

Extra-ordinary Whangarei District Council

Notice of Meeting

A extra-ordinary meeting of the Whangarei District Council will be held in the Council Chamber, Forum North, Whangarei on:

**Wednesday
12 December 2012
11.00am**

Committee

His Worship the Mayor (Chairperson)
Cr C B Christie
Cr S J Deeming
Cr A J Edwards
Cr S M Glen
Cr P R Halse
Cr J S Jongejans
Cr G M Martin
Cr B L McLachlan
Cr S L Morgan
Cr K J Sutherland
Cr W L Syers
Cr M R Williams
Cr J D T Williamson

1. Amendment of the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012

Reporting officer Paul McDonald (Parks and Recreation Manager)

Date 4 December 2012

Vision, mission and values

This item is in accord with Council's vision, mission and values statement as it will promote better utilisation of Council-owned land. The management plan encourages partnerships and enables a healthy sporting culture which goes a long way towards creating the ultimate living environment for the people of Whangarei.

Local Government Act 2002 – The four well-beings

Cultural *The culture of sport and recreation on Kensington Park contributes significantly to the healthy development of the District's population.*

Economic *Recreation contributes nearly 3% to the Northland GDP.*

Environmental *This report will enhance the future management of a prominent open space area in Whangarei city.*

Social *An effective reserve management plan enhances provision for public well-being, use and enjoyment of the park.*

1.0 Introduction

The Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012, including a third hockey turf option, was approved by Council for advertising and public release for submissions in accordance with Section 41 (6) of the Reserves Act 1977 at an Extra-ordinary Council Meeting on 20 September 2012.

2.0 Public Consultation on the Draft Plan

A period of two months (26 September – 27 November 2012) was provided for public submissions following the approval and release of the Draft Plan. During the submissions period a total of 20 submissions were received.

A public information session was held on 30 October 2012 at the ASB Leisure Centre, Kensington Park. Approximately 15 members of the public and representatives of the sports clubs and organisations who use the park attended the session. On 15 November 2012 a Hui was conducted at Whangarei Terenga Paraoa Marae. This was attended by six tangata whenua, Councillor Phil Halse, the Parks and Recreation Manager and several members of the public.

A public hearing was held on 3 December 2012 in the Council Chambers at Forum North. The hearing provided an opportunity for submitters to the Draft Plan to speak in support of their submissions before the panel of four appointed Councillors; Greg Martin, Mervyn Williams, Phil Halse and Shelley Deeming.

Summary of Submissions on the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012

The public submissions have been summarised and discussed between staff and the four appointed Councillors. The Summary of Submissions and Recommended Changes to the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012 (Attachment A) lists all submitters and, in following the format of the Draft Plan, records their comments together with staff recommendations on their comments.

The Council is now being asked to approve the staff recommendations in the attached Summary of Submissions and Recommended Changes, as amended by the four appointed Councillors and to direct staff to revise the Draft Plan and present to Council the final Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012 for approval.

Recommendation

1. That the information be received.
2. That Council approve the staff recommendations in the attached Summary of Submissions and Recommended Changes to the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012.
3. That Council direct staff to amend the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012 for approval as a final Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012 at the Council Meeting on 19 December 2012.

Attachment:

[Summary of Submissions and Recommended Changes to the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012.](#)

Summary of Submissions and Recommended Changes to the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012

A total of 20 written submissions were received on the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012. These submissions are summarised in the following table.

Summary of Submissions Received:

| Name/Organisation | Address | Suggestions/Issues Raised |
|------------------------|---|---|
| Kevin Abercrombie | 2F Powhiri Avenue, Kensington, Whangarei 0112 | Retain open space between existing netball courts and the temporary car park on the corner of Park Avenue/Kensington Avenue as it is well used for formal and informal recreation. Support a grassed petanque court and shared use of Netball Centre facilities. Support temporary car park (above) becoming a permanent car park. Illegal use of corner car park by heavy vehicles. Consider bollards along Kensington Avenue. Tougher dog control. Use native trees in future plantings. |
| Alan Agnew | Three Mile Bush Road, R.D. 1, Kamo, Whangarei 0185 | Purchase of former Mitre 10 building at Regent for indoor sports. Third artificial hockey turf to be constructed above existing car park. Construct parking buildings on the corner of Kensington Avenue and Western Hills Drive and above the existing Sports Arena car park. |
| Tim Damerell | 254 Matapouri Rd., Whangarei 0173 | Corrections to information on "Early Expansion of European Settlement". |
| Hatea Harriers Club | C/- 246 Whareora Road, R.D. 5, Whangarei 0175 | Continued use of the Cricket Clubrooms. |
| Denis Hewitt | 295 Three Mile Bush Rd., R.D. 1, Kamo, Whangarei 0185 | Kensington Park is for all the people of Whangarei; not to a privileged few. Oppose any sports body fencing off more of the park for their private use. Need more information from NZTA. |
| Peter R Hewitt | 1 Lincoln Place, Kamo, Whangarei | Seek alternative location for petanque facility. Adequate provision of parking. Plant hedges along fence lines of netball courts. Support new netball courts and Option 2 for new hockey turf. |
| Bruce Hill | 12 A Powhiri Avenue, Kensington | Problem of parking in Powhiri Avenue and on the grass berm along Kensington Avenue on Saturdays during winter. Rubbish truck parking on Kensington Avenue grass berm to empty bin. |
| Hockey Northland | PO Box 8021, Kensington, Whangarei | Support development of another urban sports park. Construction of a drop-off area in front of the hockey facilities. Corrections to factual information in text. Use of water. Artificial hockey turfs on school grounds. Option 3 as best option for third artificial hockey turf. Support amendment of building envelope line to allow for the construction of additional netball courts. Alternative sites for additional artificial hockey turfs. Maintenance of Kensington Park Grandstand. Decisions on NZTA proposal should not delay decisions on sports fields' development. |
| Ross & Caroline McLean | | Lack of toilet facilities near the children's playground. |
| NZ Transport Agency | Private Bag 106602, Auckland 1143 | Amend text to provide for flexibility in NZTA mitigation responses and to acknowledge needs of road users. |
| Northern Football | PO Box 8125, | Football in Whangarei is 7-8 full-sized fields short of current requirements. Kensington Park is increasingly |

