

Melville Park

Management Plan

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Management Plan Function

This management plan contains general objectives and policy statements for Melville Park.

Brief background notes, a locality plan and a map of the reserve can be found at the back of this management plan.

The Auckland City District Plan spells out the policies relating to the overall provision of reserves, how these form a coherent reserve system and contribute to community development. It also sets down an overall pattern of the types of uses to which the parks and reserves can be put.

A reserves management plan is an extension of the District Plan. It is a less formal document establishing guide lines for the types of activities and leases (if any) on individual reserves, providing detail on specific items such as fencing, pathways, play equipment, maintenance etc. and where possible, identifying problem areas or conflicts of use. In short it is a working document designed to assist the Councillors, Community Board Members and Council staff in making decisions about a particular reserve.

Management Planning Procedure

The Reserves Act 1977 requires the Council to prepare management plans, outlining its general intentions for development, use and maintenance of nearly all parks and reserves under Council control. Public comments about the parks form an important contribution to the management plans. The Reserves Act sets out a formal procedure for the public involvement in this management planning process. It begins with public notification in the newspapers of the Council's intention to prepare a management plan for a particular reserve. Interested persons and organisations are invited to send in written suggestions.

A draft plan is then prepared, taking into consideration the current and potential use of the reserve, its classification, together with any suggestions which have been received from the public.

A second public notice will advise when and where the draft plan is available for public inspection. Individuals or organisations can lodge written submissions or objections on this draft plan and at a later date be heard by the Local Community Board in support of their comments.

All the submissions or objections will be carefully considered and where appropriate will be incorporated into the final draft of the management plan.

The final draft will then be adopted by the Community Board as the Operative Management Plan. As Melville Park is a recreation reserve, the Council is not required to submit the plan to the Minister of Conservation for his/her approval.

The plan will still be subject to review as and when circumstances relating to the reserve change. When a comprehensive review or any major amendment is to be undertaken, the procedure outlined above will again be followed. However, minor changes would normally be made by Community Board resolution.

Although there is no right of appeal under the Reserves Act, a management plan is never "final" and submission from the public can be received at any time.

The following management planning procedures for Melville Park have been actioned:

- Public Notification of intention to prepare a management plan
 - NZ Herald 21 & 28 June 1994
 - Central Leader 22& 29 June 1994
- Final day for acceptance of written suggestions
 - 22nd July 1994
- Draft management plan adopted by Mount Eden Community Board and published
 - 17 August 1994
- Public notification advising availability of draft plan
 - NZ Herald 9, 13 & 27 September 1994
 - Central Leader, 31 August, 7 & 28 September 1994
- Final day for acceptance of submissions/objections
 - Friday 28 October 1994
- Adoption by the Mount Eden Community Board of the revised draft as Operative Management Plan
 - Wednesday 15 March 1995
- Operative Management Plan Published
 - April 1995

1.0 Introduction

Melville Park was acquired by Auckland City Council in 1917 when the Epsom Road District amalgamated with the City. It is named after Ellen Melville, Auckland's first woman councillor.

As with nearby Windmill Park, development commenced when relief workers were employed to level the rocky landscape during the early 1930's. Melville Park became home to the Epsom Croquet Club, the Auckland Women's Cricket Association, and the Auckland Women's Hockey Association. The upper level quickly gained a reputation as a woman's sports ground. The Mt Eden Community Board recognises and wishes to uphold this tradition.

Today the park continues to be used extensively for Woman's Cricket and by the Epsom Croquet Club. With the advent of artificial playing surfaces for hockey, use of the park for that sport has diminished.

