

Five family homes and a Whanau Marae

Horaparaikete Papakāinga 2000 – 2009

The Papakāinga

Horaparaikete was the first example of multiple housing built on Māori land in the western Bay of Plenty sub-region since the late 1980s. Consisting of five family-owned homes and one large communal whanau marae on about 80 acres of rural-zoned land, it realised aspirations of re-connecting to whanau and whenua. The project lasted from 2000-2009.

Land tenure and administration

To get this project underway, the whanau had to first establish a land management entity through the Māori Land Court to administer the land. An Ahu Whenua Trust, which has authority to issue Licences to Occupy to whanau wanting to build in the Papakāinga, was established in 2001 for this purpose. Under a Licence to Occupy, the holder owns the house only (not the land) and obtains a right to exclusive possession of the house and allocated site area. This Licence to Occupy is also required by Housing New Zealand to approve mortgage finance to build a home on Māori land. This is usually the only home-loan option available to Māori to build homes on Māori land.

Barriers

Numerous barriers were faced during the nine years this project took to complete. Establishing the Ahu Whenua Trust alone took two years and many whanau hui (meetings) around New Zealand. Obtaining Māori Land Court orders took 12 months following the Court decision, while gaining resource consent on a fully notified basis was a lengthy and expensive process. Engagement with Territorial Authorities was strained, as the foreign concepts of untitled house sites, shared common infrastructure, a large communal house, and multiple homes being built at the same time challenged planning and technical staff. Public prejudices were also highlighted during the submission process with comments suggesting the project would “devalue neighbouring land”, “encourage alcoholism and drug use”, and “be dirty and messy”.

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**Whanau
Papakāinga**
Building Communities

Funding/Finance

Funding for the five family-owned homes was achieved by mortgage finance through Housing New Zealand, using what is now known as Kainga Whenua Loans. Funding for the marae was a combination of fundraising (50%), borrowing at high interest rates (30%) and charitable grants (20%). The Trust also received some assistance from Te Puni Kōkiri and Community Employment Group for non capital items, for example, holding hui and concept plans. The marae is available for whanau and the community to hire and is regularly in demand –especially by school groups.

Regulatory requirements

Tauranga City Council was the regulatory authority for this Papakāinga. Under the then City Plan, only two houses per rural property were permitted regardless of land size. A fully notified resource consent and provision for firefighting water tanks were required. The marae utilises a recycling inflow wastewater system, which also required consent from Bay of Plenty Regional Council.

What worked well

- Having a project manager.
- Working together as a collective and agreeing on the project's vision with Whanau first.
- Having a dedicated project driver with relevant skills and experience.
- Planning for the overall project rather than one house at a time.
- Working bees and regular newsletters to those involved.
- A collective approach to helping Whanau get finance, meaning everyone signed their mortgage documents on the same day.
- Using the same building company saved money.

Lessons learned

- Kaumatua (elders) are a source of immense support – treasure and honour them through and after the journey.
- Sometimes the right decisions are not the most favoured – unpopular decisions have to be made for the project to progress.
- Effective communication is crucial – look for allies in all your engagements.
- Plan everything – preparation is key.

For more information about the Whanau Papakāinga, please contact Papakāinga Solutions Limited on 021 041 4676 or email Victoria@pslproperty.co.nz

