



# MANGAWHAI COMMUNITY PARK



## Master Plan





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# Introduction

Mangawhai Community Park (the Park) is a 34 hectare piece of public land in the heart of Mangawhai Heads between Thelma Road South, Molesworth Drive and the Mangawhai Golf Course. The land has no formal reserve classification meaning it can be put to any uses agreed by the community. To date this has included a local museum, Historic Village, the Daring preservation project, wastewater treatment plant, walking tracks, Activity Zone with multiple play opportunities, ambulance station, fire station, information centre and Bowls Club as well as a large area of native bush.

The flexibility in what uses the Park can be put to, and the need to protect its natural values heightens the need for this Master Plan. That is, this Master Plan is the document through which the Mangawhai community can set direction for the ongoing management and use of the Park.

The original Master Plan was developed by the community and adopted by Council on 24 November 2014. The Mangawhai Community Park Governance Committee initiated a review of the Master Plan at its 05 September 2022 meeting. The community provided initial feedback (over 100 responses) for consideration in a redrafted Master Plan. The Mangawhai Community Park Governance Committee considered this feedback and worked with stakeholders and user groups in the Park to develop an updated draft Master Plan. The community were then given the opportunity to review the draft Master Plan and submit feedback, with 37 submissions being received. These submissions were considered by the Committee and amendments made to the Master Plan in response, before a final Master Plan was recommended to Council for adoption. The Master Plan was finally adopted by Council on 30 October 2024.

## **The agreed vision for Mangawhai Community Park is:**

***Mangawhai Community Park will be a visible, predominantly natural, public space at the entrance to Mangawhai Heads, used (freely) by the public for recreation and enjoyment of the outdoor environment.***

This Master Plan directs that the Park's natural landscapes (ecological and geological) will come to dominate, with additional native plantings providing shade, shelter and tying the different areas of the park together. The presence of all existing users is valued and acknowledged. Moving forward the Park will continue to primarily be a space for informal play, passive and active recreation. Maintenance, expansion, and enhancement of walking and cycling tracks through the Park will be supported, as will establishment of additional play equipment, picnic facilities etc. Formal competition-level sports such as those requiring full sized sports fields will better be accommodated elsewhere, as will any large-scale development of further utilities (water supply etc).

Mangawhai Community Park will continue to be a thriving green heart with play and recreation opportunities that invite residents and visitors to enter and enjoy the natural surroundings. The Park will continue to be a hub for a community of interest groups, volunteers, citizens, and visitors to connect, share and express their talents. The Park hosts community events (both outdoors and indoors), provides space for individuals, friends, and whanau to gather – a place to bump into friends and make new ones. You can learn a new skill, share kai or just watch the world go by.



## Understanding the Park

This section provides background information and an overall understanding of the Park as it exists at present.

### Location and connectivity

Mangawhai Community Park is conveniently located in the heart of Mangawhai Heads, within walking and cycling distance of this area, just across the Tara Creek estuary from the Mangawhai Central shopping precinct and only a short walk from the Wood Street shops. The Park also backs onto the Mangawhai Golf Course with walking and cycling linkages around the outside of the course.

The Mangawhai shared path runs through the Park, providing an active transport link between the Park and key residential areas of Mangawhai. A range of walking trails run throughout the Park, connecting to different activity areas and out to surrounding neighbourhood.

As the number of attractions at the Park and Mangawhai's population has grown, car parking at the Park has become increasingly limited. While accessing the Park via active transport rather than private motor vehicles is encouraged, active transport is not a realistic option for everyone. Presently, all carparking is available off Molesworth Drive at the Mangawhai Museum/Historic Village, Mangawhai Activity Zone, and the Bowls Club.

The Park is also on the route of a bus service that operates in the summer months providing a further alternative to private vehicle use.

### Legal Status of the Park

The land now known as Mangawhai Community Park was purchased from a private owner through a willing seller/willing buyer sale in the 1980s by Otamatea County Council (now incorporated into the Kaipara District Council). This land was further subdivided in the 1990s with the Mangawhai Golf Course and the site of the Bowls Club now having separate titles. The land for the Mangawhai Golf Course was later made a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977 and is hence excluded from the scope of this Master Plan, though linkages between the Park and the reserve will be considered.

Mangawhai Community Park is 32.5 hectares situated in Lot 2 DP 450057 and the site of the Bowls Club is 1.66 hectares situated in Lot 1 DP 450057.

The land comprising Mangawhai Community Park, including the separate title for the Bowls Club, was never formally protected as a reserve under the Reserves Act 1977, but rather has continued to be held in fee simple by the Council on behalf of the community.

This means that this large area of land in the heart of Mangawhai Heads has remained available to be put to any use the community requires, be that a museum, wastewater treatment plant, activity zone or fire station.

*Parks and reserves*

**138 Restriction on disposal of parks (by sale or otherwise)**

(1) A local authority proposing to sell or otherwise dispose of a park or part of a park must consult on the proposal before it sells or disposes of, or agrees to sell or dispose of, the park or part of the park.