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| Federation | Kensington, Whangarei | under pressure to provide for 'midget' football. Corrections in Plan to number of existing fields. New urban park needs to be operational before changes are made to the existing usage of Kensington Park. Third artificial hockey turf will have a direct impact on football's current operations. |
| Northland Cricket Association and Onerahi Central Cricket Club Inc. (letter of support from Northern Districts Cricket) | PO Box 892, Whangarei 0140/PO Box 8077, Kensington, Whangarei | Require four grass cricket blocks and three artificial pitches (one additional of each). Completion of deferred maintenance of the Cricket Pavilion by Council. |
| Petanque Group, 60sUp Movement of New Zealand Inc. – Whangarei Branch | C/- Wally Gallaher, 34 Austin Road, Maunu, Whangarei 0110 | Sharing of facilities in the Whangarei Netball Centre. Construction of a grass petanque terrain. |
| St. Francis Xavier Catholic School Board of Trustees | PO Box 200, Whangarei 0140 | Safety of school children and families who use the park and its margins for walking and cycling. Management of traffic flow in the area surrounding the park. |
| Sport Northland | P O Box 1492, Whangarei | Kensington Park as a regional facility. Information on ASB Leisure Centre, ASB Northland Sports House/Northland Table Tennis Centre and ASB Sports Arena. Support for Kamo/Tikipunga Walkway-Cyclepath Network link with Kensington Park. Provision of cycle racks. Existing car parks ample for the park's purposes. Support provision of bus bays for park users. Support third hockey turf, four additional netball courts and a petanque court. Vandalism of outdoor basketball hoop. Support a new Whangarei urban sports park. Concerns about proposed roundabout, loss of car parks and mature trees, access to/from Kensington Avenue. |
| Whangarei Academy of Gymnastics | C/- Vicki Macdonald, 12 St. Andrews Place, Kamo, Whangarei | Gymnastics events held in Sports Arena. Car parking requirements. |
| Whangarei Junior Rugby Management Board Inc. | P O Box 8089, Kensington, Whangarei | Request Council financial assistance for relocation from present headquarters at 87 Western Hills Drive. Need a long term lease at minimal cost to WJRMB for any new premises. |
| Whangarei Netball Centre | PO Box 707, Whangarei 0110 | Competitions. Netball Co-ordinator. WNC purpose. Car parking. Four additional netball courts, lit. Covering of existing courts. Sharing of Centre facilities with petanque interests. Concrete footpath. Maintenance of phoenix palms. Relocation of rubbish bin. Formation of a "Users of Kensington Park" group. |

Recommended Changes to the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012 in Response to Public Submissions:

A set of general comments on the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan or on the management of Kensington Park and staff responses is given. Subsequently, the summary follows the format of the Draft Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012. The document is referred to below as the "Draft Kensington Plan".

Submitter: Peter Hewitt

Comments: Compliment those involved in the preparation of the Draft Kensington Plan. Agree with the whole aspect and future vision.

Staff recommendation:

That Council notes these comments with thanks.

Submitter: Kevin Abercrombie

Comments: Kensington Park is an excellent example of "Parks for People, People in Parks". Fortunate to have this asset. Well maintained. To safeguard and enhance Kensington Park another urban sports park is a necessity.

Staff recommendation:

That Council notes these comments with thanks.

Submitter: Whangarei Netball Centre

Comments: Request establishment of a formal "Users of Kensington Park" group to meet on a three or six monthly basis.

Staff recommendation:

That Council supports the concept of enhanced consultation and information sharing between park user groups for the benefit of the park as a whole, and directs Parks staff to consider further WNC's proposal and other options in consultation with the Kensington Park user groups. That no change be made to the Draft Kensington Plan.

Submitter: Alan Agnew

Comments: Extension of Kensington Park by the purchase of the former Mitre 10 building at Regent for indoor sports.

Staff recommendation:

That Council recognises Kensington Park is defined by the land parcels described in Appendix 1 of the Kensington Park Reserve Management Plan 2012. With the exception of houses along the western side of Park Avenue marked as "Potential Future Park Extension", the Plan does not provide for the purchase of further properties for inclusion into the park, particularly land which is not adjacent or in close proximity to the park. Council notes the submission and that no change be made to the Draft Kensington Plan.

| Submission | Staff recommendation |
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| 2 The Park | |
| 2.1 Location and General Description | |
| Submitter: Sport Northland | That Council amends the Draft Kensington Plan. |

