

# Howe Park

## Plan of Management



February 2007

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## Introduction

This plan of management has been prepared by Cessnock City Council for Howe Park, Abermain 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 community land covered by this plan is categorised as Sportsground. 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.

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.

## Figure 1: Site Plan

### HOWE PARK



Cessnock City Council (C)  
C/- Property Officer  
PO Box 152  
CESSNOCK NSW 2325

Property Information :

Address : 27A Charles ST, ABERMAIN  
Authority ParcelID : 13454  
Title : DP: 755259  
Area : 16103.9 sq m  
Perimeter : 508.396 m  
Council Type : Community  
Title Description : Council Owned Land  
Property Description: Howe Park  
Legal Docs:  
Assessment No. : 19083

Postal Address :

Cessnock City Council (C)  
C/- Property Officer  
PO Box 152  
CESSNOCK NSW 2325

## Objectives

The key objectives which give direction to this plan are:

- To plan for the continual development and maintenance of recreational resources within Howe Park to a high standard for the convenience and well being of users;
- To plan for progressive improvement of the quality and appearance of parks, playgrounds and sportsgrounds as funds become available;
- To encourage and support the hosting of local, regional, state and national sporting events at Howe Park;
- To facilitate the effective, equitable and efficient management of the land within Howe Park;
- To provide a broad spectrum of safe, high quality recreational opportunities at Howe Park;
- To distribute future recreational resources as community demand and financial viability dictates in regards to Howe 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 council's 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**

Howe Park was identified some time ago by Council as a site which contained potential. It was recognised that there were a number of opportunities available to improve and expand upon the existing facilities at Howe Park particularly on the northern and western sides of the complex. In order to visualise and demonstrate the further potential at Howe Park a Masterplan was developed in conjunction with the key stakeholders, which outlines a number of works to be completed at the site over the next 3-5 years. 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**

Howe Park is situated in Abermain. Access to the sporting facilities is via Williams Street and pedestrian access is provided through Cessnock Road. Howe Park consists of 1.6 hectares of land which is owned by Cessnock City Council with a portion of the land being Crown Land. Howe Park comprises the following parcel of land – 27A Charles Street, DP755259.

## **Buildings and Facilities**

The site currently contains a sportsground, a kiosk and an amenity building. Each of these facilities will now be analysed individually to present a more detailed overview.

### **Sportsground**

The sportsground is located to the east of the amenity building. The oval is well grassed and in relatively good condition. A turf cricket pitch is situated in the middle of the oval and metal sleeves are located in the ground at each end of the field for the installation of goal posts during the rugby league season. A metal pipe rail fence surrounds the perimeter of the field. There are (4) four floodlights situated around the field which enable night games/competitions and training.

### **Amenities**

A brick amenity building is located in the north western portion of Howe Park facing the main field. The building is dated and in poor condition. Two change rooms are located within the amenity block and contain bathroom amenities consisting of showers, hand basins and a toilet. Timber seating benches surround each of the change rooms. The amenity building contains male and female toilets which are located at on the northern and southern ends of the building. A kiosk is located at the front of the amenities providing an open view of the main field. The kiosk contains benches for serving and preparing food, and kitchen amenities consisting of two (2) kitchen sinks and hand basins, a fridge as well as a pie warmer.

### **Surrounding Grounds**

Located in the south eastern portion of the facility is a small brick building which was once utilised as a kiosk. This facility contains two (2) viewing windows that face the sportsground, kitchen amenities including a wash basin and benches. This structure is now utilised for storage.

A storage container is located to the east of the former kiosk on the south eastern portion of Howe Park. Cricket equipment is located in the container.

There are a number of shade trees which are located in the south western portion of the site providing additional shade for spectators.

A score board is located on the eastern side of the oval and is in poor condition. A combination of timber and aluminium bench seating is located around the southern boundary of the field.

A new 1.8m high plastic coated chain wire fence surrounds the perimeter of the site.

### **Car parking**

Informal car parking is available adjacent to the sportsfield as well as along the boundary fence adjacent to the complex.

Vehicles enter the site via an informal dirt road that continues from the front gate through to the brick amenity building on the western side of the facility.