(2) In this section,—

**dispose of**, in relation to a park, includes the granting of a lease for more than 6 months that has the effect of excluding or substantially interfering with the public's access to the park

**park**—

(a) means land acquired or used principally for community, recreational, environmental, cultural, or spiritual purposes; but

(b) does not include land that is held as a reserve, or part of a reserve, under the [Reserves Act 1977](#).

Section 138: substituted, on 28 June 2006, by section 13 of the Local Government Act 2002 Amendment Act 2006 (2006 No 26).

*Box 1: Section 138 of the Local Government Act 2002.*

Given the wide scope of uses to which the land can be put, it is essential that a clear Master Plan be developed in consultation with the community to ensure that the ongoing use of the land meets the present and future needs of the community.

In addition, the Park is formally protected through section 138 of the Local Government Act 2002 (reprinted in Box 1).

Furthermore, the Local Government Act 2002 requires Council to engage with its communities on any significant decisions, as per its Significance and Engagement Policy. That is, were the Council to seek to make a decision on the future use of the Park which was of significant interest to the community, it would be required to consult with the community on that decision. What constitutes “significant” is set out in Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy.

The Park is zoned “rural” with a harbour overlay in the Operative District Plan. All future development of the Park must comply with the District Plan rules.

## Landforms, Ecology and Vegetation

The Park lies on a fixed sand dune comprised of sand blown in from the coast during the Holocene. This feature is still largely unconsolidated and free draining.

While the area along Molesworth Drive is mostly flat with only slight undulations, much of the remainder of the Park is steep and undulating with relatively dry ridges and damper hollows. Many of these lower lying hollows have developed into wetlands/wet areas. The Park is also home to an impressive sandstone gully which is an important natural feature of the Park.

The Park contains several wetlands/wet areas, the largest being an extensive kanuka (*Kunzea ericoides*) dominated area in the northwest corner along Thelma Road. An extensive rush bed is also present in the northeast below the Mangawhai Bowls Club car park. A further three wetlands/wet areas along the southwestern edge of the Park are dominated by kanuka although the most northern one, and largest has a significant component of mānuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*). At their drier eastern ends, tree ferns and even cabbage trees are present. Ground cover is jointed rush (*oioi*) (*Apodasmia similis*). All the wetlands/wet areas are ecologically valuable.

With the exception of those areas cleared for development or as the result of exotic forestry removal, most of the Park is covered by a closed canopy of tall kanuka forest. This is a distinctively Northland forest type (kanuka does not grow as tall further south) and may also be an example of a sand dune forest, a forest type recognised as being nationally rare. While some areas of this forest are degraded by introduced species, others are essentially pure and of high ecological significance. The more natural areas of kanuka forest are also home to abundant native fungi.

This kanuka forest is the single most important component of the vegetation cover of the Park. Its dense continuous canopy restricts the establishment of exotic species such as acacia, asparagus fern (*Asparagus densiflorus*) and pines. Canopy height varies from 4m on the drier ridges to 8–10m in moist

valleys. The reasonably dense canopy of this species limits light to the understory with some areas supporting few ground cover and sub-canopy species. Common ground cover species include carex grasses (*Carex lessoniana*), and exotic asparagus fern (an invasive weed), with kauri grass (*Astelia*) and sphagnum moss on damper sites, and a sub-canopy of hangehange (*Geniostoma rupestre*), karamu (*Coprosma robusta*), tree ferns (*Cyathea*), and scattered five finger (*Pseudopanax arboreus*) where the canopy is higher. There are however no populations of indigenous fauna which need to be protected within the Park. Fortunately, most of the high quality native bush and wetlands/wet areas are located away from Molesworth Drive and so should not clash with development.

There are also two very large Pohutukawa trees located in the Park. These Pohutukawa, which are likely to be several hundred years old, are a remnant of the prehistoric forest cover and are arguably the Park's most valuable minor vegetation component. These are also interesting in that they have been partly buried by the once shifting sands of the dune and so have taken on a unique structure.

## Current Uses

Many assets and activities in Mangawhai Community Park have been created by small charitable trusts with Licences to Occupy specific areas of the Park, and consistent work by many community volunteers.

## Walking

The Park contains a network of walking tracks. These tracks have been designed to highlight and make accessible the various scenic features of the Park. These include large Pohutukawa trees, a sandstone gully, wetlands/wet areas and kanuka forest. Condition of the tracks vary and they are frequently monitored. Maintenance of the immediate margins of The Last of the Summer Wine Track and Paul's Track is carried out by volunteers within the Mangawhai Tracks Charitable Trust, and many people use these daily, often walking dogs and taking children. The Council maintains other tracks to keep them open.

## Cycling

Some of the paths through the Park, particularly the shared path also accommodates cyclists. Proposed new signage will clearly identify the walking and cycling tracks.