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| Requests a shade cover sail for summer use, bench seating and lighting for night games. Discussions are underway with the Whangarei Netball Centre on the sharing of facilities in their building. | |
| Submitter: Whangarei Netball Centre Comments: WNC is in discussions with the Petanque 60sUp Group for the sharing of facilities within the Centre. Proposal is supported in principle subject to agreement by WNC Committee and subject to excluding use on Saturdays which is the busiest day for netball. | That Council commends this initiative between WNC and the Petanque 60sUp Group. See also Staff recommendation for the submission from the Petanque Group (above). |
| Submitter: Sport Northland Comments: Supports the construction of a petanque court. It will promote increased recreational use of the park. If possible, the court should be constructed in the grassed area between the Whangarei Netball Centre and the carpark on the corner of Kensington Avenue and Park Avenue. | See Staff recommendation to submission from the Petanque Group, 60sUp Movement of New Zealand Inc. |
| Submitter: Kevin Abercrombie Comments: Support development of a grassed petanque court adjacent to the corner car park and sharing of facilities at the Netball Centre. | See Staff recommendation to submission from the Petanque Group, 60sUp Movement of New Zealand Inc. |
| Submitter: Peter Hewitt Comments: Questions the need for a petanque court on Kensington Park. This can be accommodated on any park. | See Staff recommendation to submission from the Petanque Group, 60sUp Movement of New Zealand Inc. |
| 4.9 Leisure Centre | |
| Submitter: Sport Northland Comments: Council should consider relocation of the outdoor basketball hoop and backboard from the south end of the Leisure Centre as this facility has been subjected to vandalism due in part to its secluded location. | Parks and Recreation staff are aware of vandalism occurring. They are exploring options for the relocation of this facility. That Council notes this submission and that no change is required to the Draft Kensington Plan. |
| 4.11 Amenities | |
| Submitter: Ross & Caroline McLean Comments: There is no public toilet facility at the children's playground. Children and adults are using the Phoenix palms. Requests urgent attention by Council to this matter; to either find funding for a new | That Parks and Recreation staff request the Whangarei Netball Centre to arrange the public use of the downstairs toilet in the Centre, and that Council will be responsible for maintenance, cleaning and security costs involved. That no change is made to the Draft Kensington Plan. |

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| public toilet or arrange for public to use the toilets in the Whangarei Netball Centre. | |
| Submitter: Sport Northland Comments: Information in the second paragraph on page 19 needs correcting to reflect changing circumstances. It should read: "Existing signs in Kensington Park include advertising signs ... (e.g. ASB Stadium, Rosvall Hockey Stadium and Mad Butcher Cricket Pavilion). Sponsorship is invaluable..." | Advertising on the park relates to the naming of buildings and facilities only. Providing examples in the Management Plan is not appropriate as sponsors may change with time. That Council notes the submission and amends the second paragraph on page 19 to read: " <i>Signs in Kensington Park include sponsorship signs on buildings and facilities incorporating the naming of park buildings. Sponsorship is invaluable for assisting in the provision of recreational facilities for the public community.</i> " |
| Submitter: Whangarei Netball Centre Comments: Request an extension of the existing concrete footpath adjacent to Kensington Avenue to the western public netball courts. Area is high use and prone to bogging with mud being carried onto the netball courts and posing a safety risk as the area becomes slippery. | Parks and Recreation staff to continue liaising with the Whangarei Netball Centre. That no change is required to the Draft Kensington Plan as this is an operational matter. |
| 4.13 Policies and Actions (Recreation Access and Use) | |
| Recreation Access and Use - General | |
| Submitter: Kevin Abercrombie Comments: Problem of dogs on the park has worsened. "No dogs" signs need to be more obvious. Banning dogs from the park is necessary. | The Council notes the Draft Kensington Plan contains a Policies and Actions statement on page 20 prohibiting most dogs from the park. No change is required to the Draft Kensington Plan. However, Parks will work with Regulatory Services and Environmental Northland to conduct a publicity campaign on dog control. |
| Access and Parking | |
| Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC/Simon Cocker Landscape Architect Comments: The "Landscape enhancement report and assessment of landscape and visual effects" (Oct 2012) suggested the <i>provision of pedestrian access-ways through the car parks to help enhance connectivity between the park and wider area.</i> | That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended. |
| Additional comment: WDC and Opus International Consultants Ltd. Comments: An amendment is requested to the Draft Kensington Plan to note the results and recommendations of the Kensington Park Parking Study: Issues and Options Report (November 2012). | That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended. |

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| <p>The following new Policies and Actions statements are suggested: <i>“WDC will work with the sporting and recreational codes using the park to help resolve issues of car parking. Strategies may include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>managing the timing of games</i> • <i>moving games away from Kensington Park where possible</i> • <i>reducing the number of cars travelling to the games, for example, car-pooling or park and ride initiatives from the clubs</i> • <i>promotion of alternative modes of transport (see supporting Policies and Actions in this sub-section)</i> • <i>development of drop-off areas and bus bays within the park’s car parks or in the vicinity of the park for park users</i> • <i>increased enforcement by WDC of legal parking in the car parks on Kensington Park and on the surrounding streets.”</i> | |
| <p>Buildings and Structures</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: Hockey Northland Comments: A future review of the building envelope line may be necessary given the ability of artificial surfaces to significantly enhance the amount of usage that can be gained from high-value sports field areas compared with natural grass turfs.</p> | <p>A review of the layout of the park is being conducted. That Council notes with the loss of green space for the third artificial hockey turf, four additional netball courts and a grassed petanque court, as well as a possible new roundabout at the corner of Western Hills Drive and Kensington Avenue, there is very little open space area on Kensington Park for passive recreational use. Passive recreation is recognised as an important use of Kensington Park. The natural turf areas have a maximum capacity for their use. That no change be made to the Draft Kensington Plan.</p> |
| <p>Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC Comments: A change to the Draft Kensington Plan is required to note possible changing use of the Parks depot site on Park Avenue, as suggested: <i>“WDC will consider the removal of all or part of the WDC Parks and Recreation depot from its Park Avenue site, the relocation of the storage of park maintenance equipment elsewhere on the park and construction of a car parking area on the former depot site. Note: This action is dependent on decisions made with other buildings on the park.”</i> That further the deletion of the following statement under Policies and Actions – Access and Parking</p> | <p>That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly.</p> |

