

Carmichael Park

Plan of Management

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Introduction

This plan of management has been prepared by Cessnock City Council for Carmichael Park in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993.

This plan of management is an important document providing a clear framework for the future management of land in the care and control of council. This plan will enable Cessnock City Council to produce a consistent and effective set of guidelines which will govern the management of its community land.

The Local Government Act, 1993 states that community land is land that is reserved for community use. The Act also states that councils must categorise all community land according to its function. The majority of community land covered by this Plan is categorised as Sportsground in accordance with Section 36 (4) of the Act (refer to Figure 1). The core objectives of community land categorised as Sportsground are:

- (a) To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games; and
- (b) To ensure that such activities are managed having regard to any adverse impact on nearby residences.

In addition there is Parkland located within the site, this area is categorised as Park in accordance with section 36 (4) of the Act (refer to Figure 1). The core objectives for management of community land categorised as park are:

- (a) To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities; and
- (b) To provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games, and to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management.

This Plan of Management will be reviewed quarterly and annually during the budget process to assess implementation and performance, and fully reviewed after five years to allow policy and planning issues to be updated.

Objectives

The key objectives which give direction to this plan are:

- To plan for the continual development and maintenance of recreational resources to a high standard within Carmichael Park for the convenience and well being of users;
- To plan for progressive improvement of the quality and appearance of the parks and sportsgrounds within Carmichael Park as funds become available;
- To encourage and support the hosting of local, regional, state and national sporting events at Carmichael Park;
- To facilitate the effective, equitable and efficient management of the land within Carmichael Park;
- To provide a broad spectrum of safe, high quality recreational opportunities at Carmichael Park;
- Distribute future recreational resources as community demand and financial viability dictates in regards to Carmichael Park;
- To maintain clear communication channels with stakeholders, the public and nearby residences;
- To make provision for the sale of undesirable open-space areas, leases, licences and agreements in respect of the utilisation of Councils recreational assets; and
- To make provision for licence agreements for periods up to 21 years in respect of the utilisation of Councils recreational assets.

Background

Carmichael Park was identified some time ago by Council as a site which contained immense potential. It was recognised by Council that there were a number of opportunities available to improve and expand upon the wide range of existing facilities. In order to visualise and demonstrate the further potential at the site a Masterplan was developed. The Masterplan assisted Council by providing a clear direction for the site and also identified a number of opportunities to be explored in the future.

The Physical Setting

Carmichael Park is situated in Bellbird. The facilities located at this site can be accessed via Tennant Street, Hetton Street and Sparke Street with vehicular access provided at the latter two. Carmichael Park consists of 8.71 hectares of land which is owned by Cessnock City Council and comprises the following parcel of land – Tennant Street Bellbird, Cnr. Lot 3, DP624793 and Lot 1, DP329071 and Lot 261, DP524058.

Buildings and Facilities

Carmichael Park contains a number of facilities including two tennis courts, a BMX track, a soccer field, three combined use cricket and soccer ovals and a playground. Each of these facilities will be analysed individually to present a more detailed overview.

Tennis Courts

There are two tennis courts located at the site, each containing a black tennis net. A bench seat is located between the two courts. Chain wire mesh fencing is situated around the perimeter of the facility. Entry to the tennis courts is available via two access gates.

The courts that are currently located within Carmichael Park were established in 1999 some six years ago. Since this time the synthetic court surface has declined. It is anticipated that upon the adoption of the Carmichael Park Masterplan by Council, facilities at the site requiring improvement such as the tennis courts will be reviewed.

Main Soccer Field

Adjacent to the Bellbird Bowling Club is the main soccer field. This field is well grassed and in relatively good condition. The field contains metal goal posts at either end of the playing area. The field also contains automatic irrigation which aids in the maintenance of the site. Four floodlighting poles are situated around the perimeter of the field. The ground is surrounded by a plastic chain wire fence which has a number of advertising signs mounted upon the northern and eastern sides. Seating in the form of wooden benches is situated on the northern, eastern and western sides. Additional seating is located on the western side of the field in the form of cement player's enclosures. This seating is utilised by participants during breaks in play. A small mound is located behind the player's enclosures on the western side of the field which acts as a spectator area. Located in the South West corner of this field is a metal scoreboard which contains the sponsor's logo. A car access gate is located on this field.

