

8 June 2021

Tena koe

Whakapapa Village Parking Area and Restrictions

The Department of Conservation (the Department) received comments and feedback from you regarding our proposed parking restrictions in Whakapapa Village (the Village). We are writing to let you know the outcome of the consultation process.

Any feedback provided that is not directly related to the proposed Whakapapa Village public parking areas and restrictions has not been considered.

The formal public notification process generated sixteen submissions and a detailed summary of the feedback is provided in Table 1 (Appendix 1). The feedback has been grouped into five themes:

- Parking Permits – Day, Overnight and Multi-Day
- Taranaki Falls Car Park closure
- “No Stopping” zones
- Whakapapa Village Bus Park
- One and three-hour parking restrictions

Strategic approach

The Department is adopting a strategic and consistent approach to the overall management of parking in Whakapapa Village by utilising the new parallel parking areas opposite the bus park, State Highway 48 for private vehicles for 3-hour, day, overnight and multi-day parking. It is a safe parking area for the public to exit their vehicles, close enough to local tracks and amenities, and has good lighting, for security purposes.

Outcomes

We have considered the submissions against the strategic approach and confirm the following outcomes, based on the five themes.

1. Parking Permits – Day, Overnight and Multi-Day

You can phone, visit or email the Tongariro National Park Visitor Centre in Whakapapa Village to obtain a permit in the new parking areas for day, overnight and multi-day parking. The Department does not propose to implement an online permit system at this time but will consider this option in the future.

2. Taranaki Falls Car Park closure

The existing Taranaki Falls carpark is small, beyond its useful life and no longer suitable as a carpark. The carpark will be closed to align with our strategic approach for managing parking in the Village, however drop offs are permitted.

3. “No Stopping” zones

“No stopping” zones are strategically located within the village for safety reasons, emergency services access and to assist snow clearing during the winter season. ‘No stopping’ zones in Ngauruhoe Terrace aligns with our strategic approach for managing parking in the village. There is sufficient parking to cater for the broad group of recreation park users that visit the Tongariro National Park all year round.

4. Whakapapa Village Bus Park

The Department's observations from the 2020 winter season, is that ceasing use of the Whakapapa Village Bus Park as a transport hub in conjunction with the 3-hour parking restrictions in winter, achieved our core objectives to manage traffic congestion, flow and safety risks. We will continue to support the use of shuttle services from ‘Park and Ride’ facilities in National Park Village and Ohakune, as well as from local towns such as Turangi and Taupo. The Bus Park is also available for large coach buses, shuttle transfers from 2WD vehicles to 4WD during road restricted days and as a safe self-chain fitting area for private vehicles.

5. One and three-hour parking

One-hour parking restrictions apply all year round and cater for visitors wanting information or purchase goods and services from local businesses. The 3-hour parking restrictions in winter are intended to cater for visitors to local short walks and other amenities in Whakapapa Village, with the provision to park longer than 3-hours by permit. In summer, the 3-hour restrictions become all day parking.

Please see the map attached that illustrates the restrictions and locations.

Thank you for taking the time to provide us with your feedback.

