

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM

KAURI FLATS SCHOOL - AWAKERI WETLANDS

DESIGN OPPORTUNITIES



September 2020

DESIGN BRIEF / REQUIREMENTS

Based on discussions the project team had at Kauri Flats School at the end of 2017, we agreed on the following design criteria and requirements for the outdoor classroom and access to the school. The adjacent sketch was included in the memo, marking the key areas.

These key areas include:

1. A platform upstream

This platform is to provide the waterway for water quality measurements and other activities. The structure is to be used exclusively by the school, although access across the channel is possible.

Design criteria:

- Size: - to be used by 8-10 students at the same time
- Access: - new gate and footpath, access from existing building
- Water access: to be provided through a staggered/terraced structure or a set of steps
- Materials: Matching the outdoor classroom
- Surrounding vegetation: follow the planting design of the channel, potential for school involvement in propagation and planting. Low growing vegetation (sedges and ferns) for safety, visibility and crime prevention

2. Outdoor classroom

This space is to be designed as a community (public) area, available for school events and outdoor education. The outdoor classroom is located by the proposed back entrance of the school.

Design criteria:

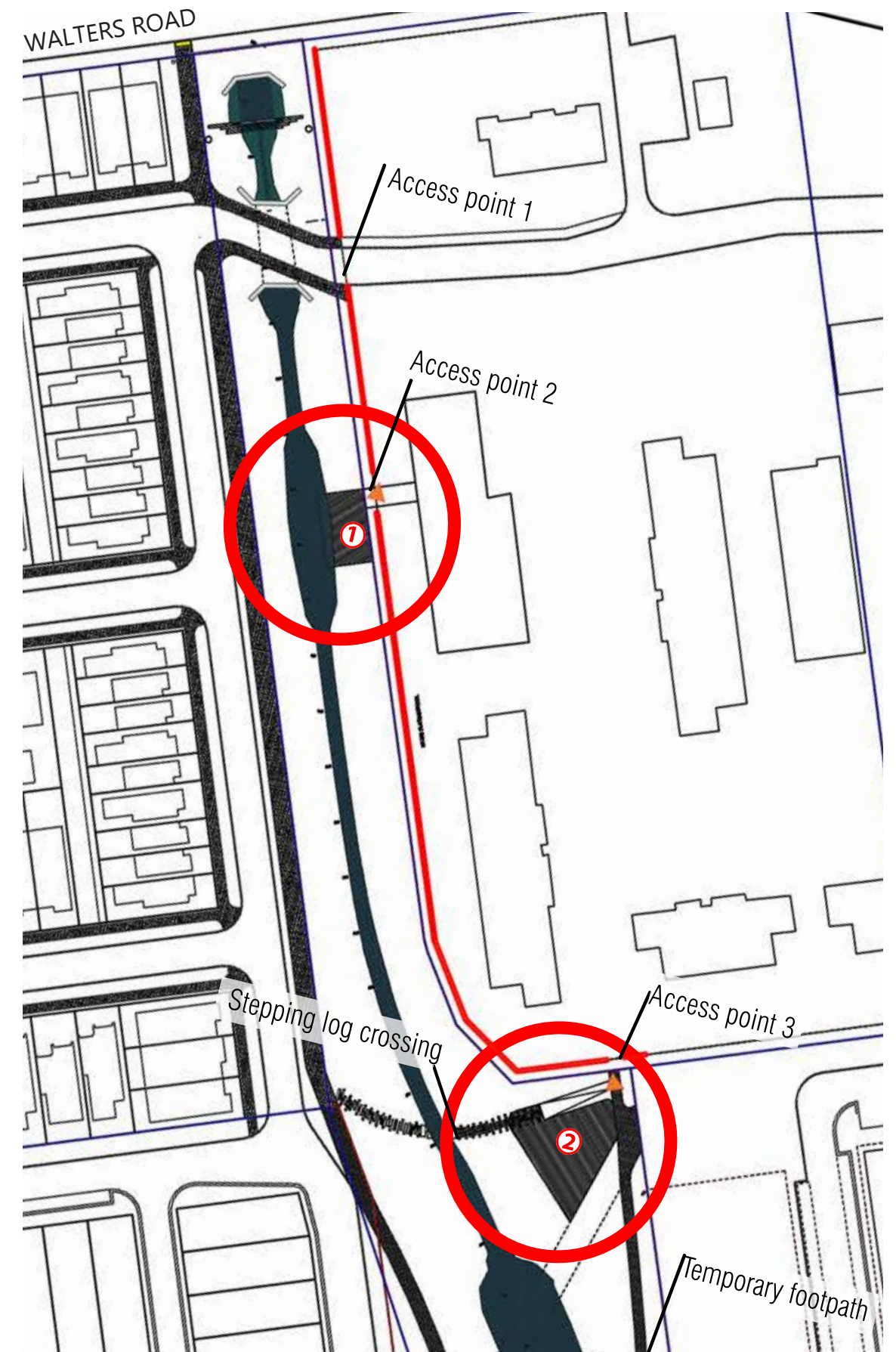
- Size: - to be used by multiple classes (possible small events) at the same time (60-80 students)
- Materials: easy maintenance, longevity
- Spatial integration: to be integrated into the overall design of Awakeri, with access from the school and the footpath network. Accessibility is key
- Seating: terraced seating providing views across Awakeri, creating an engaging meeting point.
- Potential for cultural expression
- Shading: long term solution is natural shading by trees, short term a shading structure can be considered
- Surrounding vegetation: follow the planting design of the channel, potential for school involvement in propagation and planting. Low growing vegetation (sedges and ferns) for safety, visibility and crime prevention