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| <p>(page 20) may be required if Council decides that the maintenance depot is to be removed: <i>“Access to WDC Parks and Recreation maintenance depot is limited to WDC and contractors’ vehicles and staff only.”</i></p> | |
| <p>Hockey Grounds</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: Hockey Northland Comments: Supports continued liaison with the Council on the investigation of long-term alternative sites in the District for additional artificial hockey turfs.</p> | <p>That Council notes the submission and that no change be made to the Draft Kensington Plan. (See also Staff recommendation to other matters raised in the submission from Hockey Northland under Section 4.6 – Hockey Grounds.)</p> |
| <p>Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: Sport Northland Comments: Change the heading from Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium to <i>ASB Sports Arena</i>.</p> | <p>That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly.</p> |
| <p>Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC Comments: The Draft Kensington Plan includes two Policies and Actions statements under the heading, “Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium” (page 22) relating to a boundary adjustment of Kensington Park and a new lease with the Northland Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium Trust. These proposed Actions have now been completed. The corresponding Policies and Actions statements, as noted following, can therefore be deleted: <i>“WDC will carry out a boundary adjustment to Kensington Park to include the new gymnastics and athletics stadium and associated car parking in the park. WDC will enter into a new lease with the Northland Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium Trust incorporating the athletics and gymnastics stadium and the athletics track to enhance the park and its future management.”</i></p> | <p>That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly.</p> |

| Submission | Staff recommendation |
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| 5. Landscape Enhancement | |
| Submitter: Peter Hewitt Comments: Requests the planting of hedges along the fence lines of the netball courts to provide wind breaks and enhance the visual effect across the park. | Refer Staff recommendation in response to the “landscape enhancement report and assessment of landscape and visual effects” (Oct 2012) discussed below. |
| Submitter: Whangarei Netball Centre Comments: Request Council to review the placement of the phoenix palms along Kensington Avenue and to increase maintenance of these palms. They are a health and safety hazard. Request either relocation of the rubbish bin or its placement on a concrete base to minimise damage to the Kensington Avenue road berm. | Parks staff have a long-term plan to replace the phoenix palms with native trees. However, in the interim, Parks staff will increase its maintenance on the palms to minimise the health and safety risks to the public. That Parks staff ask the Whangarei Netball Centre to move their rubbish bin to its former location in the Centre’s gravel car park for ease of access to Council’s rubbish truck and protection of the grass berm. As previously discussed between the Council and Whangarei Netball Centre, the Council will not be constructing a concrete pad for the rubbish bin. |
| Additional comment: Simon Cocker Landscape Architect/WDC Parks and Recreation Comments: A “landscape enhancement report and assessment of landscape and visual effects” was completed in October 2012 for the Council. The Draft Kensington Plan stated that the “Results and recommendations of the landscape assessment of Kensington Park will be incorporated into the Kensington Park Management Plan as appropriate prior to the finalisation of the plan.” (page 26). Changes to the Draft Kensington Plan are therefore required. | That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly. 5. Landscape Enhancement <i>In August 2012, WDC engaged a landscape consultant to undertake a landscape and visual assessment of Kensington Park to guide future landscape development decisions for the benefit of the park as a whole. Information from the “Landscape Enhancement Report and Assessment of Landscape and Visual Effects”, October 2012, is summarised below.</i> 5.1 Landscape Character Areas <i>Seven character areas have been identified within the park, each having distinct visually dominant features.</i> 5.1.1 State Highway 1/Western Hills Drive Frontage <i>Character Summary: Assorted buildings of various size and function, surrounded by car parking, with intermittent tree plantings and amenity landscape treatment. Views into the park are generally fore-grounded by built form and parking, through more expansive views across the park to Parihaka and Western Hills/Pukenui are intermittently possible.</i> <i>Description: This character area occupies a narrow strip of land at the southern end of the western facing edge of the</i> |

park. It comprises the Leisure Centre, Cricket Pavilion and car parking surrounding the northern, western and southern facades of these buildings.

The parking area to the north of the Leisure Centre along the Western Hills Road frontage envelops a couple of residential buildings, numbers 87 and 89 Western Hills Drive. To the south of these residential buildings a drystone wall and single large Phoenix palm (*Phoenix canariensis*) defines the boundary and signals the main entrance to the car park from Western Hills Drive. A line of trees (*Alnus jorullensis*) has been planted along the eastern car park edge adjacent to the sports fields. Within this northern area of car park are a limited number of modest planting beds, predominantly planted with low native species and clear stem magnolia (*Magnolia 'Little Gem'*).

Along the Western Hills Drive frontage of the Leisure Centre is a narrow strip of car parking, and a narrow grass berm where native trees including puriri (*Vitex lucens*) and titoki (*Alectryon excelsus*) have been planted. Many of these trees display a poor form – a witness to the constraints of this confined location where pruning of the trees is necessary to maintain clearance from vehicles on Western Hills Drive.

To the south of the Leisure Centre and Cricket Pavilion this character area is dominated by car parking. At the intersection of Western Hills Drive and Kensington Avenue the narrow grass berm widens with a group of semi mature native trees, including puriri (*Vitex lucens*), kowhai (*Sophora teptaptera*), titoki (*Alectryon excelsus*) and kauri (*Agathis australis*), which screen views of the car park and buildings from Kensington Avenue. Trees along the Kensington Avenue frontage are of a larger scale and form a defined edge to the park. The Kensington Avenue park boundary is also delineated by a timber knee rail along its frontage.