## Mangawhai Activity Zone (MAZ)

After communications with Kaipara District Council in 2008, the Mangawhai Activity Zone Charitable Trust was created by a group of parents and interested members of the community to establish a state-of-the-art activity zone. Today MAZ features a large skatepark, picnic and barbeque areas (free for community use), playground, senior and junior pump tracks, 3-a-side basketball court and multi-sports court, and one of the country's largest skate bowls. The skatepark was designed by both Premium Skatepark Designs and Rich Landscapes. It currently features three bowls, a street plaza (half completed), a junior/beginners area, multiple rails, ledges, manual pads and various transitions, stair sets ranging from sets of 3 to 10 as well as plenty of flat land terrain.

Incorporated into the Activity Zone are natural landscaping elements giving the space a sense of place. The construction of the fifth stage of the skatepark was completed in July of 2024 with only one more stage to go (the completion of the street plaza). With skateboarding now being an Olympic event, design aspects of the park have been focused on "Olympic standards" over the past eight years from both a quality and design element perspective. The Park offers almost every type of feature you might expect and caters towards beginners and professional levels and anything in between.

The MAZ Café sells refreshments to visitors which provides a small amount of funding towards the maintenance of MAZ.

The combination of a café, public toilets and play equipment make MAZ a great place to meet and engage. For example, families and community members, in collaboration with Sustainable Kaipara, meet at MAZ at 8.25am on the first Sunday of each month for Mangawhai Community Clean Up of selected streets and beach. MAZ also organises and hosts both the annual Mangawhai Christmas Parade as well as the annual Mangawhai Bowl Bash. These are the two largest events held regularly in Mangawhai.

## **Mangawhai Museum**

The Mangawhai Museum is a new and modern museum that stands proudly at the southern entrance of the Park on the corner of Molesworth Drive and Thelma Road South. The Museum celebrates life and heritage around our harbour including gum digging, ship building and Māori history in the area. Family and women's stories of early life in Mangawhai are shown. The displays and educational materials also focus on natural history around Mangawhai and our harbour including the programmes to stabilise sand dunes and save the critically endangered Fairy Tern. The Museum and Daring Trustees are working together towards a new purpose-built Daring display space connected to the Museum.

The Museum has a changing exhibition space to engage locals and visitors as well as school holiday and other programmes. Second hand book sales at long holiday weekends are legendary.

Mangawhai Museum is a prime tourist destination and includes a café and gift shop.

## **The Daring**

The Daring, a two-mast schooner built in 1863 in Mangawhai, is in the process of being preserved and put on display as an extension of the Mangawhai Museum.

After being beached purposefully by Captain Phipps and his crew in 1865 this ship was rediscovered after a weather event moved the sands to expose her near Muriwai in Auckland. After an extensive rescue mission, with diggers on the beach, the Daring came home to Mangawhai in May 2019, where it now resides beside the Mangawhai Museum.

The Daring Trust volunteers are working to preserve this historic ship to the condition it was in when it was discovered on the beach and look forward to bringing it to the public in coming years.

The Museum and Daring trustees are working together on a project to erect a purpose-built facility which will connect the current Museum building and the new permanent Daring building. This facility will be built within the Museum's current Licence to Occupy area.

## **Mangawhai Historic Village**

The Mangawhai Historic Village is a collection of historic buildings that have been relocated to an area of the Park adjacent to the Museum. These buildings, coming from different areas across the district, have been restored, are on display to the public and can be made available for some meetings and smaller events.

The buildings include a church built in 1895, the former Tara Road School (which closed in 1968), the old Mangawhai Post Office and telephone exchange, the old Te Arai Library and a 1920s farm cottage. Two new structures that are soon to be added include a rotunda and a replica gum diggers hut, later lived in by George Merz. The Mangawhai Pioneer Village Trust was formed in 2016 to manage the site, raise money and coordinate volunteers for ongoing maintenance of the buildings.

## **Mangawhai Artists Inc.**

The Mangawhai Artists are actively involved in the life of the Park, bringing creativity and flair to this space, though they do not as yet have their own facility within the Park. An incorporated charity since 2012, Mangawhai Artists Gallery currently operates on the site of the Mangawhai Library and Hall in Moir Street and met the costs of an art workshop addition to that building. A development site for Mangawhai Community Art Centre between the Museum and Historic Village was agreed in 2018-19, and in 2022 Mangawhai Artists Inc agreed to the shift of a potential site for a Licence to Occupy in favour of a proposed location for the Daring.

## **Gum Diggers and Merz Hut**

The site of gum digger Pipi Smith's hut in the upper harbour within the Mangawhai Community Park is a link to the history of fossilised kauri gum digging in the Mangawhai area dating back to the late 19th century.



