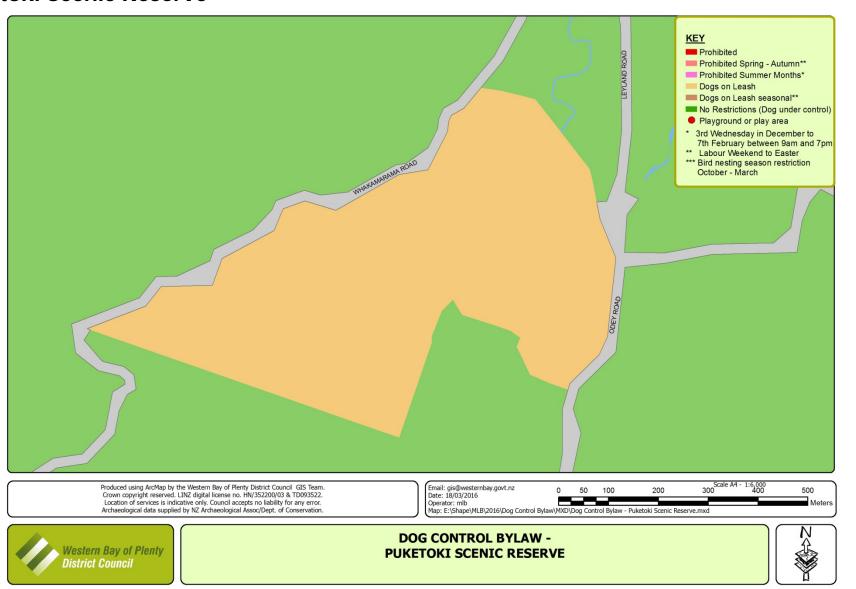


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Puketoki Scenic Reserve

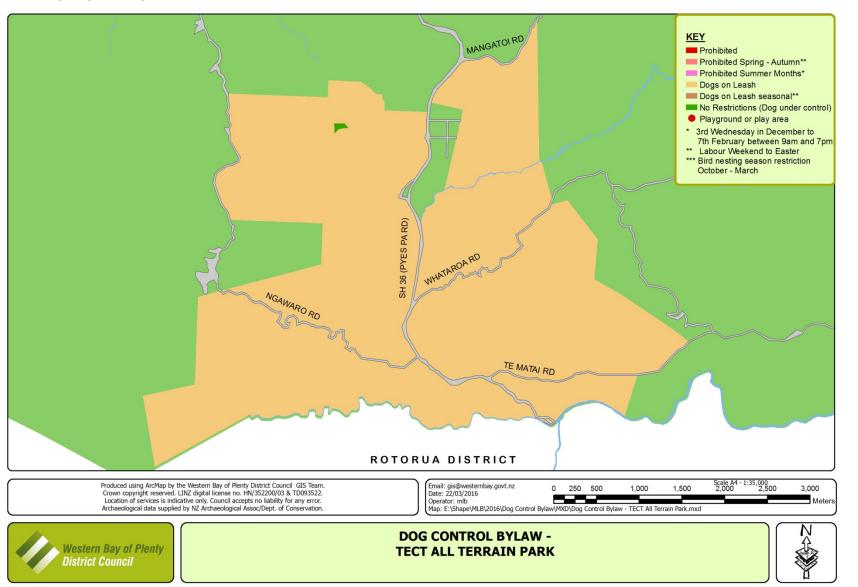


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TECT All Terrain Park

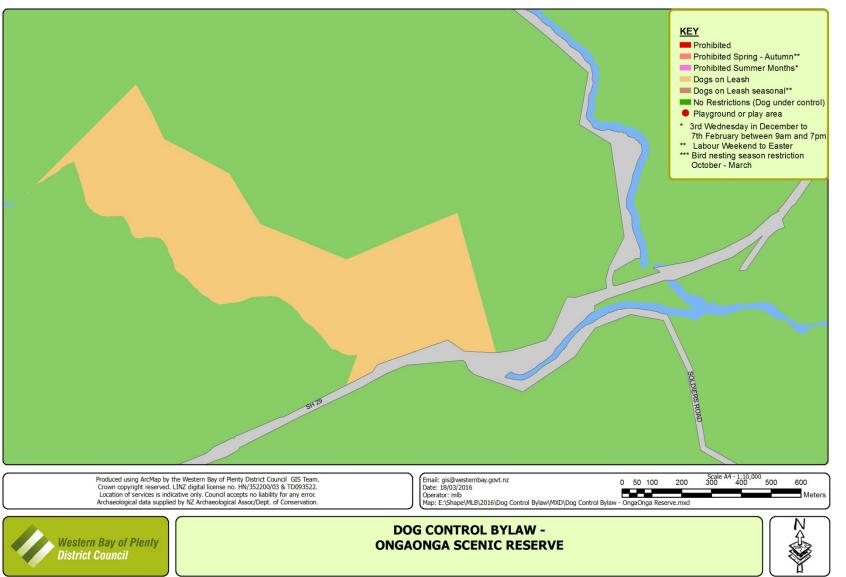


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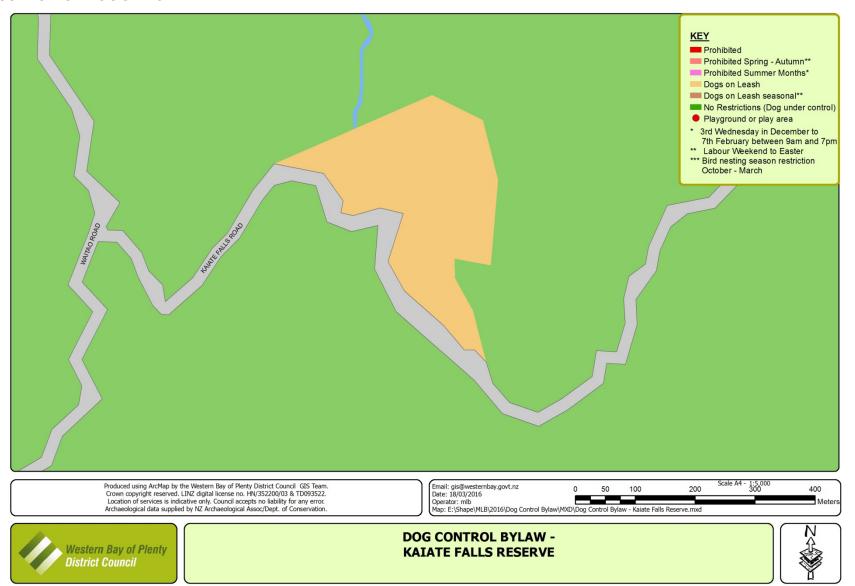
OngaOnga Reserve