Naku noa, na



Connie Norgate
Operations Manager, Tongariro District

Table 1 Detailed summary of consultation feedback

Feedback	Suggestions	DOC response
<p>Parking Permits -Day, Overnight & Multi-Day</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An 'in person' permit system denies the ability to make last minute decisions on outdoor activities based on the weather and conditions. We do not support the lack of provision for overnight car parking without a permit. Whakapapa is the starting point for a number of overnight and multi-day tramps. Esp in summer months, when backcountry recreationist will seek early starts, the requirement for people to personally attend the VC for a permit could cause unreasonable delays to people starting their day, resulting in unnecessary time pressure on the trail. We do not support the lack of provision for day parking without a permit for reasons similar to above. We understand that this is to discourage ski field patrons parking in Whakapapa Village. It would be entirely feasible to have shuttles from National Park Village act as 'drop off only' at Whakapapa Village, so there is no mechanism for the provision of day parking to be abused this way. I cannot see the problem with all day parking at any time along the roadside. The new carpark and the old bus park should also allow all day parking and it is here that any overnight parking should be allowed on a strictly permit only basis for Northern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Online permit system so they can be easily obtained without altering trip plans, or indeed, to aid the appropriate altering of trip plans so recreationists can make safe decisions. Propose that the parking opposite the bus park be a designated overnight park year-round. We would like to see the green zones be day parks year-round. Provision for all day and multi day parking Change VC hours from 8am – 5pm to 7am – 4 pm or update website to include a web form to apply online, print out and leave on dash. Pre-arranged online system or by email DOC create an app to allow for self-registration. The app could inform users of where they can park, update on any changes to parking restrictions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOC does not propose to implement an online parking permit system at this time, as it has the potential to be exploited, especially during the winter season. We will however consider this option in the future. Day, overnight and multi-day parking permits are available via email from the Tongariro National Park Visitor Centre in Whakapapa Village. DOC does propose to utilise the new parallel parking facility opposite the bus park for overnight parking, but by permit only. It is a safe parking area for the public to exit their vehicles, close enough to local tracks and amenities, and has good lighting near Chateau Tongariro, for security purposes. DOC assumes that backcountry recreationists are experienced at planning their overnight and multi-day trips in Tongariro National Park. DOC encourages visitors, particularly those with no or limited tramping experience, to talk to the visitor centre staff, get the latest safety and weather updates and collect their backcountry

Feedback	Suggestions	DOC response
<p>Circuit, Round the Mountain etc park users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain how extended parking permits will work. Many people will want to leave vehicles for longer periods when going further afield than Taranaki • I come to tramp and generally longer trips than 3-hours or overnight to multi-night tramps. Whakapapa is a good base to leave the car with some element of safety as many trip possibilities start from there. Day trips from Whakapapa Village to Whakapapaiti hut, or the Tama Lakes take greater than 3 hours, or can be the start of many longer trip possibilities. Please make some limited provision for these eventualities. • Support in principal but unclear what is happening to, day/multi day passes for hikers. Parking permits for hikers hard and impractical to obtain before the VC opens at 8.00 am • My personal want is to park there daily so I can use the park, but not the commercial area. I regularly travel to the park in hours where the visitor centre is closed. It's not clear if there is a way to get parking permits outside of VC hours. • As a multiday tramper, I have used the parking facilities and found them ideal for overnight parking. By n large I agree with the proposed changes. However, I would like you to consider an alternative means of arranging parking for those wishing to stay longer than 3 hours. Often I arrive and want to begin walking before the VC opens. Depending on the weather I may only decide to go on a walk the night before 		<p>hut passes, if staying overnight.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DOC caters to a broad group of recreation park users from families wanting to do short walks to the experienced backcountry hiker and needs a strategic and consistent system that works for everybody.

Feedback	Suggestions	DOC response
<p>leaving with insufficient time to contact the VC in advance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think it might be wise to have a day park during winter for those taking shuttles to the mountain. 3-hours is insufficient for that. What would the purpose of having bus pick ups at whakapapa village if there is no where to leave your car during winter. If the primary pick up point is supposed to be in National Park then that would need to be communicated as most people would take the bus up from the village. Turning the 60 min parking spots into 3 hour ones would then allow guests to visit the village to take the short walks in the vicinity. Limiting options for backcountry users who often are invested in full day or overnight trips. The permit system goes against the very nature of backcountry access, as it not only limits numbers but also adds a level of stress/risk for backcountry users, where trips are often heavily weather contingent. 		
<p>Taranaki Falls carpark closure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do not support the closing of the Taranaki Falls carpark at the end of Ngauruhoe Tce. This is off the main road, out of the way and provides for day walks directly from the road end. Should this carpark closure go ahead, FMC would like to be provided with the rationale for this. I have absolutely no idea why there is a proposal to close the Taranaki falls carpark. It parks 12 vehicles safely, conveniently and out of the way of everyone else. Please keep it. I would like to see the Taranaki falls car park retained (or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The track entrance to Tama Lakes and Taranaki falls track, requires a proper carpark that should be all day, next to where the track begins. Construct a carpark and make it pay by installing parking booths. There is ample wasteland around. Even better if it was free. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOC does not propose to upgrade the existing carpark or construct any additional carparks in Ngauruhoe Tce or Whakapapa Village. The existing carpark at the end of Ngauruhoe Tce is small, beyond its useful life and no longer suitable as a parking area. Removing its status as a carpark will reduce traffic flows on Ngauruhoe Tce and align with DOC's strategic approach to managing traffic in the village.