Cricket and Soccer Fields

There are three fields located within Carmichael Park that are jointly used by local sporting teams. For example, cricket teams make use of the fields in the summer season while soccer teams utilise the fields in the winter season.

First Cricket/Soccer Field

This field is located to the south of the main soccer field. The field contains a turf cricket wicket in the centre of the grounds. The oval is well grassed and in relatively good condition. A wooden sight screen is located at the southern end of the field assisting cricketers during play. Weld mesh fencing is situated around the perimeter of the field. Two floodlights are positioned on this field enabling night training.

Two practice cricket nets are located to the west of this field and are in relatively good condition.

Second Cricket/Soccer Field

There are two fields located near the tennis courts which are utilised by both soccer and cricket. The surface of the field is flat and relatively smooth. The field possesses a turf cricket wicket. Car barrier fencing is situated around the perimeter of the two fields.

Amenity Building

An amenity block is centrally located between the sporting facilities at Carmichael Park. The building contains two changerooms which contain bathroom amenities consisting of showers, toilets and hand basins. Timber seating benches surround each of the rooms. The building also contains a lady and men's toilet, a referees room as well as storage areas.

Located on the eastern side of the amenity building is a purpose built kiosk. It is a cement structure with an aluminium roof which overhangs, providing a form of shade. A cement pathway is located around the kiosk and links to the amenity building. A loudspeaker is located to the rear of the kiosk.

Situated on the western side of the amenity building are two shipping containers. These are utilised by clubs to store their sporting equipment. Located alongside the shipping containers are two water tanks.

Upon the adoption of a Masterplan for Carmichael Park a number of improvements are proposed. These include the removal of the existing shipping containers and kiosk building. In addition Council proposes to expand the existing amenity building to incorporate additional changerooms, a kiosk, a disabled toilet and additional storage.

BMX Track

A BMX track has been established in the south western corner of Carmichael Park. The starting area of the track is located on a large mound with a cement surface along the top. From this point riders may choose a number of alternate paths around the circuit. The BMX track contains a number of dirt jumps which range in level of difficulty. For example some jumps are quite small and are located further apart for younger children, whereas other jumps are quite high and spaced closer together targeting older children.

Children's Playground

A children's playground is situated in the south western portion of Carmichael Park near the BMX track. The play equipment consists of swings, a see-saw, a slide, an activity centre and a digger. The play equipment is in fair condition and a combination of synthetic grass and coarse river sand is used as softfall material.

A picnic shelter is located near the playground but not does contain a table and chairs. A bench seat is located near the fence line at the Sparke Street entry.

Surrounding Grounds

There are a number of trees which are scattered throughout Carmichael Park providing additional shade for spectators.

An informal dirt road traverses through the site. A vehicular access gate is located in the middle of Carmichael Park near the water tanks

Carparking

There is no formalised carparking provided at Carmichael Park. Informal carparking areas include the eastern side of the grounds behind the sports fields, alongside the Bellbird Bowling Club and the grassed areas located on either side of the road in front of the BMX track.

Land Use and Activity

Carmichael Park is a multi-use facility which caters for a number of sports and community events. The facilities provided have directly benefited sporting and community groups and residents within the Cessnock Local Government Area.

The fields located within Carmichael Park are utilised on an annual basis for a number of sports including cricket, soccer and rugby union. Activities these sporting groups undertake include general club competition and training.

Tennis is a popular sport which occurs year round. Activities undertaken on these courts include general club competition and training.

The BMX track located within Carmichael Park is utilised on an annual basis and targets a broad array of age groups. Activities on this track include competitions, training and general recreation. The playground located near the BMX track is utilised year round by children.

The grounds within Carmichael Park are utilised for passive recreational use such as walking and running. Picnicking is an activity that occurs often within the open space areas provided at the site.

All of the sporting facilities within Carmichael Park are utilised by local primary and high schools for school sport and competitions.