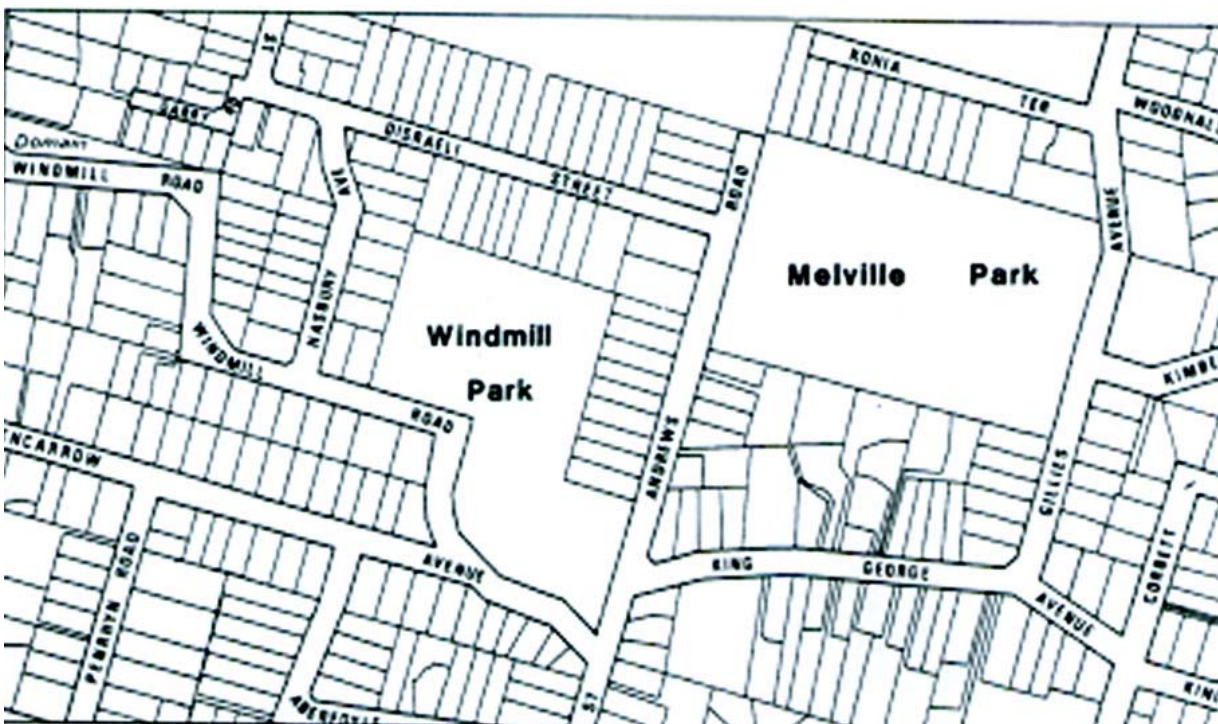


Figure 1. Location Plan

1.1 Objectives

1. To provide area's of sufficient size and standard to allow organised sports to be accommodated.
2. To retain the area of Melville Park adjacent to St Andrews Road for its traditional use as a woman's sports park.

3. To maintain and operate an attractive, safe amenity for the benefit and enjoyment of the community.
4. To allow the fullest public use of the reserve by minimising any possible conflict between the public and the various organised activities on the reserve.
5. To minimise any possible conflict between the park users and the adjoining residents.
6. To develop and maintain quality playing surfaces.
7. To provide a pleasant environment where children may play in safety.

1.2 Policies

1. Leases and Tenancies

- 1.1 Existing leases are to be fulfilled properly by each lessee; where this is not possible, the lease may need to be rewritten or reviewed.
- 1.2 Any priority use of a defined sports area by a club or code shall not preclude the general public access to the remainder of the park, or general use outside of club hours, notwithstanding that section 53(1)(e) of the Reserves Act prescribes that a club may, for not more than 40 days per year, have exclusive possession of their leases area.
- 1.3 Any future lease entered into must be directly related to the use of Melville Park as a Recreation Reserve zoned Open Space 3 under the District Plan.
- 1.4 Resident sports clubs will be encouraged to enter into formal leases over the buildings they use.

Notes

- a) It is recognised the Melville Park has been developed primarily for use by organised sporting groups, present and future leases and tenancies to those groups are considered appropriate.
- b) The upper level of Melville Park has traditionally been a home to Women's Sport. The Mt Eden Community Board has resolved to continue this tradition with regard to the upper level for organised sports. Leases and tenancies to such groups will be given preference for use of this upper area.

2. Buildings and Structures

- 2.1 Any new building, extension to an existing building, or the erection of other structures will be subject to the controls set out in part 9 of the District Plan – Open Space and Recreation Activity.
- 2.2 The existing cricket pavilion on Melville Park will be refurbished or replaced.
- 2.3 Existing and future stone walls will be protected and maintained.

Notes Buildings and Structure

- a) The District plan sets out the permitted, controlled and discretionary activities in the Open Space 3 Zone.
- b) Existing and potential Park users have indicated that the existing buildings on the Park do not meet their current or future needs.

