

# Just the ticket

A heritage-focused project in the heart of Kawakawa sits at the junction of colour and culture.



If you have had the pleasure of visiting Kawakawa, you know that there's no place quite like it. Its charming main street brims with whimsy and unique character, where interesting colours and forms abound – thanks in part to Austrian-born artist Friedensreich Hundertwasser, who resided there from 1975 until his death in 2000 and designed what is likely the country's most famous toilet block. But Kawakawa is even more famous for the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway, which runs through the centre of its main street, earning it the moniker 'Train Town'.

Popular with tourists, the railway operates on a portion of the former Opuia Branch line. The station building, built in 1900, remains largely in its original condition. Now, the adjoining Te Hurihanga Training and Service Centre offers even more for visitors to enjoy. It's a component of a much larger project funded by Kānoa, the Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit. The Bay of Islands Vintage Railway is also working with Northland Adventure Experience (NAX) partners to restore the 1880-84 heritage rail line to Opuia, repair Gabriel the steam engine, their carriages, the Minerva steamboat, reinstate the Pou Herenga Tai Twin Coast Cycle Trail and other projects from Kawakawa to Opuia that are sure to attract plenty of interest over the years to come.

Given that the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway has such great historical and cultural importance, the Te Hurihanga Training and Service Centre is the product of many dedicated stakeholders who have had a hand in ensuring the carefully considered project reflects the cultural narrative and history of the Kawakawa Railway. With the support of cultural design guidance, the Bay of Islands Railway and NAX, MODE Design and Avail Pacific collaborated on the building's design – which is quickly becoming a much-loved and highly-photographed destination.

"The project team worked closely with Ngāti Hine throughout the project to confirm the cultural narrative," says Charles Fisher, Senior Technical Lead at MODE Design. "Te Hurihanga, meaning 'turning point' or 'junction', provides an important bookend for the railway as it embarks on restoring the historic line back to Opuia. The unique frontage reflects the



traditional coal mining architecture of the local area, representing four separate coal miners' cottages. The barge boards reflect the Māori heritage, whakapapa and identity of the area – and these works were completed by local artists."

The colour selection was of high significance to this project, with each Resene hue intentionally and authentically chosen. The project team wanted a balanced representation of the project partners and to reflect the unique bicultural heritage of the community.

"Even though it is a small building, we wanted to be bold and playful with highlighting the Kawakawa historical coal mining story using the architectural style of buildings from that time as well as local iwi and community kaupapa," says Pip Bolton, Director and Founder of Avail Pacific. "We are really pleased with the final outcome."

Laurell Pratt, Development Manager for NAX, worked together with Pip on the colour selection for the project. "The colour palette works on a couple of key levels," she explains. "Firstly, it recognises Ngāti Hine as tangata whenua and the combination of red, green, yellow and black are significant to their tribal identity.

**opposite:** The new Te Hurihanga Training and Service Centre in Kawakawa was funded by a provincial growth fund grant by the government to Northern Adventure Experience (NAX), a joint venture short life entity set up to administer the funds and successful delivery of the project objectives. The building will be used to enhance training, education and tourism and connects the significant culture and history of Kawakawa and the Bay of Islands to Opuia. Its carefully considered and eye-catching exterior features Resene Laser, Resene Fuel Yellow, Resene Colonial White, Resene Paddock, Resene Parsley, Resene Permanent Green, Resene Wild West, Resene Pioneer Red, Resene Lonestar, Resene Ironsand and Resene Black – earning it a Resene Total Colour Commercial Exterior Award. Walls are finished in Environmental Choice-approved Resene Sonyx 101 semi-gloss waterborne paint and trim and joinery in Resene Lustacryl semi-gloss waterborne enamel.

**above:** Beyond its brilliantly-coloured façade, the Te Hurihanga Training and Service Centre houses a trainee's space, kitchen, utility room, boardroom, offices for railway operations and public toilets. The interior echoes the energy and palette used outside, featuring Resene SpaceCote Low Sheen tinted to Resene Half Colonial White, Resene Parsley, Resene Laser, Resene Fuel Yellow, Resene Wild West, Resene Permanent Green and Resene Gondwana.

	Resene Colonial White
	Resene Laser
	Resene Fuel Yellow
	Resene Wild West
	Resene Pioneer Red
	Resene Lonestar
	Resene Paddock
	Resene Gondwana
	Resene Parsley
	Resene Permanent Green
	Resene Ironsand
	Resene Black



## Motif meanings

The design of the building responds to the cultural narrative, not only through colour but also through the shapes and their symbolism.

The Waharua Kopito or diamond shape represents courage and commitment. When the diamond shape is paired, it indicates a transition and reminds each generation to think about succession and growing capability.