Maintenance of Facilities

Cessnock City Council holds a licence agreement with the Bellbird Bombers Soccer Club (BBSC) for the main soccer field at Carmichael Park. This license is for a five year period and contains detailed information regarding the maintenance of the facility to be undertaken by the BBSC. **(Please note this agreement is currently being negotiated)**

Council is responsible for the remaining facilities within Carmichael Park which include the tennis courts, children's playground, BMX track, three (3) combine use soccer fields as well as the passive recreation areas located on the site. Maintenance responsibilities for these areas include:

- Line marking – Council line marks playing fields once a year. Clubs are responsible for any additional line marking;
- Maintenance of playing field surfaces;
- Mowing of all grassed areas within the boundary of the premises;
- Maintenance of the playground;
- Maintaining fences and barriers;
- Maintaining picnic shelters and all other forms of seating;
- Drainage;
- Floodlighting;
- Irrigation; and
- amenities

This Plan of Management authorises the granting of easements where the Council decides it is necessary to do so.

In addition this plan of management authorises the granting of leases and licenses or delegation of management of the land for purposes consistent with the goals, issues and objectives included in the plan. Leases and licenses may be for periods up to 21 years, subject to the requirements of the Local Government Act 1993.

Future Land Use

Future plans for the use of the facilities within Carmichael Park are varied. Future short term casual uses include:

- Food Vending;
- Busking and Entertainment;
- Sale of Alcohol;
- Community and Private events;
- Filming; and
- Use of buildings.

Fees may be charged for the use of Carmichael Park, which will be dependant on the type of use. These fees will be determined by Council.

Management of the Land

The objective and performance targets below provide the framework for the management of Carmichael Park. The objective and performance targets listed are consistent with anticipated availability of resources.

The priorities in this implementation action plan have been determined through community consultation and recreation planning data and are subject to the availability of resources.

This action plan will be reviewed annually and adjustments made in conjunction with the annual estimates process.

The key objectives which were cited in the introduction are revisited to illustrate what each strategy is aiming to achieve.

- To plan for the continual development and maintenance of recreational resources to a high standard within Carmichael Park for the convenience and well being of users;
- To plan for progressive improvement of the quality and appearance of the parks and sportsgrounds within Carmichael Park as funds become available;
- To encourage and support the hosting of local, regional, state and national sporting events at Carmichael Park;
- To facilitate the effective, equitable and efficient management of the land within Carmichael Park;
- To provide a broad spectrum of safe, high quality recreational opportunities at Carmichael Park;
- Distribute future recreational resources as community demand and financial viability dictates in regards to Carmichael Park;
- To maintain clear communication channels with stakeholders, the public and nearby residences;

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- To make provision for the sale of undesirable open-space areas, leases, licences and agreements in respect of the utilisation of Councils recreational assets; and
- To make provision for licence agreements for periods up to 21 years in respect of the utilisation of Councils recreational assets.

Implementation Action Plan

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<p>Recreation Resources</p>	<p>To continually enhance and develop the buildings located at the site as resources become available.</p>	<p>Buildings are enhanced and/or developed as required, based on their current condition.</p>	<p>Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community regarding buildings.</p>
		<p>The existing amenity building is extended to incorporate additional storage space, changerooms, an upgraded kiosk and an accessible toilet.</p>	<p>Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding the amenity building.</p>
	<p>To continually enhance and develop the facilities at the site as resources become available.</p>	<p>The roadway through the site is formalised. In addition carparking throughout the site is formalised.</p>	<p>Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding the formalised roadway and carparking.</p>
		<p>The children's playground is upgraded.</p>	<p>Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding the playground.</p>
		<p>Floodlights are installed on the playing fields nearest the tennis courts as well as at the tennis courts.</p>	<p>Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding floodlighting.</p>
		<p>A large picnic shelter with storage and an electric barbeque is installed near the tennis courts.</p>	<p>Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups regarding shelter and barbeque.</p>

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		Facilities are improved as required, based on their current condition.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community regarding facilities.
Community Competitions and Events	Encourage, organise and administer sporting and community events.	Allocation of recreational resources for sporting and community events to occur on a regular basis.	Records of frequency & types of events to be kept, as well as attendance figures.
	Promote sporting and community events through respective local, state and regional areas.	Events are recognised in media releases, advertisements and other forms of promotional material.	Level of media coverage and general awareness of events.