- c) Stone walls are a feature of the area and will be maintained. Planting close to stone walls will be minimised to reduce damage caused by vegetation encroaching onto the walls.

3. Access, Parking and Fencing

- 3.1 No additional vehicular access will be provided, although existing accesses may be developed and/or rationalised.
- 3.2 All pathways will be maintained to a high standard suitable for wheelchair access.
- 3.3 Any new pathways will be constructed from all weather surfacing.
- 3.4 Requests from neighbouring properties will be fenced.
- 3.5 All boundaries with neighbouring properties will be fenced.
- 3.6 The location of the park will be clearly signposted.
- 3.7 There will be no parking on non designated areas.
- 3.8 The amount of traffic and demand for parking is a factor which will be assessed as part of any application to use Melville Park.

Notes

- a) Any neighbouring property owner may apply to the Council for gate access onto the reserve. Each application will be considered on its individual merits. Some properties already have such access.
- b) Currently a grassed area off Giles Ave is used as a parking area during times of peak demand.
- c) It is recognised that the use of Melville Park as a sports ground creates traffic and demand for parking which can at times put pressure on the surrounding residential streets. The amount of traffic generated by any new applications to use Melville Park will be criteria which will be assessed in determining if that use will be granted.

4. Sports

- 4.1 Use of the Park for both organised and casual sports activities which are in accordance with the Reserves Act and the District Plan will be encouraged.
- 4.2 Use of the upper area of the park as a traditional home for Women's sport will be encouraged.
- 4.3 Limited use of the upper area of the park for boys/men's games by clubs or associations with formal agreements to use the ground will be allowed provided it does not interfere with usage for women's sports.

Notes

- a) Melville Park is one of seven public recreation reserves that cater for organised sports in Mount Eden Ward and provides an important facility to the area. It is Council's intention that this be the predominant type of usage for the park, and that it continue.
- b) The upper level of Melville Park has traditionally been a home to Women's sport. The Mt Eden Community Board has resolved to continue this tradition with regard to use of the upper level for organised sports. Use by women's sporting groups is therefore preferred.

However, it is recognised that there is a shortage of sports grounds within the area. Should there be no demand for use of the park by women's sporting groups other groups may be granted use on either an informal or short term agreement basis. In these instances priority will be given to mixed and midget/junior teams over senior men's teams.

- c) Recently both the Women's Cricket and Hockey Associations amalgamated with their male counterparts. This has resulted in a higher degree of sharing of grounds and facilities than was previously the case. The Auckland Cricket Association in particular has indicated that in some circumstances limited use of Melville Park by boys/men's team would greatly assist their operations. This is on occasions when multiple pitches are required for tournaments and/or when other venues are unavailable (for example when events such as Opera in the Park close the Domain). It is envisaged that this type of usage would occur a maximum of 3-4 times per season.

5. Children's Play Equipment

- 5.1 All items of children's play equipment will be inspected on a regular basis and will be repaired, refurbished, or replaced as necessary.

Notes

- a) The Council is appreciative of those members of the public who assist by reporting any instances of vandalism.

6. Playing surface Management and Vegetation

- 6.1 All developed playing surface areas shall be maintained to acceptable management standards and in accordance with Auckland City Policy for the particular surface.
- 6.2 All planting's will be designed to compliment the amenity of the park.
- 6.3 Any new areas of major planting will be depicted on a plan and made available for public comment prior to implementation.

Notes

- a) The maintenance of croquet lawns is the responsibility of the Epsom Croquet Club. The maintenance of other playing surfaces is currently the responsibility of Auckland City and is undertaken by contractors to the Council. All playing surfaces shall be maintained to a standard acceptable to the Council.
- b) A number of Camellias of the Kate Shepherd variety were planted by the National Council of Women near the footpath on the south side of the upper level of the Park. These commemorate the centenary of Women's Suffrage.

7. Park Furniture and Signage

- 7.1 Picnic tables, seats and rubbish containers may be installed. Picnic tables are not envisaged.
- 7.2 Rubbish containers are provided and are serviced regularly.
- 7.3 All parks furniture shall be inspected on a regular basis and will be repaired, refurbished or replaced as necessary.
- 7.4 All signage on the park will be maintained to the appropriate Auckland City signage standard.

