

Assessment Criteria

Significant Natural Features Grant



General

The Matamata-Piako Significant Natural Features Grant is a contestable fund of \$15,000 per year that is administered by the Matamata-Piako District Council. The funding round is open March to May each year. This fund serves to encourage and assist landowners and members of the community to protect, manage and enhance the significant natural features in the district through funding assistance of up to 50% of the project cost.

Funding

These significant natural features include but are not necessarily limited to:

- Stands of native trees
- Areas of native bush
- Wetlands.

This fund will give preference to those sites that are either:

- Already protected in perpetuity (these include QEII Covenants, listed under the District Plan, Schedule 3 – Outstanding Significant Natural Features and Trees, and Other Protected Items, or any other formal protection method); preference will be given to those areas that have some form of formal protection.
- Identified as significant through an ecological assessment of the site, (undertaken by a qualified ecologist and ecological assessment to be provided).

Priority will be given to habitats of Regional or National Significance by meeting one or more of the criteria of the District Plan, Appendix 1, section 5 (xi).

All areas for funding **must** be located within the Matamata-Piako district boundary, therefore any area or part area outside the district boundary will be ineligible for funding.

Please Note: No funding will be released prior to sites being formally protected in perpetuity. Funding will not be released until Council receives evidence that the land owner has registered a covenant or other appropriate legal instrument on the title.

Criteria for assessment

The following criteria will be used to assess the application, and in some instances, a visit to the site may be warranted.

- Appendix 1 of the Matamata-Piako District Plan.
- The degree to which the work improves, enhances, benefits, protects or reinstates indigenous natural resources.
- Evidence of landowners future commitment to the project, the long term benefit, including the future management for protection of the site.
- The level of ecological benefits.

Further information

In each financial year (July to June) there will be one funding round. The funding round is open to all residents/ratepayers and groups of the Matamata-Piako District and will be advertised through the local papers as a public notice. Public agencies such as Department of Conservation, Waikato Regional Council, and Land Information New Zealand etc are excluded from applying for the funds. Preference for funding will be given to those applications that meet the criteria stated above. The level of community involvement with a site may in some instances be used as further criteria for assessment of funding allocation.

The total amount available to an application is solely at the discretion of the panel assessing the application. The funds will be paid on completion of the project.

The funds cannot be used for:

- Work that there is a legal obligation to do.
- Compensation for work already commenced.
- Work for financial gain to the landowner/occupant.
- Any resource or building consent fees as a result of the proposed activity.
- Costs for the preparing and lodging of your application.
- Debt servicing.

If the applicant breaches any of these conditions, Council will require that either the full or a determined partial amount of the funds provided be refunded.

Any exceptions to the Significant Natural Features Grant Assessment Criteria will require resolution from Council.

If you are GST registered, please do not include GST in your costs.

How to apply

Complete the application form and supply all necessary documents that support your application to:

Corporate Strategy
Matamata-Piako District Council
PO Box 266
Te Aroha 3342

Alternatively you can apply online at mpdc.govt.nz/our-community/significant-natural-features-funding.

The funding round is open March to May each year.

