

Greerton Maarawaewae Study – Engagement Report

Prepared by SGL/BOON Consultant Team



For Tauranga City Council

March 2022



Executive Summary

The Greerton Maarawaewae Study team (SGL and BOON Ltd) were asked to bring forward recommendations on the future use for the racecourse and golf course reserve land, to support wellbeing and liveability as the city continues to grow, and to provide certainty for existing users and the wider community.

A key focus of the Study was investment in bringing together a wide range of community views - including those from existing users – to inform the decision-making on the future of the reserve land.

This engagement forms one of the primary inputs for the Commissioners' decision. The other inputs will be direction from mana whenua, technical and geological assessments of the site and the wider context of city needs.

The engagement took place from November 2021 to early March 2022. Overall, the team received around 1500 individual pieces of information/input/feedback.

The overall engagement outcomes are summarised as follows.

- extremely strong support for creating a multi-purpose destination green space for the city with improved access to Kopurererua Valley
- very strong support for creating active recreational spaces and for other community amenities – including telling the cultural story of the whenua and providing a multi-cultural community centre
- some support for relocating the racecourse (if a suitable location can be secured)
- some support for relocating equestrian (if a suitable location can be found)
- not much support for relocating the golf course
- limited support for housing on this reserve land
- some support for a public health precinct / future hospital facility (more when the possibility of housing on the existing hospital site is factored in).

Raw data and summaries of each phase of the community engagement input and feedback is available on the Greerton Maarawaewae webpage

<https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/our-future/enabling-growth/the-greerton-maarawaewae-study>

Introduction

Community engagement on the Greerton Maarawaewae study began in November 2021.

Our plan was to engage the community in a four-month conversation to get input in the future of this significant and iconic piece of land.

The objectives of our process were to ensure that:

- existing users would have plenty of opportunity to be heard
- we would try and hear from as wide a representation of Tauranga people as we could
- outcomes would not be ‘a numbers game’ but would instead be deliberately focused on enabling the community to influence the study as it evolved
- the wider context of city needs must also be explained and considered
- the study team would keep an open mind (ie no preconceived ideas).

We chose a process that would be as open, inclusive and as responsive as possible and therefore deliberately did not make this a vote for ‘likes/dislikes’ but rather provided an open-ended process for people to have their say.

The key question we asked in November was:

- ***what would be the BEST use of this reserve land in the future?***

The key question we asked in December/January was:

- ***which of these seven options do you prefer and why?***

This report is a summary of the engagement process and outcomes for the consideration of Council.

Process

The engagement was in two phases – Phase 1 in November/December 2021 and Phase 2 in January February 2022.

Phase 1 - gathering ideas for possible future uses of reserve land (including status quo)

Phase 2 - sharing the seven options and getting feedback (including status quo)

In Phase 1 engagement the project team sought ideas and input from mana whenua (see page 5), existing users of the reserve land and the wider community. Over 650 ideas and inputs were received via online forms, emails, letters, hard copy forms, Facebook, focus groups and community drop-in sessions.

Almost all our questions and engagements were via open-ended questions.

Key outcomes from the feedback in Phase 1 were:

- a significant number of participants said they loved the green, open space provided by the racecourse and golf club (this was particularly recognised during the lock downs) as this was a great place to walk, exercise and take the dog. They appreciate it is one of the only open green spaces left in the city and want to keep it that way
- 71% of people who filled in the online survey said they felt that one of the top five uses of this land should be for a parkland and gardens, accessible for everyone to use and enjoy with another 68% supporting walkways and cycleways to other parts of the city and 64% supporting playgrounds and recreation spaces
- 68% of people who responded said they would use this reserve land more frequently if there were additional recreational and sports activities available
- the majority of people submitting ideas did not want housing of any sort on this land with only 13% of the online submitters agreeing this should be one of the 'top five' future uses of the land
- the biggest challenge being thrown up for consideration if changes were to be made at the site was traffic and costs of infrastructure

- there were concerns about loss of livelihood for those who work at the racecourse and golf club and the lack of any suitable places for relocation if these and equestrian
- there were many who felt that the character of Greerton would be undermined by the addition of 'housing'.