Notes

- a) It is not intended to “clutter” the park with furniture. The location of any new furniture will be shown on the development concept plan.
- b) As well as the standard Auckland City parks signage a sign board indicating the Coast to Coast walkway is located in Melville Park.

8. Floodlighting

- 8.1 The use of floodlights a discretionary use on Melville Park under part 9 of the District Plan.

Notes:

- a) Any application to erect floodlights shall be subject to the assessment criteria set out in part 9 of the District Plan.
- b) Any floodlighting will be positioned so as not to throw excess light outside of the reserve area.

Resource Information

1. Location, Legal Description, etc.

Insert Location Plan

1.1 Melville Park Location Plan

1.2 Legal Description

Allot 182,

Section 10, Suburbs

Auckland

SO 703

CT 24B/167

Acquisition

- 17 October 1882

The land, which has been a reserve for public recreation in the provincial District of Auckland and which was known as The Epsom Recreation Ground was brought under the operation of the Public Domains Act 1881, to be administered by The Epsom Domain Board (Gaz. 1882 p1495).

- 29 January 1917

Epsom domain (which by then also included Windmill Reserve) was acquired by Auckland City Council on the amalgamation of the Epsom Road District with the City.

1.3 Area

4.693 ha

1.4 Classification

Subject to the Reserves Act 1977.

Classified as a Recreation Reserve – Gaz. 1979 p. 2693

1.5 Zoning

Open Space 3 – Organised Recreation

2.0 History and Use of Melville Park

Although the land had carried recreation reserve status for some 50 years, little appears to have been done in the way of development until the Depression Years. By 1932 over 100 relief workers were employed on the difficult task of levelling the rocky landscape, building stone retaining walls and forming sports fields on the upper level of Epsom Domain (later to be known as Melville Park), at an estimated cost to the Council of 4,200 pounds. A subsidy of pound for pound had been sought from the Government. The money was provided out of the Auckland Patriotic Association Fund. During the course of the work it was estimated that 60,000 cubic yards of rock would have to be removed. Relief workers were also forming the adjacent Teachers Training College grounds.

These new sports fields were some 4 years in the making, but the park was not officially opened until 3 June 1939 by Councillor Ellen Melville, accompanied by the chairman of the Parks Committee, Mr J L Coakley. A tablet was made a year later.

The sports grounds had been used for two seasons for soccer and rugby when, in 1938, an approach was made to the Auckland Centennial Council for suitable grounds for the NZ Ladies Hockey Tournament to be held in 1940 as part of the Auckland Centennial celebrations. Gillies Ave Reserve (Melville Park) with room for 3-4 hockey fields was chosen and soon became established as the Auckland home of ladies hockey.

In Summer the hockey fields were converted to 2 cricket pitches, which were made available to Auckland Women's Cricket who were also able to establish their headquarters at the park.

About this time a pavilion was built by the council. This has been used by both women's cricket and ladies hockey with both codes contributing funds towards extensions during the late 1950's.

Two croquet lawns had already been laid out on part of an area which had been levelled, also using unemployed labour, along the Gillies Ave frontage. Epsom Croquet Club moved to Melville Park in 1930. When the original croquet pavilion was burned down in 1960, it was replaced by one of the huts that the American troops built as a convalescent hospital during World War II.

In 1963, the Auckland Women's Hockey Association moved their own single storey premise – the Jubilee Hall – onto the park. In 1971, they hosted the World Conference and Tournament of the International Federation of Women's Hockey. Representatives from about 16 countries played hockey at Melville Park. Many more attended the conference. This was the first and only time the Tournament and Conference has been held in New Zealand.

Late in 1993, the National Council of Women planted 5 Camellias of the Kate Shepherd variety near the path on the south side of the park, to commemorate the centenary of Women's Suffrage.

3.0 Naming of Melville Park

Pearl Dawson, who loved sport and gave a lifetime of service to it at both Auckland and New Zealand level, was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1969. Miss Dawson, previously captain of both the Auckland Women's cricket team and at the time prominent in administration of both codes, had been instrumental in persuading the Council to make Melville Park available as a sports ground for women's hockey and cricket. In recognition of the support given by her she wrote to the Council suggesting the ground be named after Ellen Melville. She felt that a women's sports

ground named after Auckland's first women councillor, who was also a member of the parks committee, would be a fitting tribute.

