

# A TRANQUIL COUNTRY EXPERIENCE

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THE CBD

AUCKLAND  
DESIGN MANUAL

TE PUKA WHAKATAIRANGA I A TAMAKI MATAU Rau

PARKS // LANDSCAPE & AMENITY CASE STUDY

Totara Park  
Manurewa, Auckland



# OVERVIEW

A large park provides a well-integrated mix of active and passive recreation opportunities, whilst protecting its native bush and maintaining its rural character.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Totara Park is a 216 hectare gem offering adventure play, walks and bridle trails, riding for the disabled, tennis courts, an open air swimming pool, mountain bike tracks and the heritage building, Beauford House, which is used for weddings, conferences and other private functions. The park is dog-friendly with both on-leash and off-leash areas. The park is located next to the Auckland Botanical Gardens, and near the Nathan Homestead, a historic building and arts centre.

The 12 km Puhinui Stream Forest Trail is an important local asset and there is an ongoing project to restore the stream and develop a walkway linking Totara Park and Puhinui Reserve.

Manukau City Council acquired Totara Park in 1965 from the owner after agreeing to protect the bush and preserve the park for public use and enjoyment. Since that time, significant amounts of local funding have been used to develop facilities at Totara Park, which is a regional treasure. A reserve management plan was developed for the park in 2001, and development in line with this plan has been delivered progressively over time. The primary objectives outlined in the reserve management plan include:

- To provide for and encourage a range of outdoor recreation activities and uses throughout the park.
- To protect and enhance the ecological integrity and natural qualities of the park.
- To extend and enhance the character of Park as a 'countryside' park and confine development to specific areas.



# KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

## MAIN ENVIRONMENT MODULE LANDSCAPE & AMENITY

## OTHER ENVIRONMENT MODULE INFORMAL RECREATION, HISTORIC HERITAGE, ECOLOGICAL

## SITE AREA 216 HECTARES

A south-facing bowl slopping generally from north to south. Slopes are steeper on the western side where several gullies and smaller streams dissect the slopes. Overall the landscape is gently undulating.

## KEY FEATURES

Picnic and barbecue areas

Adventure playground

Tennis courts

Mountain bike trails

Walkway trails – including Puhinui Stream Forest Trail

Bridle trails

Beaufords Reception Lounge located in a heritage building - a popular venue for weddings and other functions

Outdoor pool – operational in summer only

Puhinui Stream

## LESSONS LEARNT

Heritage – The park has not been surveyed and assessed. The existence of archaeological sites nearby makes it likely that there are archaeological sites present in the park, which may or may not have been affected by previous planting and track development. The park should be systematically surveyed for all types of historic heritage, especially archaeological, before any further development takes place.

## LOCATION REDOUBT RD, MANUREWA

## DESIGNERS

Reserve Management Plan - Soul Landscape architects

Mountain bike tracks - Kennet Brothers with Frame Group

Playground at Beaufords - Isthmus Group

The adventure playground with the flying fox - Boffa Miskell

Revegetation Planting - Frame Group Limited

Bridle trails - GHD limited



# TREASURE OUR HERITAGE

1. The adaptive reuse of this historic homestead as a venue for weddings and private functions has led to the building and gardens being beautifully restored.



The Beaufords Reception Lounge, a restored historic homestead, is now a popular venue for weddings and other functions.

# ENJOY MORE USE & A RANGE OF EXPERIENCES

1. Dog training is one of the many activities supported by this park.
2. The rural character of this park can be experienced throughout, even in areas without stock posts and wire fences. Simple aggregate paths make up many of the basic interventions.



Dog walking is just one of the many recreational opportunities offered in Totara Park. You can also enjoy: an adventure playground, horse riding, swimming pool, mountain biking, tennis, picnics, barbeques, bird watching and scenic walks.



# CONNECT THE ENVIRONMENT

1. Fences guide walkway users on to the track and away from sensitive areas where native seedlings could be damaged.
2. The width and materials used to form this trail reveal a sensitive approach, minimising the disturbance to landform and the paths' encroachment into the native bush.
3. The Puhinui Stream Forest Trail reveals the restoration of this significant natural feature in the park. This trail creates a link between Totara Park and the Auckland Botanic Gardens.



Fences along the Puhinui Stream Forest Trail encourage people to stay on the track, allowing them to experience the natural environment without disturbing it. This interface between water and land is a sensitive but dynamic space which delivers: improved water quality, stabilised river banks, and integrated recreation and learning opportunities for the public.



# CONNECT PLACES

1. Wayfinding signage is incorporated into the interpretation signage, consolidating information into a single element, and reducing clutter.
2. Providing information about pest species or endangered plants can both engage walkway users to look out and identify these species or inspire community members to consider becoming park stewards.
3. Locating signs at natural pause points encourages people to stop and have a look.