Note: additional details and numbers are contained in Appendix 1.

The engagement process was specifically designed to enable the widest possible range of ideas and feedback be received and considered.

The intention of the process meant every comment or interaction provided the opportunity for the study team to harvest views. The process followed also meant that this was not a *counting* exercise but a *listening* one.

Note: where feedback is reported as a percentage: this is only reporting the online feedback.

The raw data collected from this and the other various ways people had to contribute are available on the Greerton Maarawaewae webpage - <https://www.tauranga.govt.nz/our-future/enabling-growth/the-greerton-maarawaewae-study>

– as well as the summaries of each phase.



Commissioners Tolley and Rolleston viewing some of the community ideas for Greerton Maarawaewae with Darren Toy – Regional Director, Kāinga Ora

The project team used these inputs, and considered a range of contextual and technical information, to develop seven options to go out for consideration in phase two engagement.

Wider context of city needs (now and into the future) that are also being considered alongside the engagement outcomes:

- history
- growth
- location
- geography
- housing
- green spaces (including sports fields)
- community facilities
- accessibility and walking/cycling continuity/connectivity
- stormwater
- DHB/hospital
- potential sites for relocation if needed
- current lease arrangements

The seven options went out just prior to Christmas 2021 with feedback being sought through January and February.

In Phase 2 we received 783 additional comments, feedback and submissions via online forms, email, letters, hard copy forms, Facebook, focus groups and community drop-in sessions.

Throughout the process we sent out regular updates and reminded people of the importance of getting involved.

There were also ongoing meetings and discussions throughout both phases with existing users: Racing Tauranga, the Tauranga Golf Club and TESA.

Note: details and numbers are contained in Appendix 1.



Attendees at one of the focus group sessions



Members of the public providing feedback at one of the community days

Feedback from mana whenua

Mana whenua have expressed a strong desire to keep the use as recreation space and will be discussing ownership if the existing land use changes.

Specifically, Ngai Tamarawaho has advised that they support the ongoing recreation reserve status of the land and would seek to have land ownership discussions should an alternative or revised use be proposed.

As outlined in their correspondence to the Crown, the Ngai Tamarawaho korero is that the return of the reserve lands and indeed all lands within its rohe used for public or community purposes was not pursued as part of its historic Treaty claim. Ngai Tamarawaho are happy for the land to continue to be used for community recreational purposes and would support use of the land for a wider range of recreational uses such as walking and biking pathways through the racecourse and golf course lands.

The Crown and Tauranga City Council will continue to engage directly with mana whenua on these matters.

Feedback from existing users

Racing Tauranga

Racing Tauranga supports options 1 and 2 and do not support options 3-7. They request an extension to the current lease term.

If, however, one of the options 3-7 were to eventuate, Racing Tauranga would like assurance that there is appropriate land and funding available to achieve this.

Racing Tauranga supports greater community use of the reserve while maintaining its present user activities into the future. The current set up is a significant “green space” for community and recreational use in Tauranga.

Tauranga Golf Club

Tauranga Golf Club believe they can work with the Council on any of options 1, 2, 3, and 7. They do not support option 4.

Their primary objective is to retain an 18-hole championship golf course with security of longterm tenure.

Tauranga Golf Club supports greater cycle and pedestrian access to Kopurererua Valley, are open to the clubhouse being more of a community asset, and realignment of golf holes to mitigate any health and safety risks of increased public activity on their boundary.

Tauranga Golf Club also suggests enhancement of their existing offering to include a driving range, mini putt and short course to widen the appeal of the Club to families, non-golfers etc.

Tauranga Equestrian Sports Association (TESA)

TESA strongly support the retention and/or expansion of the current equestrian offering at the Tauranga Racecourse reserve location.

The group has been involved in ongoing discussions with the Study Team to expand on their specific needs.

