



# GET ACTIVE & ENJOY THE VIEW

A SPORTS PARK  
EMBRACES ITS CONTEXT

AUCKLAND  
DESIGN MANUAL

TE PŪKA WHAKATAIRANGĀ I A TAMAKI MAKAUURAU

PARKS // SPORT & ACTIVE REC CASE STUDY

Cox's Bay Reserve  
Herne Bay, Auckland



# OVERVIEW

A high-quality sports and informal recreation park that makes the most of its context by providing excellent physical and visual linkages.

## PROJECT SUMMARY

Once an extensive area of mudflats, Cox's Bay Reserve was formed by a series of reclamation projects carried out from the 1950s to the 1970s. Several parcels of land were acquired over five decades to form the final extent of the reserve. The reserve was officially opened for use in the early 1980s, and has been used extensively ever since.

This park provides an excellent example of incorporating sports and recreational facilities together, and embracing the surrounding context in the design. At Cox's Bay, the foreshore, estuary and gully vegetation have been seamlessly integrated into the overall design, adding considerable value to the experiences afforded to visitors.

This reserve is surrounded by dense residential development, and offers a wide variety of activities to appeal to a large number of users, and a variety of sporting codes.

A management plan was written for the park in 1994; and the most recent upgrade to the park includes the upgrading and widening of a boardwalk that travels through the wetland area leading from the sports fields to Richmond Road. This boardwalk is heavily used by runners, cyclists and dog walkers and its widening has allowed multiple user groups to enjoy it without conflict.

There are a number of scheduled Maori heritage sites which exist on the site, mostly along the edges of the reserve, and an old mill called Cashmore's Mill once called Cox's Bay home.



# KEY PROJECT INFORMATION

## MAIN ENVIRONMENT MODULE SPORT & ACTIVE RECREATION

### KEY FEATURES

### LESSONS LEARNT

### DESIGNER

**TREVOR SCHOLSON OF AUCKLAND CITY COUNCIL**

## OTHER ENVIRONMENT MODULE INFORMAL RECREATION

Retains important views to Waitemata Harbour

Heritage - A potential opportunity to interpret the history of the area, Cashmore's Mill, was not taken advantage of.

### LOCATION

**WEST END RD, HERNE BAY**

## SITE AREA 14.3 HECTARES

Legible walking paths with good connections to surrounding network

Drainage – A picnic table was installed in an area prone to flooding, making it unusable in winter.

Located at the base of a valley, this L-shaped reserve is largely flat with dense mangroves and a stream system that winds its way along the northern edge of the park. Residential streets surround the edges to the North and South, with Cox's Bay on the west and a vegetated tidal stream system to the east.

Integration of bus pickup

Edges of the site have been developed well, with the stream system and walkways on one side and pavilion building and parking along the other

Furniture placement – Rubbish bins are located too far away from the pathway, which has led to the trampling of the adjacent grass. Future designs should ensure furniture items are located directly adjacent to pathways.

Supports a mix of summer and winter sports

Provides informal recreation opportunities including playground, fitness equipment and an extensive walkway network

Vandalism – Graffiti is a problem in Cox's Bay. By locating vulnerable elements in prominent locations where more people can passively observe what goes on there, vandalism can be dramatically decreased.

The park is located in the base of the small valley, which allows good passive surveillance, preventing crime.



# ENJOY COMFORT & SAFETY

1. A planted buffer between adjacent neighbours and the sports grounds provides some level of privacy and noise reduction for nearby residents.
2. Passive surveillance from adjacent neighbours provides a safer and more enjoyable space for everyone to use.
3. This park is flexible: hosting a range of sports for a variety of age groups throughout the year.



The park is well-signposted, with interesting and welcoming entrances and good passive surveillance from neighbouring properties, ensuring safety and security for park users.

# CONNECT PLACES

1. This sign successfully uses pictures to give park users the information they need quickly without too much reading. Pictures are great because they remove the need for multiple language translations.
2. Clear park signage provides identity and navigational function for the park. The sign is clear and easy to read from some distance.



Cox's Bay is well-connected with the surrounding neighbourhood, including multiple access points from a variety of streets. It is also part of the Waitemata Greenways Project that aims to connect our parks, streets and esplanade reserves to create a green movement network.



