



CULTURE, HERITAGE AND TOURISM

Culture, heritage and tourism: overview

Culture and heritage are important elements to residents and visitors to Rotorua. Tourism is a major contributor to Rotorua's economy. The district's strong cultural and natural heritage, geothermal resources and adventure activities are major attractions for tourists. All of these factors contribute to the social, cultural, economic and environmental health of Rotorua.

The Culture, Heritage and Tourism theme includes two indicators that consider heritage and tourism

How are we going?

Rotorua continues to be a premier tourist destination due mainly to its broad suite of natural and cultural attractions, and adventure tourism opportunities. Visitor numbers have been variable due to issues affecting international travel markets, such as the terrorist attacks in the USA and SARS in Asia. Visitor numbers have continued to increase since 2002 and are projected to continue.

Only one heritage building, Pukeroa Cottage, has been lost in the past five years. It was demolished due to having lost its structural integrity. A building of the same era still remains near the site where the demolished building stood.

Only 12 authorities were granted by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust to modify, disturb or destroy archaeological sites from 2001 to 2007. Most of these were for logging operations.

What are we doing?



At the time of writing this report Destination Rotorua Tourism Marketing's Visitor Industry Strategy Plan was in the final stages of review. The revised version sets objectives for 2007 to 2015 to increase tourism whilst ensuring cultural, social, environmental and economic sustainability.

The Energy Events Centre is an asset to Rotorua, drawing national and international conferences and events. This venue is one of six managed by Event Venues, including the Convention Centre, Civic Theatre, Te Runanga Tea House, the

Soundshell and the International Stadium. Events held at these venues are important for both the local community and as a regional, national and international draw card bringing economic benefit to the Rotorua district.

Both the Civic Theatre and Te Runanga Tea House are buildings of heritage significance and feature in a recent study of built heritage in the CBD. This information will be considered during the review of the Rotorua District Plan. Other places of heritage significance exist outside of the CBD and it is intended that similar research will be undertaken in other parts of the district as well.

Cultural heritage and tourism indicators are:

Indicator	State
Number of visitor nights	 STEADY
Protection of Rotorua's heritage	 STEADY





Purpose of indicator

Monitoring the numbers of tourists visiting the district can help in planning the infrastructure needed to service visitors and minimise the pressures imposed on natural resources and the environment. New Zealand's clean green image attracts international visitors and Rotorua is one of the country's leading tourism centres.

Current information and trend

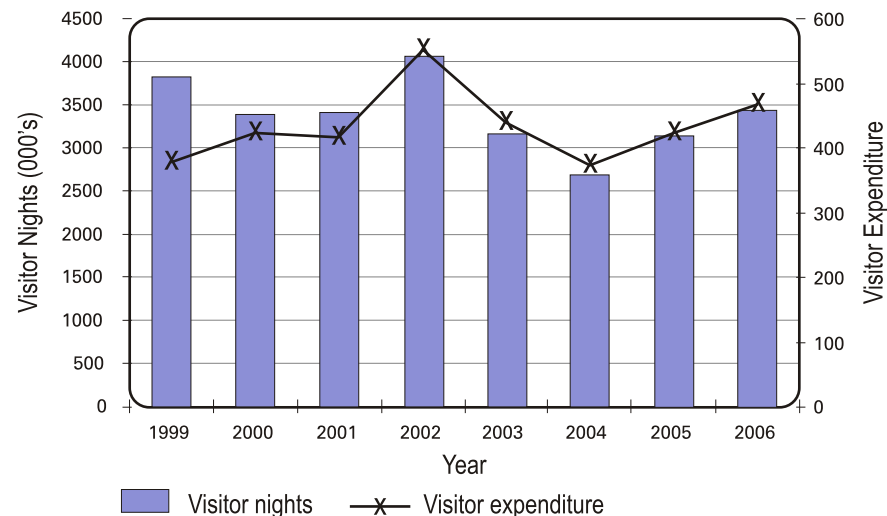
Knowing how many people visit Rotorua helps in planning for their enjoyment and comfort, and managing the environmental effects associated with having extra people in the district. Three of the major issues for consideration are traffic, solid waste disposal and wastewater treatment.

Figure 3.1 shows an increase in the number of visitor nights in 2002. This increase is the result of international visitors choosing New Zealand as a safe destination after the terrorism attacks on the United States of America in 2001. In 2003 people were not so concerned and the 2002-2003 decline is a market correction. In 2004 there were fewer Asian visitors as there was less of a travel demand due to SARS. Since 2002 visitor nights have continued to rise, along with expenditure. There is a strong correlation between the two.



The Energy Events Centre has equipped Rotorua with a greater capacity for national and international events in close proximity to the CBD. A number of projects are underway to improve the CBD, for both locals and visitors, such as the Lake Front Strategy and the CBD Revitalisation Project. Extensions and improvements to the Rotorua airport will make trans-Tasman air travel possible, encouraging more domestic and international visitors to the region.

Figure 3.1 Number of visitor nights and visitor expenditure



Source: Ministry of Tourism New Zealand Regional Tourism Forecasts 2007-2013

What the community said

The majority of residents (80%) felt that tourism was not having a negative effect on Rotorua's environment. Of those who thought it was (20%), 33% believed it was due to rubbish and 29% thought it was due to vehicles.