TESA represents the following groups:

- Tauranga Pony Club
- Dressage
- Western Riding
- Adult Riding Club
- Greerton Pony Club
- Extreme Cowboy
- Tauranga Show Jumping Group
- Show Hunter Group

Feedback from interested parties (in addition to community)

Bay of Plenty District Health Board

The present facility will need to approximately double in scale by 2050 to serve the Western Bay of Plenty subregion.

The existing hospital site is approximately 12.5 ha in area and is constrained by the geotechnical conditions along the escarpment, the “two level” nature of the land, the need to provide off-site parking and services and the existing development of the site which constrains future development.

A ‘greenfield’ site for Health Services at Maarawaewae (option 7) is supported. This would allow for the development of a hospital facility to be planned for expansion over the next 30 years without disrupting the existing operations of the hospital, or its future operations in the new location once the day-to-day operation and administrative functions have been transferred.

The site is ideally located to continue to serve the growing population of the Western Bay of Plenty subregion with the potential for direct access to the State Highway and the arterial road network.

They also submit that the golf course should remain and that the racecourse and equestrian sports facilities could be better located in a new, purpose-built facility more central to its user and support base.

The Greerton Maarawaewae location is ideally suited to future public transport routes along Cameron Road and could incorporate a transport hub.

The existing hospital site could be released for development (which may include the provision of private health services) as well as the provision of medium to high density residential development - in particular on the 3ha RSA site south of Twentieth Ave.

Powerco

Powerco has a number of strategic underground assets through the racecourse and golf club reserve land – adjacent to both the northern and southern boundaries. These assets are protected by registered easements.

While Powerco had no comments on the options being considered, it noted that certain options may result in planting, pathways, parking areas or buildings possibly being located over these easement areas / assets.

Transpower

Transpower requests that the National Grid is recognised and identified as part of the Greerton Maarawaewae Study and that any future areas of development appropriately address the National Grid.

Development under and near the National Grid presents risks and needs to be managed carefully.

No comments on the options.

Ministry of Education

The Ministry is “neutral on the seven options outlined in the study” and acknowledged that Council has incorporated its earlier feedback on the preferred locations for a potential school site for options 5 and 6.

However, the Ministry is not committing to providing a school at these potential locations nor within the development area as they would need to undertake further investigations to determine both the need for a new school and the suitability of the site.

The NZ Motor Caravan Association (NZMCA)

The NZMCA sees some value in developing and operating a site for up to 50 motorhomes and caravans to park overnight. The value in such a venture exists not just for their members but for Tauranga Racing and local businesses which benefit from the spending of visitors.

The NZMCA notes that such a land use is not a long-term prospect for the land covered by the Greerton-Maarawaewae study and that it is not particularly relevant to any of the future options being considered as part of this study. They believe however that it is worth considering as a short to medium term activity and have asked Council to consider adding this into the mix of potential components in the immediate future for the area.

Kāinga Tupu

Overall, the Kāinga Tupu Taskforce supports the need to develop this land into housing but also to create a dynamic, connected and accessible neighbourhood to enable all aspects of the community to really thrive.

To have a positive impact on the current housing crisis in Tauranga Kāinga Tupu says the City is going to need a lot more social and affordable housing options including affordable rentals, progressive home ownership as well as other models. They recommend that this land be developed to include at least 40 percent of both affordable and social housing.

Kāinga Tupu says ensuring that there is inclusionary zoning will be hugely important to enable provision for both affordable and social housing. Different housing opportunities to be considered include: emergency housing, youth transitional housing facilities, rent to own and papakāinga (enabling Māori to live on ancestral lands).

Good quality, sustainable designs should be essential for any housing development, with access to good amenities and green space. Kāinga Tupu supports community gardens – planting of fruit trees and vegetables, good landscaping, BBQ areas and the creation of good infrastructure that attracts business and enables people to work remotely.

Kāinga Tupu Taskforce consists of:

- Accessible Properties NZ Ltd
- Bay of Plenty District Health Board
- BayTrust
- Department of Corrections
- EmpowermentNZ
- Kāinga Ora: Homes and Communities
- Member of Parliament (Labour)
- Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
- Ministry of Social Development
- New Zealand Police
- Ngāti Ranginui Iwi Society
- Tauranga City Council
- Te Pūni Kōkiri
- Under the Stars.