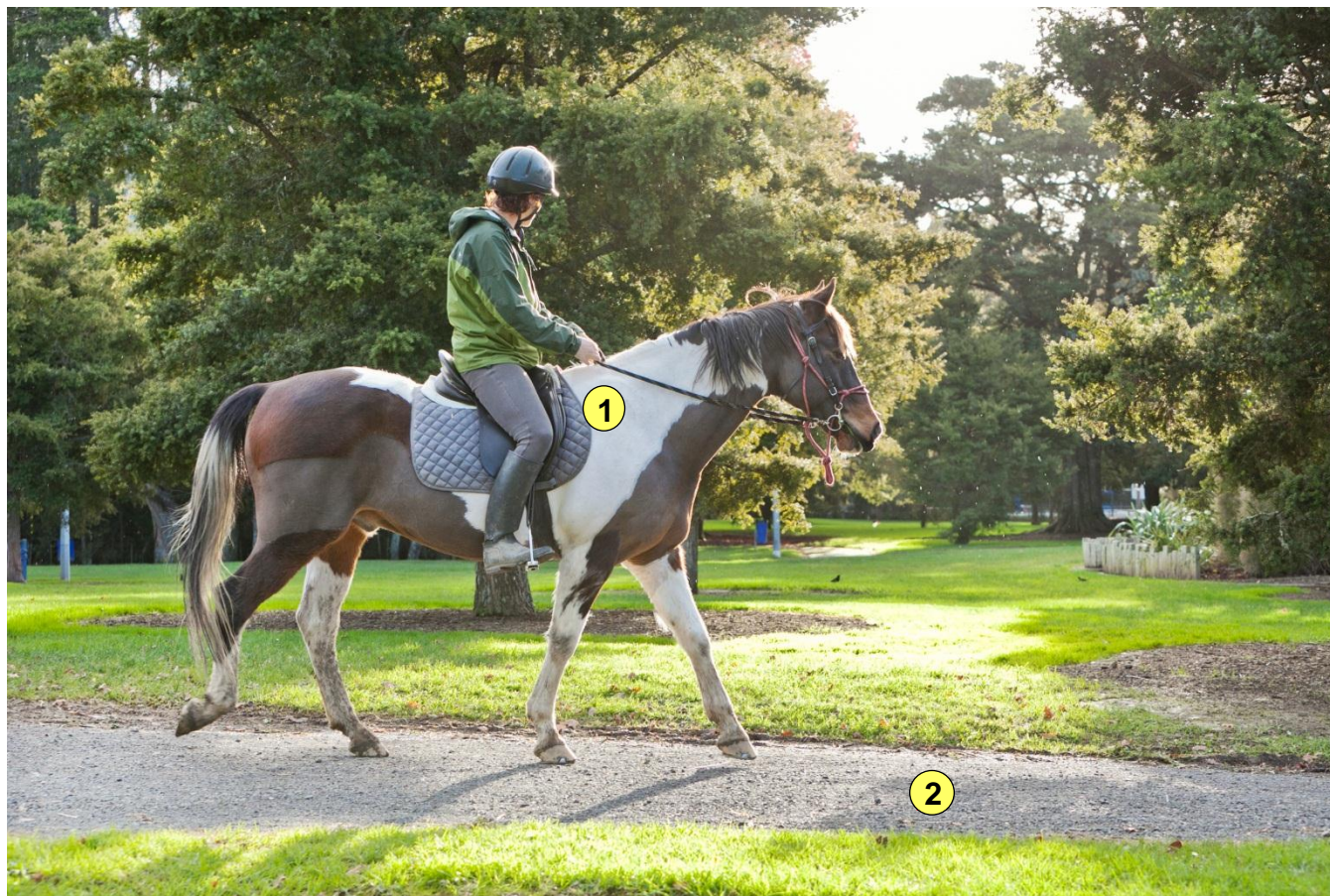


Totara park contains a range of fun and interesting movement networks, providing a variety of walkway options through the park to encourage and enable everyone to experience different areas. Wayfinding is a critical element that has been successfully provided, encouraging easy movement to features within and around the park.



# UTILISE OUR RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY

1. The park provides for a huge range of activities, including horseback riding.
2. Paths are made from materials which support the different uses of the park. Compacted aggregate is widely used throughout, which is cost effective, maintains the rural character of the site and is durable for horses, mountain biking and walking.



Path materials and design elements are appropriate to context, cost efficient (considering whole of life cost), durable, suitable for the wide range of uses and are easy to maintain.



# ENJOY HEALTH WELLBEING & FUN

1. This type of recreational activity has been successfully integrated into the park with minimal land modification, which enables the landform and character to be largely retained.
2. Mountain bike trails are a key feature of Totara Park with an established signposted network providing for beginner, intermediate and advanced users.



Totara park offers a range of active recreational opportunities for a wide range of ages and abilities, encouraging all types of people to be more active, more often.



# ENJOY COMFORT & SAFETY

1. Simple bollards prevent cars or motor bikes from entering the park and damaging it.
2. As with many large parks, there are numerous access points. This access is flanked with native planting but retains clear views into the park.



Totara Park has well-signposted, interesting and welcoming entrances, which maintain clear sightlines, helping park users to feel welcome, safe and secure.



# ENJOY COMFORT & SAFETY

1. Covered rest areas provide shelter and protection from the elements. These areas also allow larger groups to set up a picnic base for a day of activities at the park.
2. A strong use of native specimen trees throughout the park provides a distinct native character which is further enhanced by the native fauna beginning to flourish in the canopies.
3. Pathways meander through the site ducking in and out of canopy cover. Access to pathways is designed to enable as many people as possible to access the path network.



A range of amenities are provided, such as: seating, shade and picnic areas. The amenities offered are appropriate for the scale and purpose of the park, and also cater for a variety of ages and abilities.



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