# TREASURE THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. A wider vegetative edge would have provided further slope stability and therefore a higher level of water treatment runoff from field areas. It may be that a staged planting approach was unfinished due to budget constraints.
2. This estuarine stream has been cleaned up and restored with a narrow planting buffer along the edge.
3. Planting large trees beside the stream helps to regulate the temperature of the water, providing a cooler environment which is preferable for many of our native fish.



The designers of Cox's Bay successfully identified, protected and enhanced prominent views, natural landscape features, indigenous ecosystems and habitats, and areas of ecological and biodiversity value, implementing a restoration planting scheme along the stream to enhance its functioning.



# UTILISE OUR RESOURCES EFFICIENTLY

1. Having all facilities consolidated into one building and locating the building at the edge of park ensures the overall building footprint within the reserve is minimised.
2. Concrete terracing has been built into the building plinth, providing informal seating with clear sightlines to playing fields.
3. Solar panels have been integrated into the roof, providing a sustainable source of energy. Although these were initially an expensive addition to the building, they will provide ongoing savings for the club into the future.
4. This single building located centrally on the site with club rooms, toilets and storage allows easy access for all.



This clubroom building is multifunctional, providing changing rooms, toilets and also incorporates a solar panel roof making it sustainable. It is ideally located close to the sports fields, but also on the edge of the park, so as not to prevent other uses.

# ENJOY MORE USE & A RANGE OF EXPERIENCES

1. Trees planted around the edges of sports fields provide shade and shelter for spectators and players.



Cox's Bay has a friendly neighbourhood feel, it's the kind of place where dog owners stop to chat and parents cheer whilst watching their young sports stars compete. It is also popular with joggers who enjoy the variety it offers.



# ENJOY HEALTH WELLBEING & FUN

1. The location of the play space at the edge of the park works well and does not compromise the park's use. However, this particular play space is adjacent to the busy internal road which means it requires a perimeter fence.
2. Although traffic is a safety hazard, the passive surveillance on this space from the sports fields creates a safe space to occupy throughout the day.
3. The integration of play equipment adjacent to the sports field enables greater use by family groups while visiting the park.
4. Seating facing the play space provides a comfortable place for adults to supervise children.



This park provides a fun, creative and stimulating environment for all ages to enjoy. It successfully incorporates opportunities for social interaction, active and passive physical activity; and places for children and young people to have fun, play and learn. It also has a fitness trail with a variety of fitness equipment dotted along the path network to enable park users to keep fit.



# CONNECT THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

1. Conserving the sea views allows the park's identity and sense of place to be celebrated.
2. Views across West End Road out to the upper Waitemata Harbour have been successfully preserved with tree plantings and signage limited to the park edges.



The design of this park is particularly successful in protecting and enhancing views, providing a strong visual connection to the sea and contributing to a distinct sense of place as a coastal park.



# CONNECT PEOPLE

1. Park signage clearly indicates one of the main entrances into the park, making users feel welcome.
2. West End Road creates one of the park's boundaries.
3. West End Road connects through to Jervois Rd going east and Garnet Road going west. Key public transportation routes are located along these roads, including the Outer Link bus service. By locating public transport links near the park, more users can easily visit and parking is required.



A bus stop near Cox's Bay provides easy public transport access to the reserve, enabling those without a car to visit and enjoy the park.



# ENJOY MORE USE & A RANGE OF EXPERIENCES

1. Multiple sporting codes are integrated into the park space, making it flexible for changing user requirements and seasonal peaks.



The sports fields are suitable for all ages and multiple sporting codes, making them flexible and able to be enjoyed by a large number of people.



# CONNECT PEOPLE

1. These paths provide an important active opportunity for those who are not participating in organised sport on the fields, but still want to exercise and enjoy the park.
2. Path systems connecting with the surrounding area encourages surrounding residents to walk through the park, rather than drive.
3. Pathways are found around the edges of the fields connecting many of the various fields and linking into the surrounding street network and other bush tracks within the reserve.



This park provides excellent walking paths, fitness equipment and seating to promote greater pedestrian use and enjoyment. This is particularly important for creating safe and easy movement networks which are suitable for children and the elderly.

# AUCKLAND DESIGN MANUAL

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