Note: Tauranga City Council and Kāinga Ora did not form an official view on the feedback submitted by Kainga Tapu about housing on the site

Feedback from the wider community on the options

Options 1 and 2

The majority of submissions in favour of Options 1 and 2 were largely similar – people who want to keep things the way they are with possibly some enhancements.

Common themes around wanting the reserve land to remain as is included:

- people who want it to stay the same because they don't want housing there (often with no context – simply: “no to housing”)
- people who want it to stay the same because they enjoy the activities already there: golf, racing, equestrian activity or ‘walking the dog’, and some that mentioned the great economic benefit to the city from racing, golf and/or equestrian

- historical reasons such as the land being ‘gifted’ as a reserve specifically for racing and golf or that the land was stolen and should be given back
- many people who consider the status quo to be existing green space that the public already enjoys. Regular comments included: “don’t take away our green space” and “keep it green for everyone to enjoy”, “lots of people enjoy this green space already”.

Stay the way it is now – we need the greenbelt to break suburbia

Number 2 option looks the best – no housing – keep it green space for the future. Once it’s gone it’s gone forever

It’s already green space – the vital lungs of our city

With regard to option 2 a comment that summed up people’s views was: “a good option that preserves the integrity of keeping this a valued green belt area while increasing the avenues for more recreational use for people living in Tauranga”.

People who did not support options 1 and 2 were concerned about the limited numbers of users currently able to access the reserve and the idea that in the future this will be in the middle of the city – and therefore probably has better alternative uses.

The reserve is underused by the wider community and not accessible to most

This is a poor use of strategically valuable land

Options 3 and 4

The majority of feedback on options 3 and 4 was in support of these options because people liked the idea of enhanced public use, stating that they meet the needs of the widest range of people.

Both these options were consistent with the views of the majority – ie they want to see the reserve kept as green space and used for public recreation. There was significant support (through these and the feedback on options 1 and 2) for creating a multi-purpose destination for the city and for future generations.

This should be like everyone's backyard
The City's Mount equivalent... a place where I can walk each day
We should think about this as having our own Central Park
Keep it as our own Hagley Park, beautify it and let the people of Tauranga be proud of it

People also felt that these options stayed true to the original intent of maintaining this as a reserve [public land].

The main negatives for options 3 and 4 were the cost involved (either for redevelopment and/or relocation of existing facilities) and that maybe equestrian is not a good mix with other sporting activity.

Options 5 and 6

Option 6 was viewed much more favorably than option 5 in the feedback. People (especially younger people and ethnic groups) were the ones mostly in favour of housing. There was plenty of references in the feedback to Tauranga needing more homes for people to live in and that this it would be ideal for multi-unit dwellings. But also many references that this was unlikely to be “affordable housing” as the location and outlook (onto a golf course or recreational park) would mean the houses would be very expensive.

Many people expressed the idea that this was an excellent location because of its centrality.

Along the same lines regarding location, there was strong support for the provision of a multi-cultural community centre that would be accessible to the many different cultures that live, work, and play in Tauranga.

Housing and a park will benefit the whole community as these meet the future needs of a growing city

The city desperately needs more houses

I think having housing and sports fields is important for the future of Tauranga

The second most common negative comment throughout the entire phase 2 feedback (after “no to housing”) pointed to current traffic and infrastructure issues. People expressed concern that, with the addition of housing/recreation/community facilities/schools, “things will just get worse”. There was also concern that having housing on this land would not be in keeping with the current reserve status of the land.

There were also a lot of people who believed the city should be building out (into the countryside) for more houses instead of intensifying the city.

Option 7

In November the Bay of Plenty District Health Board proposed including a precinct for “potential health services” within this green field site (see notes from their submission page 7).

