

5. *Marfell Park*

Description

Location:	Cook Street, New Plymouth West
Legal description:	Lot 1 DP 9295 Lot 1 DP 9485 Lot 1 DP 15742
Size:	11.78 hectares
Reserve Status:	Subject to the Reserves Act 1977
Reserve Classification:	Recreation reserve Lot 1, DP 9295 and Lot 1, DP 9485 Proposed classification of Lot 1, DP 15742 as Recreation Reserve



Physical description

This sports park is located off Greenville Street and Cook Street in New Plymouth West. Marfell Park comprises of three fields; two on an upper terrace and one on a lower terrace approximately 2m below the upper level. The park is split into two sports fields and a skatepark at the upper levels, a BMX (Bicycle Motor Cross) track and a playground on the lower level.

The fields are located within steep valley walls. The lower field slopes in two directions from the high south east corner. Marfell Park is located on a former municipal landfill and over the years the sinkage has been addressed by importation of large volumes of soil to fill holes. It is thought that the sinkage is likely to continue due to the continuing breakdown of material in the underlying rubbish dump.

The park is Open Space A Environment Area in the District Plan. These areas are used primarily for organised sports and recreation. Such areas will normally have associated buildings such as clubrooms, changing sheds or toilet facilities. The park is surrounded by a mix of Residential A and B and Marfell School is located to the west of the park.

Tangata whenua interests

This reserve is within the tribal rohe of Te Atiawa and Taranaki iwi. The area is of historic and cultural significance to Ngati Te Whiti and Ngā Mahanga-a-Tairi hapū.

Land status and acquisition history

Lot 1 DP 9485 was purchased by New Plymouth City in 1967. Pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977 Lot 1 DP 9485 was classified as a recreation reserve in 1980.

Lot 1 DP 9295 was purchased by New Plymouth City in 1965. Pursuant to the Reserves Act 1977 it was classified as a recreation reserve in 1980.

Lot 1, DP 15742 (formally Lot 2 DP 9249) was obtained by New Plymouth City Council in 1987 in trust as a reserve for off street parking. Although it is subject to the Reserves Act 1977 it has not been classified.

History and cultural values

Marfell Park is located on a former landfill, containing domestic and industrial waste, which operated from the early 1950s until 1976. The landfill was closed in 1976 and subsequently developed into a park, which has a children's playground, BMX track which has been operating at Marfell Park since 1981, and two former sports field areas that now have casual use.¹

The sports fields were developed in 1977/1978 for use by the adjacent Marfell School and as rugby fields by a local club. The landfill material was capped with imported soil and perimeter surface drains installed. The school ceased formal use of the fields from the mid 1980s.

The park was converted to soccer fields in 1991 and also used for softball. In 1995 the club went out of existence. The clubrooms were demolished in 2008. The skatepark has been at the park since 2003.

Results from a soil sampling and testing programme prepared by Taranaki Regional Council for Marfell Park have recently proven that there are no contaminants or any environmental risk at the former landfill site.

Existing improvements

Existing improvements include:

Shed, playground and play equipment, two rubbish bins, seven flood lights, three signs, seats, wall structures, barriers, carpark surface, road and playground base.

There is a storm water pipe running along the eastern boarder and another running horizontally through the northern end of the park. There is a waste water pipe running along the western border at the northern end of the park.

¹ 'Marfell Park, New Plymouth, Environmental Investigation', Prepared for Taranaki Regional Council, Pattle Delamore Partners Ltd, August 2009.

Uses and activities

Although Marfell Park is currently under-utilised it could provide recreation opportunities for a variety of users. The upper and middle levels of Marfell Park are unused with two sports fields available. Although the fields are not currently used for organised sport, there are some informal or casual activities undertaken by locals.

A playground and BMX track are located on the lower levels as well as a skatepark at the southern end of the park.

The following club has a land only lease at Marfell Park:

- New Plymouth BMX Club for the BMX track and associated facilities located on the lower level of the park (lease expired 2009)

Management objectives and specific policies

- 1) The developed areas of this park will be managed as a sports park suitable for formal and informal sport and recreation.
- 2) In May 2011, the Council resolved to support in principle to enter into a lease for an off-road cycle park and BMX track at Marfell Park with New Plymouth BMX Club and New Plymouth Mountain Bikers Club. This would cover a large portion of the park in order to establish a new international standard track, four cross track and jump park. The development concept plan contemplates this development although the final layout may differ from that shown in this management plan.
- 3) Future development of Marfell will be in accordance with the development concept including:
 - i. BMX and Cycling facilities (subject to the a lease being entered into)
 - ii. Future removal and replacement of Cryptomeria trees on the southern bank
 - iii. Creation of new entrance ways in accordance with the Housing New Zealand Neighbourhood Master Plan
 - iv. Relocation of the play equipment near a new entrance opposite Clerke Place or near the existing skate park
 - v. An all-weather pathway through the park to provide connectivity through Marfell and towards the Mangatoku Pathway
 - vi. Extension and sealing of the carpark junction with the cycling facility development.
 - vii. Relocation of softball nets to Hickford Park
- 4) Any earthworks at the park must be carefully managed in accordance with guidelines for management of contaminated sites.