## **Land Use and Activity**

Howe Park is a multi-purpose sporting facility that caters for a number of sports and community events. This site has directly benefited a wide range of local sporting and community groups.

The sportsground/cricket oval at the site is utilised by rugby league teams in the winter season and cricket teams in the summer season. Activities undertaken by these teams include general club competition, charity matches and training activities.

The facilities within Howe Park are also used by the general community. The grounds on Howe Street are used for passive recreation use such as walking, running and on leash dog walking.

Local primary schools also utilise the facility for school sport.

## **Maintenance of Facilities**

### **Sportsfield**

Council allocates the use of the field on a seasonal basis and there are no lease or licence agreements pertaining to the use of these facilities. Cessnock City Council is therefore responsible for all of the maintenance required at this site. Maintenance responsibilities 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;
- Maintaining fences and barriers;
- Maintaining all forms of seating; and
- Drainage

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 licences or delegation of management of the land for purposes consistent with the goals, issues and objectives included in the plan. Leases and licences 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 Howe Park are varied. Future short term casual uses include:

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

Fees may be charged for the use of Howe 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 Howe Park. The objective and performance targets listed are consistent with anticipated availability of resources.

The priorities in this implementation 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 for the convenience and well being of users;
- To plan for progressive improvement of the quality and appearance of parks, playgrounds and sportsgrounds as funds become available;
- To encourage and support the hosting of local, regional, state and national sporting events;
- To facilitate the effective, equitable and efficient management of the land within;
- To provide a broad spectrum of safe, high quality recreational opportunities;
- To distribute future recreational resources as community demand and financial viability dictates;
- 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 council's 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
<b>Recreation Resources</b>	To continually enhance and develop the buildings located at the site as resources become available.	A new amenity building is constructed	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
		Buildings are enhanced and/or developed as required, based on their current condition.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
	To continually enhance and develop the facilities at the site as resources become available.	Two floodlights are installed around the playing field.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
		A weldmesh fence is installed around the playing field.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
		A training area is established at the northern end of the site.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
		A Formalised carparking area is provided	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
		An automatic irrigation system is installed	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
		Facilities are improved as required, based on their current condition.	Council recommendations. Feedback received from the community and key user groups.
<b>Community Competitions and Events</b>	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.

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Partnerships with Stakeholders</b>	Facilitate regular contact with stakeholders, such as key users, i.e. cricket club, rugby league club,	Quarterly meetings are held with key stakeholders.	Minutes from meetings are recorded and acted upon.
		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.
<b>Providing Support and Advice to Community Groups</b>	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.
		Clubs are notified of all government department grants that are available. E.g. The Regional Sports Facilities Program as well as the Capital Assistance Program which are 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.

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Providing Support and Advice to Community Groups</b> (Continued)	Provide professional advice with regard to development concepts /designs and management issues.	Council maintains continual 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 Howe Park.	Appropriate projects are added to Capital Works and Planned Maintenance Program, or alternate sources identified.	Amount of funding provided from Council or alternate source. Completion of project in a timely manner.
<b>Informal/Social Recreation</b>	To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games.	Howe Park provides areas where sporting activities and organised games can be conducted.	Number of activities and games provided on an annual basis.
	To encourage, promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities.	Allocation of Howe Park for this type of use. Howe 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 provided within Howe Park.	Number of patrons attending organised events, number of people utilising passive park areas.
	Maximise availability for passive recreational use within Howe Park	Promote use of Howe Park outside peak sporting use. Limit organised activities in passive recreation areas.	Ongoing promotion of area by Council. Data is available on attendance figures.

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

Management Issues	Objective and Performance Targets	Means of Achieving Objective and Performance Targets	Assessment of Performance in Relation to Objectives and Performance Targets
<b>Licence Agreements</b> (Continued)	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.	Negotiate leases, licences and estates as required.	Implement leases, licences and estates as required.
	To make provision for lease and licence agreements where appropriate.	Licences are reviewed upon expiry and provision for 21 year licence is made by application to the Minister for Planning where appropriate.	Feedback received from Minister for Planning.
<b>Future Needs</b>	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	Howe Park is recognised in Councils Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan.	The Open Space and Outdoor Recreation Plan is reviewed every five years.