Elements which detract from this character area:

- Dominance of car parking areas.
- Sense of constriction along the Western Hills Drive frontage of the Leisure Centre.
- Lack of landscape planting within the southern car park.

5.1.2 Sports Fields

Character Summary:

This character area comprises expansive open space at the centre of the park with views to the Western Hills/Pukenui and Parihaka. It is bounded by chain-link fence, buildings and tree plantings, some of which contribute to a strong edge to the park.

Description:

Comprising 61 percent of the park area, this character area is, in visual terms of its extent and scale, the most dominant landscape feature of the park, with the ebb and flow of sports and recreation activities providing a strong visual reinforcement of the park's character. The recreational requirements of the sports fields mean that landscape planting is limited to the margins. These plantings provide an important shade function during summer.

*On the north-western edge of the character area and of the park is a 1,800 mm high chain-link fence which encloses the frontage to Western Hills Drive. Titoki are planted inside and parallel to the fence. Much of the northern boundary is defined by fencing and visually impermeable *Pittosporum* hedges, effectively*

separating the sports fields from the adjacent artificial hockey turfs, associated clubrooms and Kensington Park Grandstand. Similarly, a tall chain link fence delineates the boundary between the sports fields and athletics track to the east. Exotic coniferous and deciduous trees as well as a timber knee rail delineate the edge of the sports fields with the Park Avenue car park. The larger mature exotic coniferous trees lend scale to the area, as well as shelter, shade and a sense of permanence. A commemorative kauri grove on the southern edge of the park adjoins a contrasting, but visually powerful row of mature phoenix palms which extend to the east along the Kensington Avenue frontage.

Elements which detract from this character area:

- *Poor or unsympathetic boundary treatment.*
- *Limited number of trees for shade especially in high use areas.*
- *Lack of seating and picnic tables on the margins of the character area.*

5.1.3 Netball Courts, Clubrooms, Playground and Adjoining Car Park

Character Summary:

Predominantly paved area with left over grassed area bounded by chain-link fence that accommodates a mix of recreational activities, mature phoenix palm trees along Kensington Avenue and fences associated with residential buildings.

Description:

This character area occupies the south-eastern corner of the park and is typified by the fenced cluster of netball courts and the adjoining Whangarei Netball Centre. For the general public, a sense of exclusion is given by the fenced netball courts. The row of phoenix palms, mentioned in relation to the Sports Fields character area, together with timber knee rails to the east of the playground and a low stone retaining wall, reinforce the Kensington Avenue edge to the park. Some seating is provided around the playground, including a bench seat/pedestrian barrier, running parallel to the road.

The temporary car park at the corner of Park Avenue and Kensington Avenue, as well as a narrow finger of grass between the car park and the eastern end of the netball courts, has a “left over” and under-utilised feel, although it does serve a function as a pedestrian access to the park from Kensington Avenue/Lupton Avenue to the east.

Elements which detract from this character area:

- *Dominance of the fenced netball courts.*
- *Lack of shade around the playground.*
- *Lack of seating and picnic tables.*
- *Isolated and under-used space at the eastern end of the character area.*
- *Poor or unsympathetic boundary treatment at the eastern end of the character area.*

5.1.4 Athletics Track

Character Summary:

This recently completed facility forms a character area of its own. Defined mainly by built structures, including the athletics track and chain-link fence, this area is physically separate from, and visually different from the adjoining park areas.

Elements which detract from this character area:

- *Poor or unsympathetic boundary treatment on the western edge of the character area.*
- *Awkward relationship between the character area and adjoining Sports Fields character area to the west.*

5.1.5 Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium/Car Park, Marist Sports Club Clubrooms, Park Avenue Car Park

Character Summary:

Comprised of two areas, one dominated by established built form, the other, annexed to the eastern side of the park, dominated by newer buildings, with recently installed comprehensive amenity landscape works.

Description:

Site landscaping for the athletics and gymnastics stadium and associated car parking was the subject of a Landscape Report prepared in October 2010 as part of the land use application for this development (Littoralis Landscape Architects 2010). The site landscaping has been designed to incorporate the Sports Arena into the existing Kensington Park facilities and to provide sufficient landscaping to assimilate the new buildings into the surrounding existing built development. A low speed, pedestrian dominated environment for the re-aligned Park Avenue, incorporating facilities for cyclists, has been created. Most of the trees on the Corns Street reserve have had to be removed to enable the provision of adequate parking. However, several large existing trees have been retained and extensive new structural tree planting reinforces a pedestrian scale and optimises amenity. Low impact design initiatives for stormwater management, such as permeable paving, wetland zones and rain gardens, have been integrated into the car parking and roadway areas.

The primary entrance to the park on its eastern side is the Park Avenue car park. Views from Park Avenue across to the park are possible when the car park is empty. These views are framed and softened by trees growing within the car park and on the edge of the park. The car park hosts a variety of native and exotic tree species, some growing to 5-6 metres in height. Island beds within the car park are planted with a mix of low native species which is, in places patchy.

At the northern end, construction of the athletics track has necessitated the excavation of a raised mound upon which is located the Marist Sports Club Clubrooms.

Elements which detract from this character area:

- *Dominance of built form and car parking.*

- *Reduced informal surveillance of the eastern side of the park.*
- *Poor pedestrian connectivity, (though potential exists for a link from the Kamo/Tikipunga Walkway-Cyclepath Network to Kensington Park at the rear of the Sports Arena).*
- *New comprehensive landscape works are not integrated with the larger Kensington Park landscape.*

5.1.6 Hockey Turfs, Hockey Clubrooms and Kensington Park Grandstand

Character Summary:

Two open sports fields, with built form of clubrooms and grandstand between, in a physically discreet location, bounded by timber and chain link fence.