Pipi Smith's hut was later occupied by George Merz, an engineer, photographer, designer and inventor who moved to Mangawhai early in the Second World War after pressure from peers and Police who were distrustful of his name, and suspicious he was a German spy. Initially Merz camped in a cave below Heather Street. He was actually of Swiss birth and when he moved to Pipi Smith's hut, he developed motorised model boats which he sailed on mini harbours he created in shapes such as Sydney Harbour. These were lost due to earth moving for the wastewater project. He also invented a form of electricity to make lighting for the hut. The original hut complex has been removed for preservation; however, the historic site remains intact. It is being protected, properly identified and celebrated with signage planned to provide the history of the gum diggers and Merz Hut. A replica hut is being erected within the Mangawhai Historic Village.

## **Mangawhai Bowling Club and Chartered Club**

The Mangawhai Bowling Club is located adjacent to the Golf Club clubrooms in the far north-east of the Park. Mangawhai Bowls Inc provides outdoor lawn bowling for its members and the clubrooms are leased to The Chartered Club, which was formed in 2002 (Mangawhai Club) for parallel use as a functions centre. In 2023 it had over 2,000 members with subsections including darts, pool, petanque and cards.

Once a big sand dune, this complicated site in Mangawhai Community Park was levelled by volunteers and turned into bowling green 'A', with the official club-rooms opening in December 1994. Bowling green 'B', was completed in 1996. In 2003, 'Hakaru Bowling Club' was renamed to 'Mangawhai Bowls Inc.' In 2018 both Men's and Women's Bowling Clubs amalgamated into Mangawhai Bowls. In 2023 the greens are in demand for many Centre fixtures and the Club House is used for private functions. The main entrance shared with the Golf Club has been identified as an area needing improvement as traffic has increased a lot over recent years.

## **Mangawhai Information Centre**

The Mangawhai Information Centre is volunteer-run and offers information on local organisations, activities, events and opportunities for volunteering with maps, brochures, website and orientation visits to the Park for residents, newcomers and visitors. The Information Centre has recently relocated into the Urlich Cottage within the Mangawhai Historic Village.

## **St John's Ambulance**

Hato Hone St John's Ambulance Station has established on the Park adjacent to MAZ. This recognises the value of this service to the community and the benefit of having ambulances able to respond directly onto Molesworth Drive 24 hours a day, and 365 days a year. The patient transfer service workload includes both planned and urgent transfers for Te Whatu Ora/Health New Zealand as well as transport for residential care, palliative care, bariatric and air ambulance patients. The St John building includes a training room which is used by a range of community organisations for wellbeing and resilience courses, community meetings, first aid training and other sessions. St John provides First Aid Courses, products, medical alarms and secure key lockboxes and is supported, in part, by a retail store in Moir Street.

## **Mangawhai Fire Station – Fire and Emergency New Zealand**

The Mangawhai Volunteer Fire Brigade relocated in late 2019 to a new fire station located next to the St John's Ambulance Station within the Park. The new station is larger and more ergonomic than the aging previous station. Importantly, it is also located on one of Mangawhai's key throughfares, allowing a quicker response to those in need. This is a volunteer station. That means all members of the Fire and Emergency Service dedicate their own time in order to serve this community and respond to a variety of emergencies in our local area including fires, medical emergencies, motor vehicle accidents, search and rescue, Civil Defence, natural disaster responses, and they also offer fire safety advice. Mangawhai Volunteer Fire Service worked tirelessly during the 2023 cyclone, clearing roads of trees, attending to homes that were flooded and helping with houses with damaged roofs.

## **Mangawhai Community Wastewater Treatment Plant**

The Mangawhai community had traditionally been serviced by private septic tanks to meet its wastewater disposal needs. However, as a number of these began to age and affect the quality of water in the harbour and as the community continued to grow, it became clear that a more coordinated solution

was needed. Subsequently, the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Scheme was constructed to move wastewater away from Mangawhai's celebrated harbour, treat it to a high standard and then dispose of it via irrigation to land in the Brown Road area. As part of the works, a little used area of the Park was made available as a site for the wastewater treatment plant with an access off Thelma Road. This required the area directly associated with the treatment plant to be fenced off and public access denied for health and safety reasons, with signage to this effect. However, the remainder of the Park remains unaffected. Work is currently progressing on a project to reuse recycled water from the wastewater treatment plant in the irrigation system for the Mangawhai Golf Course. This is dependent on the upgrade of the wastewater treatment plant to produce a higher standard of recycled water. This project will keep the golf course green, even during the driest summers.

## Adjacent Uses

### Golf course

Adjoining Mangawhai Community Park and located less than 90 minutes north of Auckland, the Mangawhai Golf Club has consistently been regarded as one of the top courses in New Zealand. The course is a demanding mixture of wide and narrow fairways, undulating greens landscaped in a picturesque setting surrounded by native bush and wetlands/wet areas that attract a wide range of bird life.

Developed on a sandy base, weather does not affect Mangawhai Golf Course due to its excellent drainage qualities (with the exception of the 2023 unprecedented wet weather, after which, remedial work was required). The Golf Club has a fully equipped Golf Shop offering a wide range of hire and new equipment. A fleet of electric carts are also available. The Clubhouse provides a spectacular vista over much of the course and across to the Brynderwyns, offers bar and café facilities and includes an all-weather golf simulator. Mangawhai Golf Course has put significant effort into invasive weed control and predator control, although is not currently permitted by the Northland Regional Council to address overgrowth in some drainage.

