



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Ruapehu District Council**



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#### **New National Army Museum i-SITE extends Council's strategic support for Ruapehu tourism and Waiouru development**

Ruapehu District Council and the National Army Museum in Waiouru have signed-off on arrangements for operating an official i-SITE visitor information centre within the Museum as part of the \$2.5 million redevelopment of its entranceway.

Ruapehu i-SITE Manager Kim Treen said that Council was excited about the expansion of the Ruapehu i-SITE network operations into the iconic National Army Museum.

The installation of an i-SITE within the National Army Museum follows on from Council's recent successful trial of an i-SITE within the Department of Conservation (DOC) Whakapapa Visitor Centre at Mt Ruapehu that has just been extended for three years.

"The new i-SITE is scheduled to be up and running by the end of June at which time it will join the Whakapapa Visitor Centre and Council's two other i-SITEs in Taumarunui and Ohakune," she said.

"This latest expansion of the i-SITE network is an important part of Council's strategic support for Ruapehu tourism and visitor services that together with Visit Ruapehu forms a central plank to Council's economic development strategy."

"As well as providing direct support for Ruapehu's growing tourism and visitor service sector the National Army Museum i-SITE builds on Council's township development plans that envisages Waiouru as the southern gateway to the volcanic plateau and the Ruapehu district."

Council's larger economic development strategy for Ruapehu is based around a broader concept of Destination Management Planning that integrates support for local business with destination marketing and economic development activity."

Mrs. Treen said that Council was about to start advertising for two new staff for the National Army Museum i-SITE.

“With the Museum already attracting an estimate 150,000 visitors per year and growing the i-SITE staff are expected to be very busy.”

“Army Museum staff state that a large number of Museum visitors want local advice and information or want to make a booking for travel, accommodation or an experience,” she said.

“Having the trained i-SITE staff and systems available within the Museum and being able to provide these services on the spot will significantly enhance the visitor experience for everyone’s benefit.”

“Council envisage that the i-SITE staff will be able to help highlight Ruapehu experiences and attractions and direct tourists off SH1 and onto SH49 down toward Ohakune and into the Ruapehu district.”

Mrs. Treen noted that when the Transmission Gully motorway bypass linking Otaki with Wellington is complete the National Army Museum would have the only i-SITE between Levin and Turangi.

“The new i-SITE will be a ‘win-win’ for Council, the National Army Museum, Waiouru and regional tourism that will help unlock Waiouru’s southern gateway potential as part of Ruapehu’s visitor and tourism offering,” she said.

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Clive Manley  
Chief Executive  
**Ruapehu District Council**

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