Description:

*In conjunction with the Sports Arena and Marist Sports Club Clubrooms character area, this character area forms a cluster of built development and a built edge on the north-eastern and eastern side of the park. By virtue of its location, in the north-east corner of the park, and the treatment of edges, this character area appears to be separate from the balance of the park. Its external boundary with Park Avenue is fenced with a close boarded timber fence supplemented by clipped lemonwood (*Pittosporium eugenoides*) hedges, which act as an effective windbreak. Internal boundaries with the park are defined by chain link fences and clipped hedges. These treatments exclude views into the character area and lend the area a private and exclusive character.*

Elements which detract from this character area:

- *Lack of integration with the balance of the park.*

5.1.7 Order of St John Buildings and Car Parking

Character Summary:

Occupying the north-western corner, this cluster of buildings is separate in character and function from the rest of the park. This is softened by the lack of fencing along the shared boundary with the Sports field character area. The strongly built character of this area is softened on the Western Hills Drive frontage by a setback of the buildings from the road and a group of exotic trees planted in the lawn.

Elements which detract from this character area:

- *Lack of integration with the balance of the park.*

5.2 General Conclusions

Kensington Park's character is defined by the large open space of the sports fields at the centre, with clusters of activity, built form and ad hoc amenity landscape works at the periphery. These clusters form the character areas described above. Bounding this, are roads on three sides, and a school and

residences on another.

The overall effect is that the parts make up the whole largely due to their sports based activity (though this is not always apparent visually) and by being grouped together by roads around the boundaries. There is little visual continuity between built forms or amenity landscape works, nor is there strong physical connection between areas, or way finding logic.

While there are areas of cohesive landscape plantings, ranging from recently established to fully mature, these have apparently been undertaken in isolation from each other. This contributes to the overall ad hoc effect.

The creation of a unified landscape character across the entire park would help establish a consistent and obvious identity. A preferred planted character should be determined, and existing plantings rationalised to move towards the preferred planted character. This includes choice of species. A palette of materials and paint colours for the park's future built development would assist with the creation of a unified character.

A more robust structure of tree planting on the margins of the sports fields and within the identified character areas should be developed. This structure should provide shade and shelter (e.g. around the children's playground), as well as softening boundary structures where these are needed.

Views into and out of the park must be maintained for the purposes of retaining the open space character of the area, amenity and informal surveillance. This can be facilitated by controlling views through clusters of trees, and enabling views beneath tree canopies.

Boundary treatments between the various character areas and between the park and adjacent roads should recognise the importance of physical permeability in terms of 'user friendliness' and security. Such treatments should be consistent for all boundaries. Maintaining and enhancing the vegetation along the Western Hills Drive boundary is important to protect the amenity values of the park and provide a noise buffer from the busy Highway. Establishment of cohesive tree plantings on all road frontages would increase the presence of the park in the surrounding residential area.

A range of park furniture appropriate to the character of the park should be identified. Seating and picnic tables should be installed in appropriate locations around the margins of the sports fields and within other character areas.

Dedicated spatially generous pedestrian entrances to the park should be provided in locations where connectivity with the wider area dictates. This includes the provision of pedestrian access-ways through the car parks and on the corner of Western Hills Drive and Kensington Avenue. Entrances should link with the network promoted by Council's Walking and Cycling Strategy.

5.3 Objective – Landscape Enhancement

To ensure that the open space character and amenity of the park is safeguarded and enhanced.

5.4 Policies and Actions

WDC will generate a Landscape Development Plan with the intent of establishing a unified landscape character, and thereby a consistent visual identity for the park. The Landscape Development Plan will

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| | <p><i>address issues recognised in this management plan, including but not limited to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>a preferred planted character</i> • <i>views into and out of the park</i> • <i>visual and physical boundaries within and around the park</i> • <i>integrating existing elements into a cohesive whole</i> • <i>tree planting will be enhanced to provide shade and shelter.</i> <p><i>Views into and out of the park will be maintained and enhanced where possible.</i></p> <p><i>WDC will, in the long-term, replace the phoenix palms along Kensington Avenue with native species. In the interim, the maintenance of the palms will be increased to minimise the health and safety risks to the public.</i></p> <p><i>Perceived boundaries between the sports fields and the netball courts, athletics track and hockey grounds will be softened through more permeable or open boundary treatments to help integrate these areas with the rest of the park.</i></p> |
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| Submission | Staff recommendation |
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| 6. Cultural Heritage | |
| 6.2 The Original Land Grants of Whangarei | |
| Submitter: Kevin Abercrombie Comments: Amend paragraph 1, fourth sentence, from “bought William Carruth up Whangarei Harbour” to “ <i>brought William Carruth up Whangarei Harbour</i> ”. | That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly. |
| 6.3 Early Expansion of European Settlement | |
| Submitter: Tim Damerell Comments: Fourth paragraph, second sentence is incorrect and should read “ <i>It stood on the corner of Kensington Avenue and Kamo Road until the 1960s when it was pulled down to make way for Carrington’s Foodliner, a supermarket which was in later years sold to become Woolworths.</i> ” | That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly. |
| 6.7 Policies and Actions (Cultural Heritage) | |