Plans are being progressed to utilise water recovered from the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Treatment Plant to irrigate the golf course via an underground drip system. This will increase and greatly improve the disposal capacity of the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Scheme, supporting Mangawhai's continued growth, while also keeping the golf course green.





## The Future

This section sets direction for the future use and management of the Park. This includes a vision and direction for the Park overall, as well as looking at the more specific aspirations for the different precincts within the Park. Within this section, the aspirations and direction for each precinct are described, together with a list of actions to work towards realising this desired outcome. These actions can be removed as they are completed, and new actions added as they arise so as to keep this plan up to date.

### Vision and guiding direction

The vision for Mangawhai Community Park is:

***Mangawhai Community Park will be a visible, predominantly natural, public space at the entrance to Mangawhai Heads, used (freely) by the public for recreation and enjoyment of the outdoor environment.***

This Master Plan directs that the Park's natural landscapes (ecological and geological) will be its dominant feature. Additional native planting shall be undertaken to provide shade, shelter and create connections between the different precincts of the Park. Future plantings should be predominantly native vegetation that is sympathetic to the dune lands environment. New plantings should give consideration to fire risk, with gaps incorporated in the layout. Some exotic trees and plants could be included around built up areas of the Park such as MAZ and the Museum.

The existing community groups already established in the Park will continue to be acknowledged for the contribution they make to the vibrancy and offerings of the Park. Their continued presence at the Park will be assured. That said, opportunities for expansion of existing groups and the establishment of additional groups will be limited in order to maintain the dominance of the natural elements of the Park. The addition of further built facilities will be in accordance with the direction given in this Master Plan.

The future use and development of the Park will be in keeping with its primary focus being as a space for informal play, recreation, and community participation. Therefore, expansion and enhancement of walking and cycling tracks through the Park will be supported, as will establishment of additional play equipment, picnic facilities etc.

Formal competition level sports such as those requiring full sized sports fields will be better accommodated elsewhere.

Historically commercial aspects of not-for-profit ventures have been permitted as they contribute to some of the groups being self-sustaining. Mobile food trucks and market stalls have also been permitted, subject to securing relevant permits, as it has been deemed they can add vibrancy to the park and be relocated as need-be.

In the longer term, commercial options that may provide necessary and meaningful contribution to the infrastructure or economic development of the community may be considered by Council.

The continued presence, operation and expansion of the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Treatment Plant is acknowledged and supported in recognition of its contribution to protecting Mangawhai's harbour environment. However, the large-scale development of further utilities (e.g. municipal water supply, emergency services depots etc.) will not be supported as these detract from the natural elements of the Park and its use for public recreation. A possible exception to this might be provision of a

helicopter landing pad, recognising the importance of the rescue helicopter service to this community. In addition, the expansion of the existing emergency service bases within their existing license to occupy footprints will be supported.

New facilities and the design or redesign of areas of the Park should maximise active transport as the primary means of accessing and moving around the Park. Similarly, strong linkages to public transport should be incorporated in the design of the Park. That said, Mangawhai is growing, with many choosing to live more rurally or in areas further afield from the Park and not serviced by public transport. The Park should therefore include ample parking, recognising its prominence as a destination Park for not just local residents but also those living on Mangawhai's outskirts as well as visitors to Mangawhai. The ability of the Park to host events also needs to be accommodated.

## Protecting the Valuable Natural Features of the Park

Natural features encompass the majority of the undeveloped area of the Park. In order to develop further community facilities, walking tracks, play equipment etc there may be a need carry out selective trimming and removal of vegetation in some parts of the Park. Where this occurs, it is important that well planned and maintained indigenous amenity enhancement is undertaken. These features are detailed in Table 1 and their spatial extent is shown in Figure 1.

Feature	Description and location	Notes for management
Mature kanuka forest	The Park is dominated by old growth kanuka forest. This is a uniquely Northland forest type and is characteristic of sand dune environments. The more natural areas of kanuka forest are also home to abundant native fungi.	Kanuka is fast growing and areas damaged or cleared can be replanted and re-established. Weed control is also important to protect the quality of this forest ecosystem.
Mature Pohutukawa	There are two very large Pohutukawa trees located in the Park. These Pohutukawa, which are likely to be several hundred years old, are a remnant of the prehistoric forest cover.	These Pohutukawa trees are to be protected.
Gum diggers/Merz Huts site	Gum diggers/George Merz's hut has been removed for preservation, however the site that the hut occupied remains intact.	To be protected and registered with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.
Wetlands/wet areas	These wetlands/wet areas are a feature of the sand dune landscape having formed in hollows in the sand dunes. The wet areas at the north-eastern end of the Park have resulted from the discharge of stormwater from The Club and Molesworth Drive.	These areas are a priority for weed control and restoration especially removing invasive acacia and pampas. These areas also have a role to play in managing stormwater within the Park and may require improvements to enhance this functionality.
Sandstone gully	The Park is home to an impressive sandstone gully system which is an impressive natural feature of the Park.	The sandstone gully should be showcased, however public access needs to be encouraged away from trampling fragile parts of this formation.

