

Frequently Asked Questions:

How would the policies affect the way Council chooses which public art to accept?

A public art panel would be established to make recommendations around new permanent public art proposals, including monuments and memorials. The panel would be made up of key Council staff, Iwi and Haapuu representation, art and construction specialists.

Together, the panel would consider new artwork proposals from an artistic, cultural and maintenance/construction perspective.

Why is Council looking at introducing new policies?

While Council has had a formal process for the acquisition of permanent public artwork, (including monuments, and memorials), it has never had formal policies.

Over the last few years there has been increasing public interest in monuments both locally and internationally.

To make sure the way we address and accept permanent public art is smooth, clear, and objective, Council is proposing to formalise the way we make decisions about art. The draft policies also propose a clear process for reviewing and decision making for artworks that have caused significant upset.

Why is Council proposing to differentiate monuments and memorials from public art?

While monuments and memorial are a type of public art, they tend to be more emotive and socially complex than other kinds of art, which is why Council is proposing to differentiate the two. Council will continue to support artworks which tell the stories of Hamilton Kirikiriroa in an inclusive, fair, and accurate way. However, the Draft Monuments and Memorials Policy will ensure that there is a greater level of public consultation through the development of monuments and memorial art.

If the policies are adopted, what would happen if a piece of art causes upset?

Artwork would have to cause significant upset for it to be reviewed by the Council.

In this case, Council's General Manager Community would decide whether artwork had triggered a level of upset that would warrant a review.

In that case, a taskforce made up of Elected Members, Maaori representation, Council staff, members of the Public Art Panel and other relevant experts to guide decision making.

Council would make the final decision about the artwork in question.

Under the draft policies, could existing artwork be removed?

Yes, public art – including monuments and memorials – can currently be relocated if it has injured someone, is badly damaged, or if its location is needed for something else. If a piece of public and permanent artwork needs to be relocated, Council works with donors to find another suitable location.

Under the draft policies, artwork would be reviewed by a specialised 'taskforce' if it were found to cause significant upset or distress to a group or community. The taskforce – made up of Council staff, Elected Members, Maaori representation and other topic related experts – would review the artwork in question.

What do the policies mean for the Captain Hamilton statue?

No decisions have been made around this monument, which remains a safe storage facility. If the policies were to be adopted by Council, the Captain Hamilton statue would eventually be reviewed through these policies. If the policies are not adopted, the Council can review the monument through other avenues.

Would park benches or plaques be included as monuments or memorials?

No, the policy won't apply to any small-scale memorials such as trees, commemorative plaques, and street furniture. The policy also wouldn't apply to art in cemeteries, the Hamilton Gardens or Waikato Museum.

Does the policy include murals?

No, public murals are considered temporary and aren't included in the policy.

To find out more about public art, including Hamilton's collection and more Frequently Asked Questions, visit hamilton.govt.nz/publicart