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Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
Partnerships with Stakeholders	Facilitate regular contact with stakeholders, such as key users, i.e. soccer, cricket, and tennis clubs.	Quarterly meetings are held with key stakeholders.	Minutes from meetings are recorded and acted on.
		Contact details are kept up to date and contact is made as needed.	Assessed through Councils internal Customer Request Management System.
	Where necessary, any queries, requests or complaints are passed on.	Queries, requests and complaints are recorded and referred to the relevant party in a timely manner.	Complaints and requests are recorded via Councils internal Customer Request Management System and acted on in a timely manner.
	Provide financial reports for activities occurring in regard to the land.	Reports are available and provided when requested, e.g. licence agreement requirements, grant applications.	Information provided within financial reports.
Providing Support and Advice to Community Groups	Identify and communicate funding opportunities available to the sporting clubs and community groups.	Organisations are notified of Dollar for Dollar grant opportunities as well as other funding initiatives operating within Council.	Number of grants applied for by community groups. Level of support from Council with preparation of grants. Number of successful applicants.
		Clubs are notified of all government department grants that are available e.g. The Regional Sports Facilities Program which is provided by the Department of Tourism, Sport and Recreation.	Number of grants applied for by community groups. Level of support from Council with preparation of grants.

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Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
Providing Support and Advice to Community Groups (Continued)	Provide professional advice with regard to development concepts /designs and management issues.	Council maintains contact with local sporting clubs. When requested, Council provides accurate and prompt advice. Where appropriate Council may instigate a project.	Minutes from meetings are distributed and acted on.
	Where possible, provide funding support for developments and improvements made to Carmichael Park.	Appropriate projects are added to the Capital Works Program, or alternate funding sources identified.	Amount of funding provided from Council or alternate source. Completion of projects in a timely manner.
Informal/Social Recreation	To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games.	Carmichael Park provides areas where sporting activities and organised games can be conducted.	Number of activities and games conducted on an annual basis.
	To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities.	Allocation of Carmichael Park for this type of use. Carmichael Park provides areas where recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities can be held.	Number of patrons attending organised events, number of people utilising passive park areas. Diversity of events.
	To provide for passive recreational activities or pastimes and for the casual playing of games.	Open space area is provided within Carmichael Park for passive recreation.	Number of patrons attending organised events, number of people utilising passive park areas.
	Maximise availability for passive recreational use within Carmichael Park.	Promote use of Carmichael Park outside peak sporting use, and limit organised activities in passive recreation areas.	Ongoing promotion of area by Council. Data is made available on attendance figures.

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Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Ensure that activities and events are managed having regard to any adverse impact on nearby residences.</p>	<p>Sporting Clubs, Community Clubs and Council develop and adopt consultation protocols.</p>	<p>Feedback is reviewed via Councils internal Customer Request Management System.</p>
	<p>Provide advance notice to nearby residents of any events/activities that may produce excessive noise or traffic congestion.</p>	<p>Nearby residents receive notice (verbal or written) of any such events/activities at least two days prior to the event taking place.</p>	<p>Feedback received from community regarding proposed events.</p>
	<p>Offer opportunities for residents to provide feedback in regard to the management of Carmichael Park.</p>	<p>Residents are provided with organisation and Council details.</p>	<p>Level of feedback received from community regarding management of Carmichael Park.</p>
<p>Licence Agreements</p>	<p>Ensure that all lease and licence agreements pertaining to Carmichael Park are current.</p>	<p>Renegotiate lease and licence agreements as they expire.</p>	<p>Lease agreements are reviewed as required.</p>
	<p>Ensure all lease and licence agreements are consistent with the core objectives for management of community land categorised as Sportsground and Park.</p>	<p>Relevant legislation regarding lease and licence agreements is readily available when negotiating new lease and licence agreements.</p>	<p>Plans of Management are reviewed as required.</p>

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Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<p>Licence Agreements (Continued)</p>	<p>Provide facilities on the land to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public. In relation to purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land.</p>	<p>Negotiate and implement leases, licences and estates as required.</p>	<p>Leases, licences and estates are reviewed on an annual basis.</p>
	<p>To make provision for lease and licence agreements to extend to 21 years.</p>	<p>Licences are reviewed upon expiry and provision for 21 year licence is made by application to the Minister for Planning where appropriate.</p>	<p>Feedback received from Minister for Planning.</p>
<p>Future Needs</p>	<p>Provide facilities on the land to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public. In relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public.</p>	<p>Land in front of tennis and netball courts is purchased to cater for any expansion of the site.</p>	<p>Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups</p>
		<p>Carmichael Park is recognised in Councils Outdoor Recreation and Open Space Plan.</p>	<p>The plan is reviewed every five years.</p>