

17. *Hickford Park Sportsground*

Description

Location:	Smeaton Road, Bell Block
Legal description:	Part of Part Section 157 Hua District Part of Mangati E Block Part of Lot 3 DP 405144 Pt Lot 1 DP 9269
Size:	6.6 hectares
Reserve Status:	Lot 3 DP 405144 and Pt Lot 1 DP 9269 Subject to the Reserves Act 1977 and classified as Recreation Reserve Part Section 157 DP 9269 and Mangati E Block not held subject to the Reserves Act.



Smeaton Rd

Physical description

Hickford Park is located within Bell Block. Vehicle access is off Smeaton Road with additional pedestrian accesses from Glamis Avenue.

The park is Open Space A Environment Area in the District Plan. These areas are used primarily for organised sports and recreation. Such areas will normally have associated buildings such as clubrooms, changing sheds or toilet facilities. The park is surrounded by Residential A Environment Area to the east, south and west. To the north is Hickford Park Grazing/Lagoon which is Open Space B Environment Area and a natural value area. This part of the park is included in the Coastal Reserve Management Plan.

The sports park, which is used for rugby, soccer, cricket and softball provide a significant asset for the community of Bell Block. The reserve has club rooms,

changing rooms with showers and is set up for night games with flood lights. There is a toilet block, skate park and playground on the southern side of the sports park. The softball area, has been refurbished with a lime diamond, bleachers and a ball fence.

Tangata whenua interests

This reserve is within the tribal rohe of Te Atiawa. It is of historic and cultural significance to Puketapu Hapu and Ngati Tawhirikura.

Land status and acquisition history

Part Section 157 Hua District was acquired by purchase under the Public Works Act from the Taranaki Harbours Board in 1975 and held by the Council for local work for drainage purposes. A secondary purpose of recreation was applied to 7 hectares of the parcel encompassing the softball diamond and adjoining mown open space. This parcel is not held subject to the Reserves Act 1977 but as part of application of a secondary purpose Part III of the Reserve Act shall apply to this land.

Mangati E Block was compulsory acquired under the Public Works Act from the Maori Trustee owners in 1968. The parcel is held for the primary purpose of sewerage treatment works with a secondary purpose of recreation applying to 2.4 hectares of the parcel which encompasses the mown open space in the southern corner of the parcel.

Part Lot 1 DP 9269 was purchased from Vivian Newton, Wilfred Truby King and Josephine Louise Hermes as part of a large block in 1959 and the Certificate of Title for Lot 1 DP 9269 was issued in 1964. Lot 1 was transferred to the Taranaki County Council as a Recreation Reserve and subject to the Reserves and Domains Act 1953. The Lot was classified as a recreation reserve in 1982.

Lot 3 DP 405144 was acquired by agreement from the Taranaki Harbours Board in 1978 and held by the Council subject to the Reserves Act 1977 for the purpose of recreation. The parcel was formally classified as a recreation reserve in 2008.

Lot 2 DP 12256 is a 343 square metre lot that provides access to the Hickford Park sportsfields from Glamis Ave. This parcel was vested in the Council as a result of a subdivision in 1976. The land is held subject to the Reserves Act 1977 for the purpose of a recreation reserve but has never been formally classified.

History and cultural values

In 1989 three of the sports grounds were used for rugby union and a further two for soccer. In the early 1990's the fields were used for cricket, soccer, rugby, rugby league, softball and athletics.

Existing assets

Existing improvements include:

Barriers, fence, gates, step, seats, paths, 12 floodlights, four street lights, three signs, rubbish bins, a carpark, courts, road, playground, toilets and amenities building.

There is a water supply pipe running horizontally through the park. There is also a waste water and storm water pipe running along the western border.

Uses and activities

Hickford Park is a sports park containing three fields, one permanent diamond for softball and two grassed softball fields. The Council owned facilities (changing rooms and toilets) are available for hire. The club rooms are owned by the resident club. The public toilets beside the skate park are open 24 hours.

Hickford Park is suitable for many organised and casual recreation activities and is a popular place for dog walking.

The following clubs lease the grounds at Hickford Park:

- Bell Block Marist Rugby League for their amenity building (lease expires 2013 with further 21 year right of renewal)
- Bell Block Rugby Club for their clubrooms (lease expires 2016)
- Taranaki Softball Association for their facilities (lease expires 2024)

Management objectives and specific policies

- 1) The sportsground area of Hickford Park identified in this management plan within the orange outline on the development concept plan will be managed as a sports park suitable for formal and informal sport and recreation.
- 2) This part of Hickford Park is also included in the Coastal Reserves Management Plan, the intention is to revoke this section of the Coastal Reserves Management Plan upon adoption of this Management Plan. The remainder of Hickford Park will continue to be covered in the Coastal Reserves Management Plan.
- 3) Future development of Hickford Park will be in accordance with the development concept including:
 - i. Development of an additional softball diamond (when demand requires)
 - ii. Extension of the coastal walkway towards Mangati Stream
 - iii. Improved signage and visibility of entrances from surrounding streets
- 4) Leases will be maintained with the Bell Block Marist League Club, Bell Block Rugby Club and Taranaki Softball Association for the facilities they own. Any extensions to the footprint of the existing buildings or other facilities will be considered on a case by case basis in accordance with General Policies for Council administered reserves
- 5) The Council will continue to own and manage the amenities building at Hickford Park with user agreements maintained with those clubs that make use of this facility.
- 6) Investigations and consultation with clubs on the configuration of the interior of this building will be undertaken with the aim of better utilising areas for storage of club equipment including softball equipment currently stored in the shipping container.

The Council owned former depot storage will also continue to be available for storage of equipment, however in the future if this is no longer required it will be removed.

- 7) In keeping with the general policy of minimising buildings and structures on sports parks the shipping container used for storage of softball equipment will be removed.
- 8) An area of Hickford Park adjoining the sport park has recently been leased to the Taranaki Velodrome Trust for the development of a velodrome and road circuit cycling track. This area is covered in the Coastal Reserves Management Plan, however, the velodrome will share facilities within the Hickford Park sports park including the car park and amenity buildings.