The main challenge with this option for people providing feedback was lack of clarity about what “potential health services” would entail. Therefore, the amount of specific feedback on this option was lower than the others. As the process moved forward, it became clear that the intention was for the development of a future hospital facility.

The most support for this option was recorded in the focus groups and community days when people had the opportunity to ask questions and the above point could be clarified. The main reason people gave for supporting this option was the potential for freeing up the current hospital site for housing – which would be even closer to the city centre – and therefore seen as a “win-win”.

People also referenced the need to consider the future growth in the city and that a new site (at the apex of all major transport routes) would enable a more cohesive health precinct to be established.

There was also perceived synergy between a health precinct, sportsfields and recreational spaces.

The main opposition to this option included current traffic issues and that it would be wrong to use this land for any purpose other than recreation.

The current hospital can be replaced by houses and a hospital and park would be better in this area

A park in the central area is important for mental health and for families

Other comments

1. Access to Kopurererua Valley

There was almost unanimous support for creating enhanced walking and cycling access to Kopurererua Valley – including from those who supported the status quo.

2. Relocation of the racecourse, golf course, equestrian

The scope of the Study did not include finding alternative locations for the racecourse, golf course and/or equestrian should they need to be relocated one day. It was agreed at the outset that coming to a decision on the ‘best future use of this land’ would be the first step. Then, following that, should ‘the best future use of this land’ require potential relocation or change of status, then there would need to be follow-up investigations in partnership with mana whenua and leaseholders.

The reason this has been mentioned here, is that many people commented that they did not want to provide feedback on options that mentioned potential relocation (in the absence of knowing what the alternative might be) and therefore preferred options 1 and 2.

There was also a strong sense that the current activities there are not the best use of this land in the future – noting that golf course remaining in situ had much more support than either the racecourse or equestrian activity.

There was some comment that if racing is relocated then it would be good to build a purpose-built equestrian facility adjacent to the new location as many people arrive and depart from horsey activities with horse floats.

Many of those who supported the racecourse, golf and/or equestrian being relocated, talked about these being activities that limited the numbers of people who could currently enjoy the green space. By relocating them, the space would be available for a much wider (and more diverse) range of people to enjoy.

3. Traffic

A lot of comments came in about the traffic and how bad it is currently. Not surprisingly people found it challenging to imagine a future where traffic (individuals in cars) will be less of an issue – specifically around the multi-modal shift, improvements to Cameron Road and the improved accessibility for cyclists to get to the city centre (taking cars off the road).

4. Equestrian

With regard to the equestrian space, there did seem to be some support for this if this land was expanded into a purpose-built facility.

However, there was also an equal amount of commentary about how the equestrian area would not necessarily sit well with other activities in the reserve (horses and ball sports, horses and children in playgrounds, or horses and walking/cycling trails) and that this type of facility would be better located elsewhere.

5. A multi-cultural community centre

The Tauranga ethnic groups who were well represented in the focus groups and community days, made strong representations for the creation of not just a “community centre” but to expand this to become more of a multi-cultural facility. This would be recognised as a space that all cultures could access for meetings and events and is considered much needed in the City.

6. Alternative housing options

Many people, in both phases one and two, raised the point about alternative housing sites in Greerton. Specifically, they thought the light industrial area to the north of the reserve (bounded by Chadwick Road) and the older housing area around the pool would be excellent locations for new multi-plex dwellings and apartments.

Appendix one – engagement summary

The study team now has 848 people on the Greerton Maarawaewae database.

By the numbers...

Phase 1 we received a total of 650 pieces of feedback – breaking that down

- 250 online – form, email
- 300 - Facebook
- 100 in person - two community days and four focus groups.

Phase 2 we received a total of 783 pieces of feedback – breaking that down

- 452 – online form
- 94 – email, phone and post
- 100 – Facebook
- 137 in person from four community days and six focus groups including a focus on young people, ethnic and multi-cultural community leaders, pacific business leaders as well as general interest parties

Website statistics

October 22 – February 28

Main page

The page was viewed a total of 4,921 times by 3,076 individual people. The average time spent on the page was 3min 18 seconds.