Table 1: Natural features of Mangawhai Community Park.



Figure 1: The location and spatial extent of natural features in Mangawhai Community Park.

## Connectivity within the park

The Park consists of a number of precincts which are separated from one another by geological features. Connectivity between areas is achieved by the Mangawhai Shared Path (a dedicated walking and cycling link that passes through the southern edge of the Park) and a series of lesser tracks and trails that explore their way through the interior of the Park. These trails are mapped in Figure 2.



Figure 2: The layout of active transport links through the Park.

Future connectivity projects will include:

- a) Install walking and cycling links between the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area, the Mangawhai Museum and MAZ. These should be designed such that they are easily traversable with a pram or mobility scooter.
- b) Improve wayfinding signage for all tracks.
- c) Continue to maintain all tracks.

## Heritage precinct

The heritage precinct includes the Mangawhai Museum, Daring Trust, Information Centre and Historic Village. Appropriate activities in this area are any that help to connect people to the history of Mangawhai and to its culture both past and present. This could include expansion and enhancement of the Historic Village with more buildings added and clubs establishing, as well as the existing historic and museum buildings being used for community arts classes, flax weaving classes, yoga classes, movie cinema, newcomers welcome sessions etc. This should be a vibrant area with doors open to the public, spaces to explore and opportunities to participate.

Future projects for this area will include:

- a) Expansion of the Historic Village with spaces available for arts and culture.
- b) Optimise existing car parking and vehicle manoeuvring areas, including the provision of accessible parking (for holders of mobility parking permits).
- c) Existing vehicle entrances designed to celebrate entrance points to the Park. Design elements and materials to be repeated at both vehicle and pedestrian entrances and heighten the presence of the Park along Molesworth Drive.
- d) Vehicle tracking to be undertaken to ensure sufficient space for bus manoeuvres.
- e) All entrances, access roads and car parks designed as slow zones which prioritise pedestrians.
- f) Additional native plantings to provide shelter and shade, as well as to create a cohesive feel throughout the Park.
- g) Outdoor display of restored or preserved vintage machinery.
- h) Outdoor display of sculptures.

A future concept for this precinct is detailed in Figure 3 below.



Figure 3: Future concept for the heritage precinct.

## Gum diggers/Merz Hut area

The Gum diggers/Merz Hut area is the area between the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Treatment Plant and Thelma Road. This area is associated with the kauri gum diggers of the Mangawhai area, particularly Pipi Smith who occupied a hut there and also with the squatters who found refuge in Mangawhai, specifically George Merz who took over Pipi's hut.

Today, the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area is almost wholly undeveloped. The vision for this area is to protect and showcase the hut sites as well as creating a new public access and car park with linkages to the Mangawhai Museum and MAZ areas via walking and cycling paths. In particular, this area will serve as the primary car park for the walking and cycling tracks in the interior of the Park. The vibrancy of this area could also benefit from the establishment of a building to house a community group in this area, however the area should not be allowed to become dominated by buildings.

Future projects for this area will include:

- a) Preservation and showcasing of the Gum diggers/Merz Hut site as a prominent feature of this area.
- b) Story boards telling the history of the Gum diggers/Merz Hut site
- c) Reconstruct the existing access off Thelma Road
- d) Construct car parking in the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area.
- e) Construct a new car park off Thelma Road between the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area and the Museum to provide access to walking and cycling tracks and overflow parking for events.
- f) Additional native plantings to provide shelter and shade. Existing trees in this area should also be protected where possible. When completed, the area should be sheltered and shaded with the ambiance of a forest meadow.
- g) Support the creation of a dog exercise area.
- h) Install walking and cycling links to the Mangawhai Museum and MAZ. These should be designed such that they are easily traversable with a pram or mobility scooter.

A future concept for this area is detailed in Figure 4.



Figure 4: Future concept for the Gum diggers/Merz Hut precinct.

## Mangawhai Activity Zone and Emergency Services

The Mangawhai Activity Zone (MAZ) is a space where people of all ages can enjoy active play and recreation. This is a space for all to enjoy getting active in the outdoors with a focus on informal play rather than competition level sport. That said, the MAZ skatepark presently features facilities of a standard suitable for training for the Olympics.

Going forward, this area can continue to respond to community needs and interests with new play equipment and opportunities being added or replaced to continue to keep future generations engaged. The area should also continue to provide shady spaces for picnics, barbecues and passive recreation.

The area should be a space where people can meet and connect, relax and socialise. The presence of a café raising funds for the Park should be maintained and the facility enhanced. The presence of this café facility provides both refreshments and passive surveillance.

