

STANLEY PARK

Redevelopment **PROPOSAL**

Council is considering changing the use of part of Stanley Park in Tokoroa and selling it for social and community housing to help meet the significant need for affordable housing in the town.

The **PROPOSAL**

We propose changing the use of part of Stanley Park and selling the land for social and community housing.

This proposal includes keeping some of the current park to build an inclusive playground, that welcomes children and families of all abilities to learn, play and grow together. Alongside this, new accessible toilets, an access road and mobility car parking would be built.

Stanley Park is considered an ideal location for much-needed social and community housing, and adding a playground and enhanced amenity at Stanley Park would provide for two needs – affordable housing in our town and improved recreation spaces for people of all ages and abilities.

IMPROVED housing outcomes for the community

Council has been considering the options for Stanley Park for some time and has reviewed all of the reserves across Tokoroa and identified that Stanley Park can provide greater benefits to the community by providing social and community housing and retaining part of the reserve for open space and to develop an inclusive playground.

The Tokoroa Transitional Housing Report 2022 found that Tokoroa is desperately short of social and community housing. The Stanley Park residential subdivision would include 19 housing units, mostly two and three-bedroom homes.

The 10,287m² Stanley Park is currently a recreation reserve under the Reserves Act 1977 and there is a formal process that Council's needs to go through to achieve partial revocation. The community will have an opportunity to make a submission on the proposal early next year.

We are considering:

- Revoking 8,378m² of Stanley Park to sell for the development of social and community housing on the site and provide for vehicle and pedestrian access to the park.
- Retaining 1,909m² of Stanley Park as reserve and building an inclusive playground, accessible toilets and a small car park.



- Reserve area that would be retained
- Reserve area that would be revoked for housing
- Reserve area that would be revoked for road and access
- Council owns 20 and 22 Manaia Street to provide improved access to Stanley Park

STANLEY PARK continued...

Council's **ROLE** in Reserve Management

Council has a role to provide safe and attractively maintained parks, reserves, sports grounds and walkways to encourage people in our community to participate in active and passive recreation and play.

Council's Reserves Management Plan (RMP) 2020, which sets out how Council manages its open spaces and reserves, including neighbourhood reserves like Stanley Park, has an overall level of service across the district to provide 9ha of open space per 1,000 residents. The RMP also requires Council consider the need to either acquire land for reserves or to sell land when deemed necessary.

We are slightly below the level of service overall in Tokoroa, however in the north Tokoroa area, where Stanley Park is, we have several parks that provide similar experiences, such as Benella, Ireland, Papanui and Cobham reserves. We have

identified the need to invest in new open spaces in the south of Tokoroa area to meet our overall level of service, and we will do this as new subdivisions are developed.

Stanley Park is currently not well used. It's a large park with no additional facilities, surrounded by residential properties with limited visibility from nearby streets.

Making significant improvements and enhancements to Stanley Park, albeit over a smaller area, will provide a much more welcoming, safer and more appealing environment for neighbours, locals and visitors alike, and will offer an inclusive space for play and connection for people of all ages. This is even more important because the former Kauri Street playground is no longer available since the Scouts NZ-owned land was sold.

INCLUSIVE playground for all

Inclusive playgrounds are designed so children of all abilities and ages can play together and have fun with their friends and whānau. Research shows that inclusive play environments can foster social interaction and empathy among children with and without disabilities and can promote understanding and acceptance.

The development of a playground at Stanley Park was included in the Long Term Plan 2021-2031 and is also consistent with Council's Reserve Management Plan for Stanley Park.

An inclusive playground at Stanley Park would increase playability and overall use of the park. The South Waikato District has more people with disabilities than anywhere else in the Waikato region and an inclusive playground would be the first of its kind in our district.

We would involve the community, whānau and most importantly, local children in the design of the playground to make sure it meets their needs and provides a fun, accessible space to play.



The Lorna Irene Playground in Paraparumu on the Kāpiti Coast, is an example of an inclusive playground. Image supplied by Creo creospace.co.nz

More **INFORMATION**

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