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| <p>Submitter: Hockey Northland Comments: As owner of the Kensington Park Grandstand, Hockey Northland is comfortable with its responsibility for the maintenance of this building. Request amendment of the Plan to reflect this situation.</p> | <p>That Council accepts the submission and amends the Draft Kensington Plan by inserting the following new second sentence at the end of Policies and Actions statement #1: <i>“Council acknowledges that responsibility for the maintenance of the Grandstand rests with Hockey Northland, the owner of the building.”</i> This change recognises both the need to protect the Grandstand, as noted by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust and the Whangarei District Plan, as well as the maintenance of the building.</p> |
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| Submission | Staff recommendation |
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| <p>7. Protection of Kensington Park’s Future Interests</p> | |
| <p>Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC Comments: Changes to Sections 7.1, 7.2 and 7.3 and corresponding Policies and Actions statement in Section 7.6 are required to note the completion of the formal classification and gazettal of land associated with the ASB Sports Arena, car park and residual area of Corns Street reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, this land to be managed as part of Kensington Park, and the purchase of 17 Park Avenue.</p> | <p>That Council accepts the requested updating of Sections 7.1 – Statutory Provisions, 7.2 – Property Acquisition and 7.3 – Amalgamation of Corns Street Reserve and Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium Land into Kensington Park and amends the Draft Kensington Plan accordingly.</p> |
| <p>7.3 Amalgamation of Corns Street Reserve and Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium Land into Kensington Park</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: Sport Northland Comments: Change part heading from Athletics and Gymnastics Stadium to <i>ASB Sports Arena</i>.</p> | <p>That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly.</p> |
| <p>7.4 Addressing the Future Growth of Whangarei through an Urban Sports Park</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: Sport Northland Comments: Supports Council’s intention to purchase land for a new Whangarei urban sports park. Its location must be central.</p> | <p>That Council notes the submission and that no change be made to the Draft Kensington Plan.</p> |
| <p>Submitter: Hockey Northland Comments: Supports the general thrust of this Section. Supports Council developing another urban</p> | <p>That Council notes the submission and that no change be made to the Draft Kensington Plan.</p> |

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| sports park. Development of a third artificial hockey turf will have a mitigating effect on the amount of additional urban sports park land required. | |
| <p>Submitter: Northern Football Federation Comments: Plan states the establishment of a new urban sports park in Whangarei will help to mitigate the constraints placed upon the expansion of football on Kensington Park. The new urban sports park needs to be operational before making changes to the existing use of Kensington Park. New developments at Pohe Island and Springs Flat will not be operational until 2014.</p> | <p>That Council notes its commitment in the Long Term Plan 2012-22 to purchase and develop a new urban sports park in Whangarei over the current and following financial years, as re-iterated in the Draft Kensington Plan (pages 33, 34). Council will provide four new fields at Springs Flat for the 2014 football season to help relieve pressure on the Kamo club.</p> |
| 7.6 Policies and Actions | |
| <p>Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC Comments: It is suggested to amend the third Policies and Actions statement as follows to provide for the purchase of 87 and 89-91 Western Hills Drive by WDC or other parties for the benefit of Kensington Park. <i>“The properties of 87 and 89-91 Western Hills Drive, identified as “priority one” purchases, will be purchased to enhance the recreational use of the park.”</i></p> | <p>That Council accepts the suggestion and amends the Draft Kensington Plan accordingly.</p> |

| Submission | Staff recommendation |
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| 8. State Highway 1 Safety Improvements | |
| 8.1 The Proposal | |
| <p>Submitter: Denis Hewitt Comments: Need more information from NZTA on their proposals.</p> | <p>That Council notes the comments. See Staff recommendation to NZTA Submission below.</p> |
| 8.2 Visitor Use and Landscaping | |
| Submitter: NZ Transport Agency | That Council does not support changes to the Draft Kensington Plan as requested by NZTA, but amends |

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| <p>Comments: First sentence: remove reference to “the proposed roundabout at the corner of Western Hills Drive and Kensington Avenue” and replace with “the proposed intersection treatment”. Amend the list of issues to read:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The loss of natural grassed amenity area, including mature trees, at the intersection of Western Hills Drive and Kensington Avenue.” (Delete: “and the relocation and/or replacement of these trees.”) • “The loss of Kensington Park land.” (Delete: “which will need to be replaced.”) • “The loss of approximately 50 existing car parks.” (Delete: which will need to be replaced.”) • “The closure of the existing car park entrance on Kensington Avenue.” (Delete: “and a new car park entrance constructed further away from the corner.”) • (Delete: “The need for additional landscaping.”) <p>Add the following: “Mitigation for any adverse effects on the current operation and enjoyment of Kensington Park may include, but not be limited to, the likes of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement landscaping, • Replacement/relocation of trees, • Replacement land for park use, • Replacement car parking area, • Reinstatement of the park entrance (to be removed). <p>Any compensation will be in accordance with the Public Works Act.”</p> | <p>the Draft Kensington Plan to note that the car parks and mature trees near the corner of Western Hills Drive and Kensington Avenue will be lost from their current location. That Council amend the first paragraph of Section 8, page 35 of the Draft Kensington Plan (i.e. Note:...) to read: <i>“This management plan notes the future possibility of a change to the intersection of Western Hills Drive and Kensington Avenue by the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA). It recognises there is significant uncertainty involved with this project, and that the project is outside the scope of the management plan.”</i> The remainder of the first paragraph does not change.</p> |
| <p>Submitter: Sport Northland Comments: Loss of approximately 50 car parking spaces should be replaced on the green space adjacent to the existing car park. Suggest proposed roundabout be located further south to avoid loss of 50 parking spaces and that Council liaise with NZTA on the possible purchase of properties on the southern side of Kensington Avenue for this purpose.</p> | <p>That Council seeks to protect as much as possible of the green space adjacent to the existing car park for passive recreation and sports fields use. That Council declines the suggestion to liaise with NZTA on the possible purchase of properties on the southern side of Kensington Avenue for the proposed roundabout due to high residential disruption. That Council amend the Draft Kensington Plan to note that: <i>“It is proposed to relocate the southern access to the stadium off Kensington Avenue by approximately 30m further east on Kensington Avenue. This new access will retain left-in, left-out and right-in, right-out vehicles movements.”</i> (As per email of 20 November 2012 from Clint Hanger, NCC Consulting Engineers to Wendy Morris.)</p> |