The fire and ambulance stations which have been established adjacent to MAZ are acknowledged and will continue to be a celebrated part of this site, given the work they do to protect our community. These operations will be permitted to expand further within the present boundaries of their sites. However, no further emergency service stations will be permitted to establish in the Park, unless establishing within the existing sites e.g. if Land Search and Rescue wanted to store equipment and hold trainings in the Ambulance Station. Establishment of a helicopter landing pad could also be permitted to improve ease of access for the rescue helicopter.

Future projects for this area will include:

- a) Installation of additional or replacement play equipment to build on the offerings of this area. Examples may include, outdoor exercise equipment, a sound shell etc.
- b) Additional plantings to provide shelter and shade, soften the built environment, as well as to create a cohesive feel throughout the Park. Predominant species should be kanuka, mānuka and Pohutukawa to provide a consistent atmosphere throughout the Park.
- c) Support the upgrading, continued presence and enhancement of the MAZ café.
- d) Be open to the establishment of further commercial offerings that may provide a necessary and meaningful contribution to the infrastructure or economic development of the community.
- e) Formalise existing car park to maximise parking spaces and provide for accessible parking for people with mobility parking permits.
- f) Existing planted mound between carpark and Molesworth Drive to be retained to provide protection from road noise and traffic.
- g) Existing vehicle entrances designed to celebrate entrance points to the Park. Design elements and materials to be repeated at both vehicle and pedestrian entrances and heighten the presence of the Park along Molesworth Drive. All entrances, access roads and car parks designed as slow zones which prioritise pedestrians.
- h) Install a new drop off zone along Molesworth Drive for vehicles dropping off or picking up passengers and not parking, including space for bus drop off.
- i) Clear, well defined, generous paths around the courts and cafe area. Improve surface material to provide continuity and increase path network legibility and accessibility.
- j) Work with Northland Emergency Services Trust regarding whether incorporation of a helicopter landing pad could add value by allowing the rescue helicopter to land and evacuate patients without requiring the Volunteer Fire Brigade to set up a temporary landing site.
- k) Increase the provision of shade.

A future concept for this zone is detailed in Figure 5.





Figure 5: Future vision for the MAZ and Emergency Services precinct.

## The forest interior

The interior of the Park is dominated by a closed canopy of tall kanuka forest. Appropriate activities include maintenance and enhancement of the existing walking track network, installation of information signage, resting stations, constructing lookouts, picnic and rest areas. All of these activities will help to sustain the park.

Also present within the forest is a sandstone gully which needs to be protected and celebrated as a scenic feature.

Concealed within this forested area is the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Treatment Plant. The continued operation and expansion of this essential service is supported; however the Park should not be used as a location for further utilities e.g. if in future a municipal water treatment plant is required, it should be located elsewhere.

Future projects for this area may include:

- a) Control of exotic weeds.
- b) Predator control and eradication in league with other like-minded community groups.
- c) Maintenance and enhancement of the existing walking track network.
- c) Improving the walking track around the sandstone gully to both showcase this feature and to protect it from being trampled.
- d) Working with the Mangawhai Golf Club to improve the trails around the golf course and make greater use of the land around the margins of the course.
- e) Construct a new observation tower to replace the former tower that had to be demolished.
- f) Restoration of the wetlands/wet areas.
- g) Maintain a thickly forested visual buffer around the Mangawhai Community Wastewater Treatment Plant.

## Area adjacent to The Club

The area below the Mangawhai Club is envisaged as a potential location for a future Council office, library, community hub or similar civic building. Any new facility should be supported by adequate parking while still maintaining a focus on active transport. This area has recently been cleared of exotic forestry, has been partially replanted with native plants, and will require ongoing weed management. The space also includes a wet area that can be restored and enhanced following any construction to better manage stormwater flows in this area.

When completed, this area will likely feature a civic building integrated into the natural environment of the Park with trees and plantings softening the outline of the new building/s. Seating and restful spaces should be provided along the shared path and around the wet area with native trees providing shelter and shade. Sufficient parking should be provided but should not dominate the site. Active transport should be encouraged with new buildings fronting onto the shared path rather than Molesworth Drive.

Reconfiguring and widening the existing carpark at the start of the track to the former car park is considered desirable given increased demand on the existing space.

Future projects for this area could include:

- a) Establishment of a new Council office, library, community hub or similar civic facilities and supporting car parking.
- b) Enhancement of the wet area.
- c) Weed control and revegetation of cleared areas.
- d) Install effective drainage to manage stormwater issues.

## Club zone

The area of the Mangawhai Bowls Club and Mangawhai Club is envisaged to continue to provide for lawn bowls and The Club's present suite of offerings, but could also accommodate other clubs and community activities such as event and function spaces.

Key projects for this area include:

- a) Reconfigure existing bowling club car park to permit additional parking and incorporate canopy lifted shade trees and native plantings to help tie it into the park. This could include realignment of the existing car park entrance.
- b) Reconfigure and widen the existing car park at the start of the track to the lookout.
- c) Stabilise slope instability.