3. Road culvert – Built

The road culvert is shown as Access point 1 on the adjacent sketch. This structure provides road access and allows for a school bus loop. A footpath connection for cycle / pedestrian access from the west is also incorporated.

4. Other potential built elements to consider as part of the scope

- Gate and fencing of the back of the school in relation to access and spatial structure
- Temporary access (refer to previous page)
- Same level crossing – a bridge providing safe access in flood conditions
- Informal, low level crossings – already built



DESIGN PRINCIPLES

Kauri Flats Primary is located at the northern end of the waterway towards Walters Road. The school opened partially in February 2017. Our aim is to integrate the school with Awakeri's open spaces as seamlessly as possible, to unlock a number of joint benefits. We also seek to integrate it well into the walking and cycling network.

In terms of public transport, three bus stops are envisaged nearby. The closest (due west of the school) is connected by a short on-road section, while those shown to the south, at the 'civic heart' are connected to the school by a short section of shared path. This offers students a range of safe and convenient 'non motorised' ways of getting to school.

In terms of the layout of the school itself, the current built form is shown, and the main connections to the back and through the school are part of this design discussion. It is likely that the school will need to be fenced, meaning that the connections shown on this page will only be available during school hours. We are aiming to work with the school as the design progresses to ensure that any barrier between the school and Awakeri is as invisible as possible, and to see whether we can encourage provision of 'outdoor classrooms' to foster a sense of environmental stewardship and understanding in the students.

In the curatorial framework three key opportunities have been identified at the southern entrance:

