

Ultra-early fire detection at Waitangi

Spark, the Far North District Council and Dryad have implemented an advanced ultra-early fire detection system at the Waitangi Endowment Forest.

This initiative provides state-of-the-art protection against wildfires, using sensors 'trained' to detect variations in air quality and the presence of pollutants associated with smouldering and smoke.

The system will safeguard an asset linked to one of New Zealand's cultural landmarks by learning to recognise smoke based on the native tree and shrub species, vegetation and Waitangi's unique soil.

Dryad's Silvanet system is a network of solar-powered sensors spread throughout the park. It uses artificial intelligence to detect fires early, issue an alarm to FNDC and the Waitangi Endowment Forest, who alert Fire and Emergency. The sensors are designed to detect traces of smouldering even if there isn't visible smoke or fire. This gives more time to respond, including faster evacuation of the park and enables alerting Fire and Emergency sooner.

Waitangi Endowment Forest, managed by DoC, is home to the popular Waitangi Mountain Bike Park and native species like the North Island Brown Kiwi.

This initiative is pioneering the concept of a 'smart forest' to protect and sustain New Zealand's natural



FNDC has installed the forest sensors and matched funding provided through the Tourism Infrastructure Fund administered by MBIE.

heritage as well as safeguarding the hundreds of people who use the area every week.

There will be 250 wildfire sensors installed across the forest, along with special devices to help them connect.

For the full story go to fndc.govt.nz

Milestone for new District Plan



All submitters to the PDP will be notified of the council's decision.

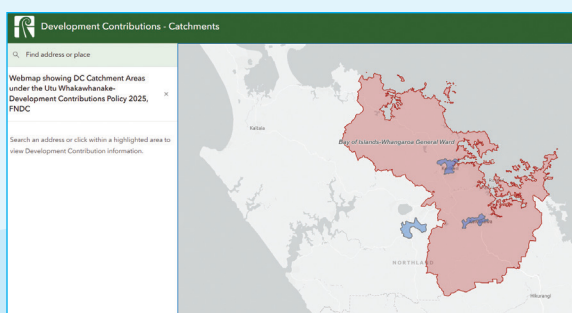
The council has approved the release of its decisions on submissions to the Proposed District Plan (PDP), marking a significant milestone in the development of the district's land use planning framework.

The council's decisions on submissions will be formally notified on Tuesday 30 June 2026. This signals the beginning of the appeal period, when submitters can appeal decisions made.

The PDP will guide how the district's land can be used, developed and subdivided across the Far North. Influencing future housing, business activity, infrastructure development and environmental management across the district.

There will be no change to how planning rules are applied or how applications are assessed between now and 30 June. Both the PDP and Operative Far North District Plan 2009 continue to be treated in the same way as before the council made its decision.

New online contributions map



Use the mapping tool to confirm if contributions will apply to you.

Thinking of building? You can now use an online map to quickly confirm whether your property is in a development contributions catchment area and get an indicative cost of the amount that may be due.

Utu Whakawhanake - Development Contributions Policy was adopted by the council last year and is due to be applied from 1 July. It charges developments that create additional demand for infrastructure.

The contributions help fund new or expanded infrastructure such as transport routes, water supply, wastewater, stormwater drainage, and community facilities required to service growth.

The contributions ensure the costs of growth are shared by those creating the demand, rather than falling on ratepayers. Currently, development contributions are applied to high growth areas. Contributions collected in a catchment must be spent on capital projects supporting growth in that area.

Kāeo's practical water solution



Staff will provide guidance on the filtration and treatment systems.

Water tanks hold the solution for 14 properties in Kāeo affected by longstanding issues with water supply in the town, a practical approach supported by FNDC. As well as installing water tanks to affected property owners and residents, council staff will be providing guidance on how to maintain the systems and how to keep their water safe.

In November, the Water Services Authority - Taumata Arowai placed the Kāeo drinking water supply under statutory management and appointed FNDC to manage the supply. The previously privately-owned supply had been on a boil water advisory for 10 years. The council ensured the supply continued operating and has been reviewing cost-effective, long-term alternative options for customers.

Five community buildings in Kāeo connected to the current supply will also be implementing Acceptable Solutions that enable water to be treated at or near Idings where people will drink it.

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