## Collaboration

So much of the facilities and offerings of Mangawhai Community Park have been provided by community groups with the support of the Council, rather than by the Council directly. Going forward, Council will seek to continue this collaborative approach, supporting community groups and volunteers to realise their aspirations. The Friends of Mangawhai Community Park are representatives of organisations in the Park who form a volunteer leadership group for collaboration with each other and the Council. The Friends are represented on the Council's Governance Committee for the Park and have a small base in the Information Centre.

While there are now limited opportunities to establish additional buildings in the Park, applications from community groups looking to establish on the Park will be considered against the direction in this plan. Groups will be encouraged to collocate or share facilities where possible, including establishing joint facilities e.g. the Daring will be housed within a new wing of the Mangawhai Museum rather than in its own standalone museum with a separate entrance.

## Review considerations

Council shall keep this Master Plan under continuous review, so that it is adapted to changing circumstances or in accordance with increased knowledge.

This plan may be subject to minor alterations from time to time, with actions removed and added to reflect progress.

Council's Significance and Engagement Policy will be used to direct what consultation is needed on a case by case basis in response to the scale of the changes proposed.

Changes to the vision or extensive changes to the overall direction would trigger a comprehensive review. Any such comprehensive review would need to involve full community consultation, including the opportunity for submissions to be made and hearings held.

## Actions list

For ease of reference, the actions of this plan are compiled into the following table. These will be kept under continuous review and amended as required. Completed actions shall be removed and new actions shall be added as they arise.

Reference	Description and location
1	Additional native planting shall be undertaken throughout the Park to provide shade, shelter and create connections between the different precincts of the Park.
2	Install walking and cycling links between the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area, the Mangawhai Museum and MAZ. Where possible, these should be designed such that they are easily traversable with a pram or mobility scooter.
3	Improve wayfinding signage for all tracks.
4	Continue to maintain all tracks.
5	Expansion of the Historic Village with spaces available for arts and culture.
6	Optimise existing car parking and vehicle manoeuvring areas, including making provision for accessible parking.
7	Existing vehicle entrances designed to celebrate entrance points to the Park. Design elements and materials to be repeated at both vehicle and pedestrian entrances and heighten the presence of the Park.
8	All entrances, access roads and car parks designed as slow zones which prioritise pedestrians.
9	Preservation and showcasing of the Gum diggers/Merz Hut site.
10	Story boards telling the history of the Gum diggers/Merz Hut site.
11	Reconstruct the existing access off Thelma Road to the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area.
12	Construct car parking in the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area.
13	Construct a new public car park off Thelma Road between the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area and the Museum to provide access to walking and cycling tracks and overflow parking for events.

Reference	Description and location
14	Support the creation of a dog exercise area in the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area.
15	Install walking and cycling links to the Mangawhai Museum and MAZ from the Gum diggers/Merz Hut area. These should be designed such that they are easily traversable with a pram or mobility scooter.
16	Installation of additional or replacement play equipment to build on the offerings of the MAZ area. Examples may include, outdoor exercise equipment, a sound shell etc.
17	Support the upgrading, continued presence and enhancement of the MAZ café.
18	Be open to the establishment of further commercial offerings that may provide necessary and meaningful contribution to the infrastructure or economic development of the community.
19	Install a new drop off zone along Molesworth Drive outside MAZ for vehicles dropping off or picking up passengers and not parking, including space for bus drop off.
20	Create clear, well defined, generous paths around the courts and cafe area at MAZ. Improve surface material to provide continuity and increase path network legibility and accessibility.
21	Work with Northland Emergency Services Trust on if incorporation of a helicopter landing pad could add value by allowing the rescue helicopter to land and evacuate patients without requiring the Volunteer Fire Brigade to set up a temporary landing site.
22	Allow the Mangawhai Volunteer Fire Brigade to add an extra bay onto their fire station to accommodate an additional fire truck.
23	Increase the provision of shade at MAZ.
24	Control of exotic weeds, especially in the forest interior.
25	Predator control and eradication in league with other like-minded community groups.
26	Maintain and enhance the existing walking track network that showcases the forest interior.
27	Improve the walking track around the sandstone gully to both showcase this feature and to protect it from being trampled.
28	Work with the Mangawhai Golf Club to improve the trails around the golf course and make greater use of the land around the margins of the course.
29	Construct a new observation tower to replace the former tower that had to be demolished.
30	Restore wetlands/wet areas.
31	Explore establishment of a new Council office, library, community hub or similar civic facilities and supporting car parking.
32	Install effective drainage to manage stormwater issues.

Reference	Description and location
33	Reconfigure existing bowling club car park to permit additional parking and incorporate canopy lifted shade trees and native plantings to help tie it into the park. This could include realignment of the existing car park entrance.
34	Reconfigure and widen the existing car park at the start of the track to the former lookout.
35	Stabilise the slope below the Club car park. (this is within the Club's LTO site)
36	Continue to work proactively with community volunteers to continually enhance the Park.



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