The day with the highest number of page views was December 16, 2021, with 292 page views.

Age and gender stats for the main page (age groups listed in order from most views to least) note: google can only gather this data from people who allow it so not everyone is included in these numbers – it does give a representation of users, though.

65+	225 female	163 male
45–54	193 female	105 male
55–64	167 female	91 male
35–44	140 female	70 male
25–34	85 female	77 male
18–24	41 female	27 male

‘What is the Greerton Maarawaewae Study for’ page

This page was viewed a total of 348 times by 286 individuals.

Greerton Maarawaewae Study FAQs page

This page was viewed a total of 244 times by 184 individuals.

Phase 1 – engagement your ideas page

This page was viewed a total of 154 times by 133 individuals.

Documents:

The Greerton FAQs have been viewed 73 times

The Greerton options introduction document has been viewed 217 times

The Greerton options 1-4 document has been viewed 577 times

The Greerton options 5-7 document has been viewed 402 times

Facebook - Phase 1...



Tauranga City Council
October 22 · 🌐

We're currently working on the Greerton Maarawaewae study in partnership with [Kāinga Ora - Homes and Communities](#)

The purpose of the study is to identify opportunities that will support wellbeing and livability as the city continues to grow.

We'll be engaging with mana whenua, existing users and the wider community on the future use of the racecourse and golf club reserve. ... [See more](#)



14,419
People reached

741
Engagements

Boost post

14,419 People Reached

77 Reactions, Comments & Shares ⓘ


33 Like	30 On Post	3 On Shares
1 Love	1 On Post	0 On Shares
4 Sad	4 On Post	0 On Shares
5 Angry	4 On Post	1 On Shares
30 Comments	21 On Post	9 On Shares
4 Shares	4 On Post	0 On Shares

664 Post Clicks

17 Photo views	116 Link clicks	531 Other clicks ⓘ
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NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

2 Hide post	0 Hide all posts
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page




Tauranga City Council
November 5 · 🌐

What do you imagine for the future of the racecourse and golf club reserve land in Greerton? We want your thoughts and ideas on the best use of this land.

One of the ways you can do this, is by dropping in to one of our community days:

🌳 Saturday 6 November, from 10am, Multicultural Tauranga Ethkick Event, Morland Fox Park, 1 Devon Street, Greerton... [See more](#)



Tauranga City Council
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Learn More

53,688
People reached

5,635
Engagements

Boost post

👍👎👏 44

172 Comments 43 Shares

👍 Like

💬 Comment

🔗 Share

⋮

53,688 People Reached

786 Reactions, Comments & Shares

103 👍 Like	22 On Post	81 On Shares
6 ❤️ Love	0 On Post	6 On Shares
3 😂 Haha	2 On Post	1 On Shares
8 😲 Wow	4 On Post	4 On Shares
19 😞 Sad	4 On Post	15 On Shares
21 😡 Angry	16 On Post	5 On Shares
582 Comments	303 On Post	279 On Shares
45 Shares	43 On Post	2 On Shares


4,849 Post Clicks

80 Photo views	309 Link clicks	4,460 Other clicks
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NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

10 Hide post	6 Hide all posts
0 Report as spam	0 Unlike Page

Phase 2...




Tauranga City Council

February 4 · 🌐

You've given us some great ideas for the future use of the Tauranga Racecourse Reserve in Greerton, including enhanced connections to Kopurererua Valley for walkers and cyclists. We now have seven draft options for you to look at.

Please drop-in to one of our community days where we will share the draft options with you, listen to your feedback and answer your questions.

- Thursday 17 February, 4pm-7pm, Le Chat Noir Café, 144 Chadwick Road
... See more



Tauranga City Council

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Learn more

👍 Adam Smith, Gray Rose and 21 others

38 Comments 17 Shares

appears on posts.