The Pukepuke Rau or rows of triangles represent the 'many hills' of the Ngāti Hine tribal area. It epitomises the many whanau and hapu within Ngāti Hine as well as many forms of leadership in a range of fields. This pepeha also highlights the concept of 'unity through diversity'

The Moko Kauae in the centre represents the eponymous ancestress, Hineamaru and denotes the strong female leadership within Ngāti Hine.



**opposite and above:** The project team selected Resene Sonyx 101 waterborne semi-gloss to colour the exterior weatherboards and soffits teamed with Resene Lustacryl semi-gloss waterborne enamel for the window frames, posts, beams, trims and doors. These were tinted to Resene Laser, Resene Fuel Yellow, Resene Colonial White, Resene Paddock, Resene Parsley, Resene Permanent Green, Resene Wild West, Resene Pioneer Red, Resene Lonestar, Resene Ironsand and Resene Black to bring the cheerful and culturally-significant character that makes the Te Hurihanga Training and Service Centre intrinsic to Kawakawa and its history.

Secondly, it plays well with the colour, character and quirkiness that Kawakawa is known for with the original Hundertwasser toilets and the award-winning Te Hononga and Te Mirumiru buildings. There needed to be a balance of colonial history and heritage, with linkages to railways, coal mining, trade and industry plus the pre-colonial heritage of the environment and significance of Ngāti Hine to the area. The resulting coal miners' cottages have a bold and meaningful palette, with each of the selected hues taking into account their respective cultural representations."

"Resene has a superior colour range, which allowed us to create various looks throughout the building. The products are excellent quality and are practical for a commercial environment, which was important," adds Pip. "The final colour selections differed from the ones first planned in terms of specifically connecting the cultural narrative. The original colours were darker; however because we were painting pine timber cladding that had not been thermally modified, we were advised that the LRV should not have a value of less than 40%. Because this somewhat limited the colour options, it meant the project team had to assess shade variations on the original."

But in the end, the project team and client were perhaps even happier with the final colour selections as it led them to incorporate a number of lighter shades on the frontage, adding to the sense of change, growth and possibility the building represents as a training centre.

"The weather conditions and the number of different colours were the biggest challenges for us, but we put plans in place to ensure everything went as smoothly as possible," says Grant Campbell of Kerikeri Decorating, whose company completed the painting. "The finished job looks great, and I think the colours they picked really reflect what they were trying to achieve."

The attention to detail, meticulous application and dedication to embracing and enhancing what makes Kawakawa special caught the eye of the Resene Total Colour Awards judging panel, who honoured the project with a Resene Total Colour Commercial Exterior Award. **BW**

To find out more about the Northern Adventure Experience (NAX) Project, visit [www.nax.co.nz](http://www.nax.co.nz), and check out [www.bayofislandsvintagerailway.org.nz](http://www.bayofislandsvintagerailway.org.nz) to learn about the Bay of Islands Vintage Railway.

**architectural specification** MODE Design Corp, [www.modedesign.com.au](http://www.modedesign.com.au), in collaboration with Avail Pacific, [www.avail.co.nz](http://www.avail.co.nz)

**colour selection** Pip Bolton, Avail Pacific; Lau'rell Pratt, Northern Adventure Experience (NAX), [www.nax.co.nz](http://www.nax.co.nz)

**build** Sita Construction, [www.sita.co.nz](http://www.sita.co.nz)

**painting** Kerikeri Decorating, [www.keridecorating.co.nz](http://www.keridecorating.co.nz)

**artists** Tuhia Amos, Taiamai Bracken, Katrina Fleming, Linda Garner, Te Hemo Ata Henare, Lorraine King, Symphony Morunga

**cultural narrative** Te Runanga o Ngāti Hine

**images** Jess Burges Photography, [www.exposurenz.co.nz](http://www.exposurenz.co.nz)

## Exterior colour meanings

The bold exterior colour selections command attention, and the unique frontage makes the building stand out – creating a great first impression for visitors. But the selections also take into consideration important cultural narrative:

**Yellow** (Kōwhai) represents the emergence of light and warmth, the rising of the sun and with it re-birth, growth and energy. This is represented with Resene Laser, Resene Fuel Yellow and Resene Colonial White.

**Green** (Kākāriki) represents the forests and vegetation that cloak the many hills and valleys of Ngāti Hine, further symbolising fertility and vitality. This is represented with Resene Paddock, Resene Parsley and Resene Permanent Green.

**Earthen red** (Kura) represents life itself and symbolises sustenance, sacrifice and leadership. This is represented with Resene Wild West, Resene Pioneer Red and Resene Lonestar.

**Black** (Mangu) symbolises the dark and the night, signifying the long darkness from which light and life emerged and therefore, it also denotes potential growth. This is represented with Resene Ironsand and Resene Black.

Resene Alabaster

Resene Laser

Resene Fuel Yellow

Resene Colonial White

Resene Paddock

Resene Parsley

Resene Permanent Green

Resene Pioneer Red

Resene Wild West

Resene Lonestar

Resene Black

Resene Ironsand