Thus it was that in June 1939, the Auckland City Council resolved to designate that part of the Epsom domain variously known as the new playing fields at St Andrews Road and Gillies Ave reserve, as Melville Park.

4.0 Existing Tenancy Agreements

Lessee	Term	Expiry Date
Epsom Croquet Club	30 years	31 May 1998
Auckland's Women's Hockey Association	No formal lease agreement – pitches rented as required	
Auckland Women's Cricket Association	No formal lease agreement – wickets rented as required.	

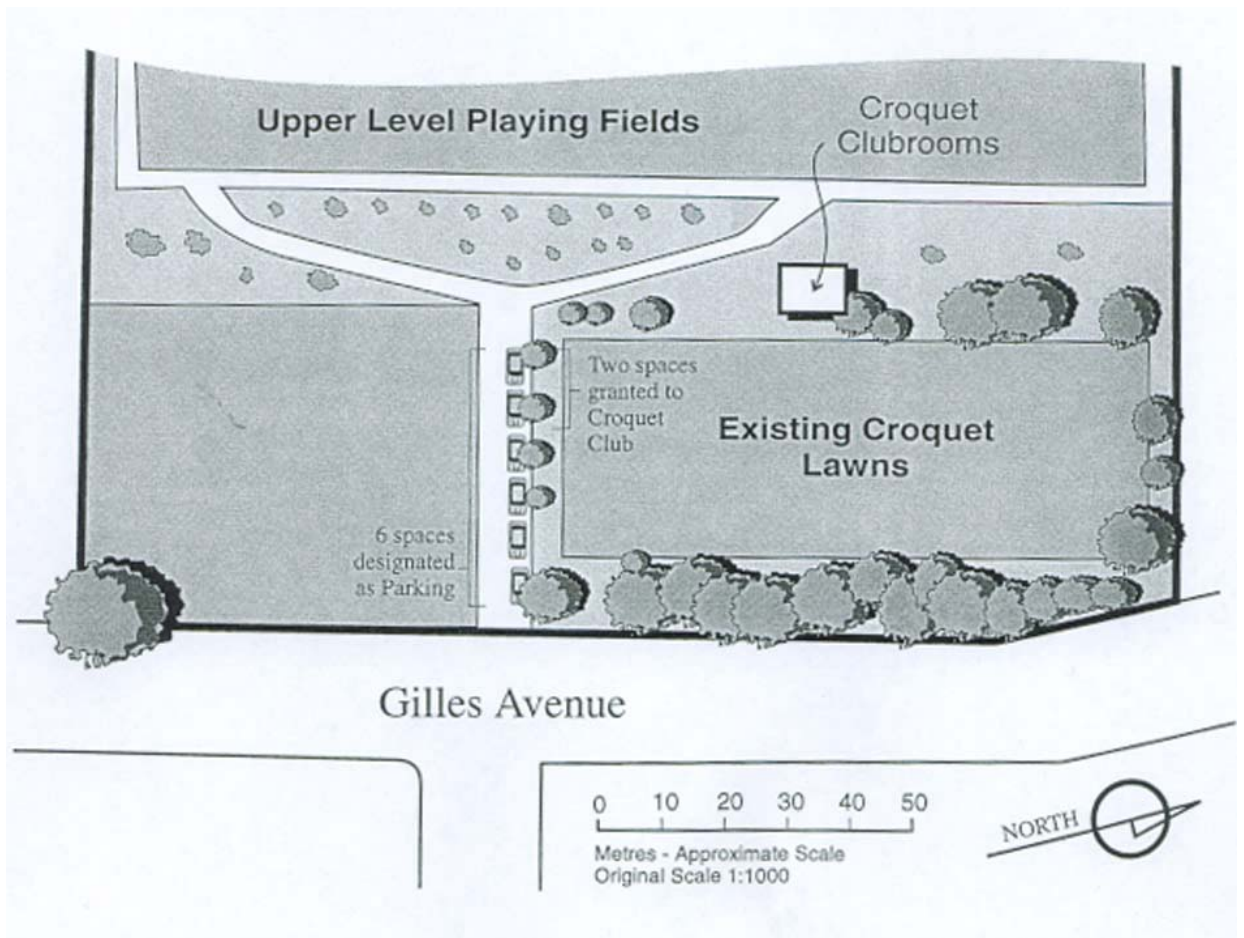


Figure 2. Melville Park Site Plan