66098
People reached

180
Reactions, comments & shares

38	0	0
👍 Like	😲 Wow	❤️ Love
0	0	0
😂 Haha	😞 Sad	😡 Angry
125	17	
Comments	Shares	

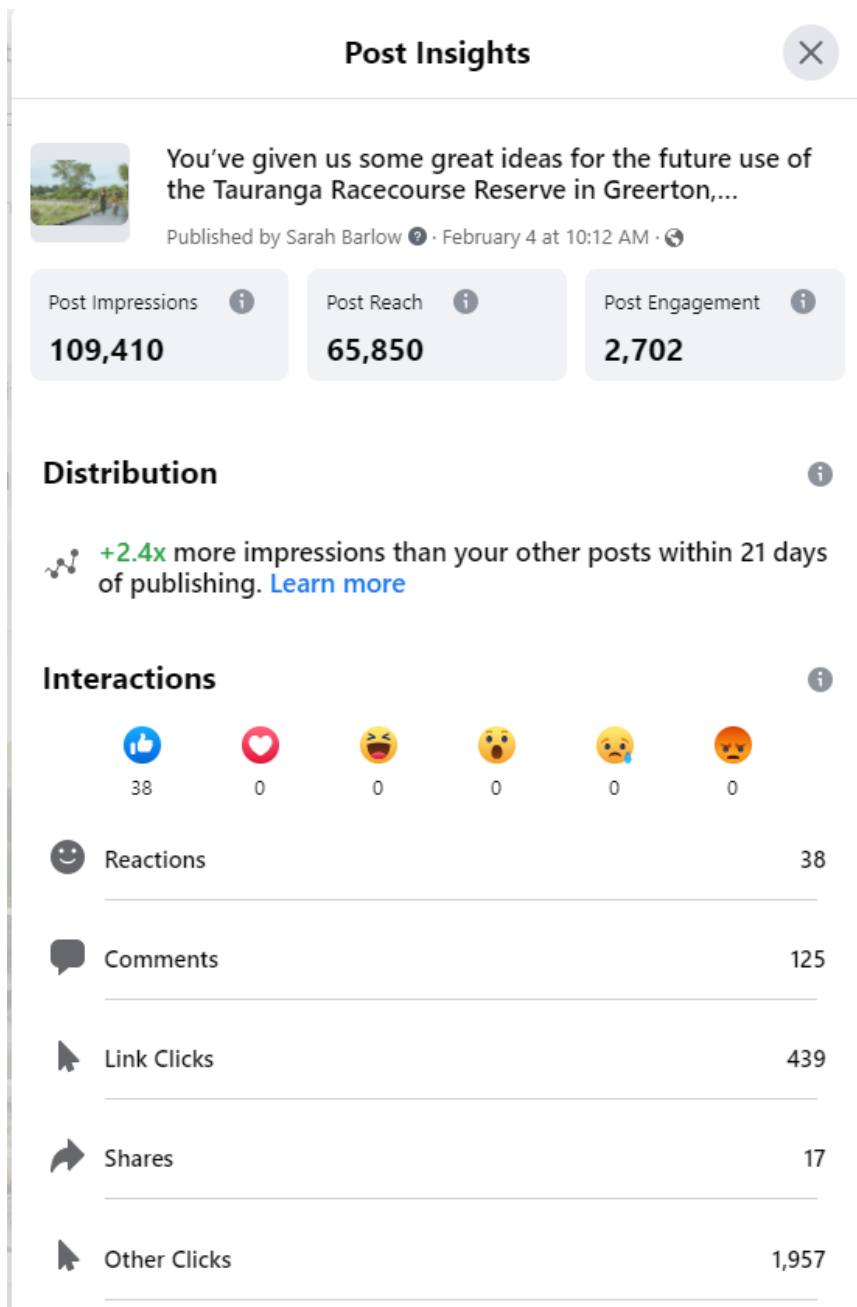
2524
Post clicks

127	439	1958
Photo views	Link clicks	Other clicks

Negative feedback

7	1	0
Hide post	Hide all posts	Report as spam
0		
Unlike Page		

Facebook (snapshot) 4-17 February



Summary reports (including raw data on all the engagement activities) is available on the Greerton Maarawaewae web page.