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<p>expanded) to provide easier access to the Taranaki Falls and Tama Lakes walks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There should be NO time limit requirement on these walks. Putting lots of carparks along the 50km stretch as you enter the village is a safety hazard. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DOC is taking a strategic and consistent approach to the management of carparking in Whakapapa Village, by redirecting private vehicles parking on narrow local side roads, such as Ngauruhoe Terrace to the new parallel parking facilities along SH48 opposite the bus park for visitors doing short walks, day, overnight or multi-day hikes. The parallel parking facility has been identified as a safe parking area for the public to exit their vehicles, close enough to local tracks & amenities, and has good lighting close to Chateau Tongariro, for security purposes.
<p>“No Stopping” zones</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> We do not support the “No Stopping” zones along Ngauruhoe Tce, along the uphill side of the fire station to the turnaround zone, and along the road in front of the VC carpark. I support day parking along Ngauruhoe Tce. However current layout causes a significant narrowing of the street which can impede service and emergency trucks. NO overnight parking allowed anywhere along the street. The Chateau has around 80-100 staff who will be accommodating during season and most live in Ngauruhoe Tce. The Chateau has limited carpark and we want to keep that for our guests and not staff. It is a health and safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parkable verge be put in place along these zones, particularly as it would stay within the road reserve and not disturb any native vegetation. No parking anywhere along the south (Ruapehu) side of the street. Creation of a parkable verge along the south (Chateau) side of the street and along the east (Skotel) side of branch going up between Skotel and RAL quarters. Chateau requires at least 15-20 private 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> “No Stopping” zones are strategically located within Whakapapa Village for safety reasons, emergency services access and assist snow clearing during winter. Ngauruhoe Terrace is the main arterial for large service vehicles and visitors staying at residential & commercial accommodation. Parking private vehicles along Ngauruhoe Terrace, narrows the road corridor and restricts snow clearing during winter. Sections of the “No Stopping” zones would

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<p>hazard for the staff to park too far from where they live and then walk all the way up as the weather will change dramatically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No stopping is a ridiculous inclusion in the plan. Is intention to stop people being dropped off at the tracks? The suggested plan prohibits us walking to Taranaki Falls or Tama Lakes? 	<p>vehicle carparks on Ngauruhoe Terrace.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct a carpark and make it pay by installing parking booths. There is ample wasteland around. Even better if it was free. All day parking & overnight parking on a permit basis only for trampers 	<p>require removal of native vegetation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chateau Tongariro to meet with DOC to review options for utilisation of other parking areas for staff within its lease area.
<p>Whakapapa Village Bus Park</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> It baffles me, I do not understand why it cannot continue to be used as a public transport hub along with others. Shifting people out of Whakapapa Village does not SOLVE a problem, it merely SHIFTS it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow Whakapapa Village Bus Park as a transport hub. Use amenity assets in Whakapapa Village (SH48) set aside for transportation management within the National Park Resumption of limited day parking within the SH48 Road Reserve and allowing bus terminal services at Whakapapa Village. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 2020 winter season was the first year DOC actively managed the parking restrictions and ceased the use of the bus park as a transport hub in Whakapapa Village. DOC's observations were that this change in conjunction with the 3-hour parking restrictions achieved our objectives, to reduce traffic congestion, improve traffic flow and public safety risks
<p>One and three-hour parking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Could you clarify when the one-hour parking rules will apply. We would like to put forward that the area across from the Whakapapa Holiday Park has the same 3-hour limit as all the other areas on the map. A 1-hour parking restriction doesn't seem to allow visitors to do anything in the area. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The one-hour parking restrictions apply all year round. This caters for visitors wanting information or purchase goods and services from local businesses. The 3-hour parking restrictions in winter, is intended to cater for visitors to local short walks and other amenities in Whakapapa Village, with the provision to park longer than 3-hours by permit.