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| <p>No encroachment onto green space used for organised sports. Concern over the loss of mature trees. Retain both left- and right-turning entry/exit from Kensington Avenue into the park.</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: Hockey Northland Comments: Supports the minimisation of any adverse effects on parking or access to the park from the construction of the proposed roundabout. Opposition to the roundabout should not delay urgent decisions relating to the development of the sports fields and facilities.</p> | <p>That Council note the submission and no change is required to the Draft Kensington Plan.</p> |
| <p>Submitter: Kevin Abercrombie Comments: Native trees should be used for replacement or relocation of trees. No more palms.</p> | <p>That Council notes this submission for further consideration if and when the roundabout is constructed.</p> |
| <p>8.3 Objective – State Highway 1 Safety Improvements</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: NZ Transport Agency Comments: Amend Objective to read: “<i>To ensure that the proposed State Highway 1 safety improvements meet the needs of Kensington Park users as well as the needs of the users of the roading network.</i>” Amend same Objective in Section 3.2 – Objectives.</p> | <p>That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly.</p> |
| <p>8.4 Policies and Actions (State Highway 1 Safety Improvements)</p> | |
| <p>Submitter: NZ Transport Agency Comments: Delete “WDC will work closely with the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) to protect the current and anticipated recreational and amenity values of Kensington Park.” Substitute with: “<i>WDC and the New Zealand Transport Agency (NZTA) will work together to protect the current and anticipated recreational and amenity values of Kensington Park and the safety and efficiency of State Highway 1 and its connecting roading network in this location.</i>”</p> | <p>That Council notes the submission and that no change be made to the Draft Kensington Plan.</p> |
| <p>Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC Comments: That an amendment to Section 8.4 is made to recognise the uncertainty of the NZTA proposals and the desire for Council to replace what</p> | <p>That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly.</p> |

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| <p>will or could be lost. The following wording is suggested as a new first statement: <i>“WDC acknowledge the uncertainty of the NZTA State Highway 1 safety improvements with respect to what is proposed and its impacts on Kensington Park, and urge that there be a replacement on a per m² basis contiguous to Kensington Park.”</i></p> | |
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| Submission | Staff recommendation |
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| Appendices and Figures | |
| Appendix 1 – Land Parcels Comprising Kensington Park | |
| <p>Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC Comments: Changes are required to the Draft Kensington Plan to note the issuing of new Certificate of Titles following the completion of Recreation Reserve classification for land associated with the ASB Sports Arena, car park and remainder of Corns Street reserve. These changes are shown below.</p> | <p>That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly.</p> |

Appendices

Appendix 1 Land Parcels Comprising Kensington Park

| Name/Legal Description | Certificate of Title | Area (Ha) | Details | Status |
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| Lot 1 DP 365614 | 265956 | 24.2800 | Land held in fee simple and subject to the Reserves Act 1977 | Classified under Section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977 as a Recreation Reserve. Purpose: Kensington Park Recreation Reserve. |
| Sections 10-12, 14-21, 23, SO 438457, Lot 69 DP 38056 and Lot 47A DP 45852 | 595447 | 0.7090 | Land held in fee simple and subject to the Reserves Act 1977 | Classified under Section 14 of the Reserves Act 1977 as a Recreation Reserve. N.Z. Gazette Notice, 2012 page 3,498, declared land as a Recreation Reserve and known as Kensington Park Recreation Reserve. |
| Sec. 2 SO 410491 | 558983 | 0.0596 | Land held in fee simple and subject to the Reserves Act 1977 | Classified under Section 14 of the Reserves Act 1977 as a Recreation Reserve. N.Z. Gazette Notice, 2012 page 3,498, declared land is known as Kensington Park Recreation Reserve. |
| Lot 47B DP 45852 | NA8A/1033 | 0.0564 | Land held in fee simple and subject to the Reserves Act 1977 | Classified under Part III of the Reserves Act 1977 as a Recreation Reserve. N.Z. Gazette Notice, 2012 page 3,498, declared land is known as Kensington Park Recreation Reserve. |
| Parts of Lot 46 DP 38056 | NA26A/655 | 0.3766 | Land held in fee simple and subject to the Reserves Act 1977 | Classified under Part III of the Reserves Act 1977 as a Recreation Reserve. N.Z. Gazette Notice, 2012 page 3,498, declared land is known as Kensington Park Recreation Reserve. |
| Total Area | | 25.4816 | | |

| Submission | Staff recommendation |
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| Figure 4 – Kensington Park Existing & Proposed Development | |
| <p>Additional comment: Parks and Recreation, WDC</p> <p>Comments: Changes are required to the Draft Kensington Plan to note decisions sought by Council on the location of an additional artificial hockey turf, four additional netball courts and a grassed petanque terrain (courts), the associated adjustment of the proposed building envelope with these developments, clearer indication of the possible area likely to be affected with the proposed State Highway 1 safety improvements, the possibility of a future car park on the site of the current WDC Parks depot and an update of the map labels where required.</p> | That the Draft Kensington Plan be amended accordingly. |