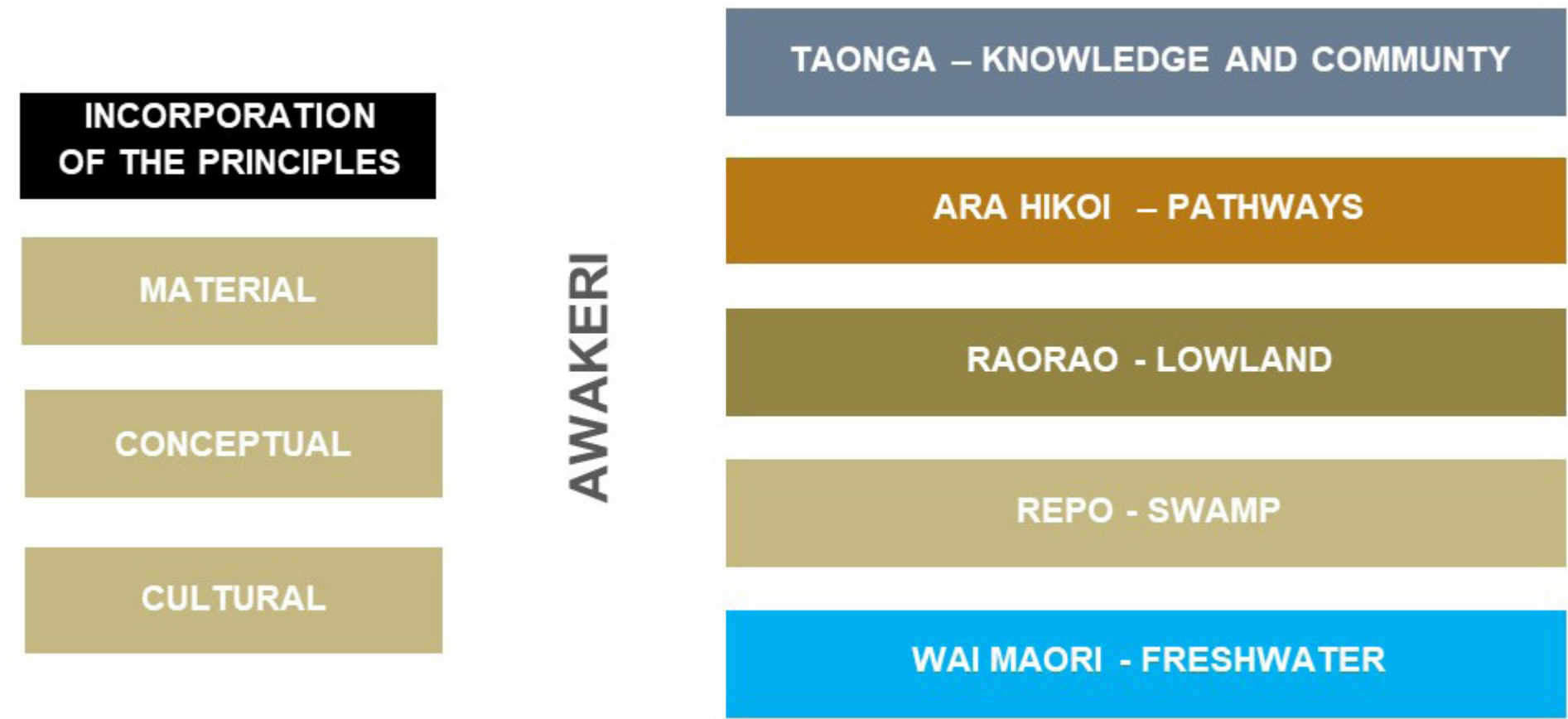
1. *There is potential to delineate or enhance the threshold between Awakeri and the school grounds, immediately outside Kauri Flats School, providing a signature gateway to Kauri Flats.*
2. *The adjoining bridge should function as an extension of the threshold experience – a transition from one side of the waterway to the gateway to the school.*
3. *The neighbouring green open space is designed to connect the school to Awakeri; encouraging discovery of the channel ecology and engagement with the whenua. There is a strong potential for this area to function as an outdoor education area.*

The Kauri Flats School entrance experience is diverse and layered. The response to this series of spaces should be one of relative scale and impact that activates the northern end of the waterway through a culturally and conceptually informed experience that centres around tiwhiri – the awakening and discovery of knowledge. The response should aim to embed meaning, promote shared experiences and create a layered expression of culture that speaks to the history of the area. The treatment of this space should respectfully and carefully consider the dialogue that will exist between the education / meeting space and the rest of the waterway.

Key principles of the Kauri Flats School entrance include:

- Waharoa (threshold)
- Taonga (knowledge)
- Wai Maori (freshwater)
- Whenua and moana (land and sea)
- Plants and wildlife





OPTION 3