Dog Control Policy 2016



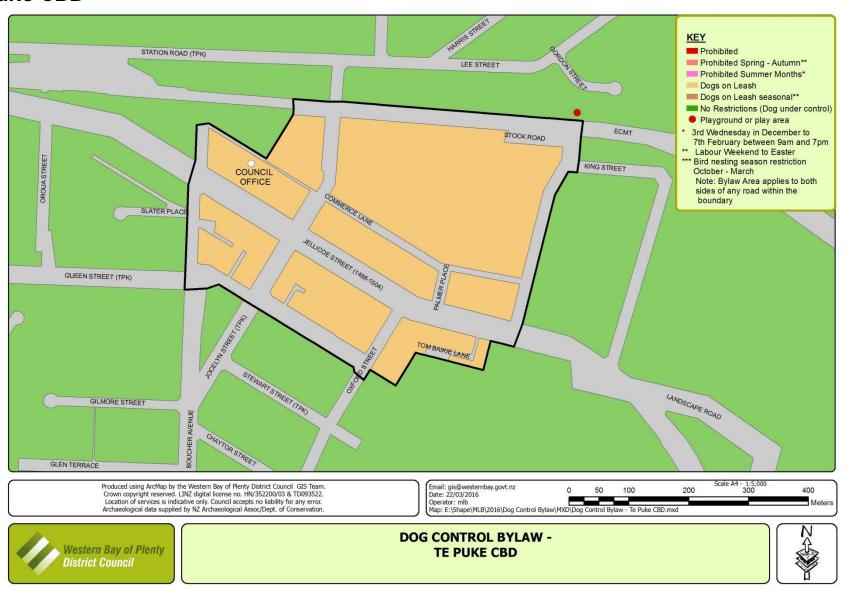
Kaiate Falls Reserve



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Te Puke CBD

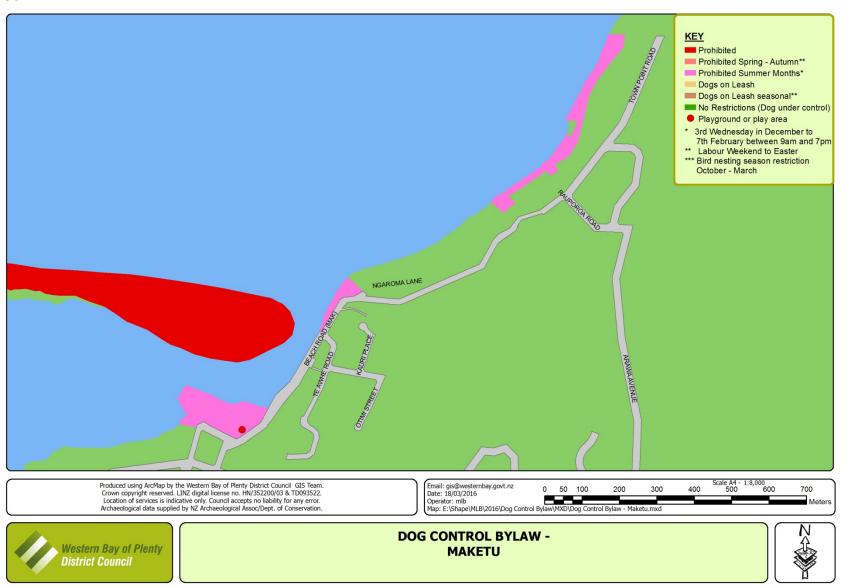


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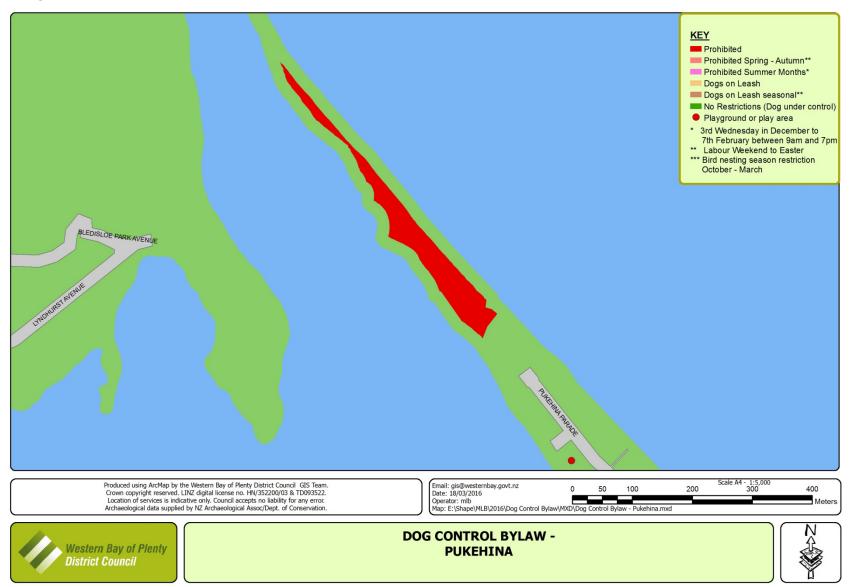
Maketu



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Pukehina



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Appendix 3

Infringement offences under the Dog Control Act 1996

The following infringements are set by the Dog Control Act 1996. The Council has no discretion to alter these fees.

Section	Brief Description of Offence	Infringement Fee
18	Wilful obstruction of dog control officer or ranger	\$750
19 (2)	Failure or refusal to supply information or wilfully stating false particulars	\$750
19A(2)	Failure to supply information or wilfully providing false particulars about dog	\$750
20(5)	Failure to comply with any bylaw authorised by section 20 of the Act	\$300
24	Failure to comply with obligations of probationary owner	\$750
28(5)	Failure to comply with effects of disqualification	\$750
32(2)	Failure to comply with the effects of classification of dog as a dangerous dog	\$300
32(4)	Fraudulent sale or transfer of dangerous dog	\$500
33(F)	Failure to comply with effects of classification of dog as a menacing dog	\$300
36(A)	Failure to implant microchip transponder in dog	\$300
41	False statement relating to registration	\$750
41A	Falsely notifying death of dog	\$750
42	Keeping unregistered dog	\$300
46(4)	Fraudulent attempt to procure replacement label or disc	\$500
48(3)	Failure to advise change of ownership	\$100
49(4)	Failure to advise change of address	\$100
51(1)	Removal or swapping of labels or discs	\$500
52(A)	Failure to keep dog controlled or confined	\$200
53(1)	Failure to keep dog under proper control	\$200
54(2)	Failure to provide proper care and attention, to supply proper and sufficient food, water and to provide adequate exercise	\$300
54A	Failure to carry leash in public	\$100
55(7)	Failure to comply with barking dog abatement notice	\$200
62(4)	Allowing dog known to be dangerous to be at large unmuzzled	\$300
72(2)	Releasing dog from custody	\$750