

# Kaipara Spaces and Places Plan Update

**Meeting:** Council Briefing  
**Date of meeting:** 7 April 2021  
**Reporting officer:** Hamish Watson, Parks and Recreation Manager

## Purpose | Ngā whāinga

To update Council on the Draft Kaipara Spaces and Places Plan (KSPP) and receive feedback on behalf of Sport Northland (SN) and Recreation Sport Leisure Consultants (RSL)

## Context | Horopaki

Kaipara District Council (KDC) has been working with SN and Sport NZ to create a Spaces and Places Plan for Kaipara. RSL were contracted through Sport Northland to undertake this work which was jointly funded by KDC and Sport NZ. The Kaipara Spaces & Places Plan is a facility-focussed plan that helps support the regional strategy for play, active recreation, and sport – Kōkiri ai te waka hourua. The regional strategy provides the high-level strategic framework to guide future decision making, with the district level plan providing more detailed guidance for the Kaipara area, both documents have informed KDC's Long Term Plan (LTP)

## Discussion | Ngā kōrerorero

Kaipara, like the rest of the Te Tai Tokerau region has experienced strong population growth, particularly between 2012 and 2017. Rapid growth is expected to continue in the Mangawhai area, with Kaiwaka and Maungaturoto also expected to grow strongly. Growth in Dargaville should remain steady, while some parts of the district are expected to have a slight easing in population.

When planning spaces and places for play, active recreation, and sport in the Kaipara District it is important to do so in the context of expected rapid aging of the population, alongside ongoing district, and regional population growth. However, with some easing in population expected in parts of the district, careful planning is required before investing in new facilities in some areas.

This plan has been developed alongside work on the regional strategy for play, active recreation, and sport – Kōkiri ai te waka hourua. It is important that this plan is read in conjunction with the regional strategy, which provides high-level, overarching regional direction for future planning for play, active recreation, and sport across Te Tai Tokerau.

The purpose of the Kaipara Spaces & Places Plan 2021 is to support the regional strategy by providing more specific, district level guidance to spaces and places (facilities) planning.

It is largely focussed on built (rather than natural) community sport, recreation and play facilities in the Kaipara District. Planning for play, active recreation and sport facilities is important as the network of facilities provided in a district (and region) should be fit-for-purpose and sustainable. This plan, along with the regional strategy, provides a pathway to achieving a well-planned facilities network through:

- The Kaipara District has a high number of non-Council owned sport and recreation assets, comparative to other council areas in New Zealand. There are several sports fields and a wide range of sport and recreation facilities that are owned and maintained by clubs or community organisations. One of the benefits this brings is strong community input and feelings of ownership and value. However, it also creates challenges around inconsistent standards of maintenance and levels of access for different communities in the district.
- Ensuring access for the full range of potential community users can be a challenge when Council does not own many of the sites which could be available to support local play, active recreation, and sport opportunities. Council needs to work with the owners and providers of these key sites to ensure appropriate access and provision for the community across the whole district.

The Kaipara District Council Resident Satisfaction Survey shows high satisfaction levels of residents who use local parks, reserves, and sports fields (89% satisfied 2019, 92% satisfied 2018). However, there is an opportunity to increase community use of Council controlled parks, reserves, and sports fields, with only 65% of residents accessing them in 2019 (an increase from 62% in 2018). Locally led initiatives to increase use of parks could be a simple way to increase activity levels within the Kaipara community.

## **Future Planning**

A facility hierarchy is developed to help understand what level of provision facilities are planned for, and capable of meeting, based on the core needs of user groups at different levels. These hierarchy definitions are taken from the Sport NZ Data Dictionary. Having a consistent hierarchy with other areas of New Zealand allows direction comparisons to be made, and helps regional and cross-boundary prioritisation, where required.

When using the facility hierarchy, a facility should be categorised at the level it is primarily/regularly used for. While some facilities may meet some international standards e.g. a basketball court meeting FIBA requirement, if most of the use is for local to regional level it should be categorised at regional level.

It is also important to understand that a facility at a higher hierarchy level may meet the needs all the way down to a local level.

## **Gap & Oversupply analysis**

There are 32 main sport and recreation sites in the district, providing approximately 80 play, sport and recreation facilities including sports fields, pools, a variety of courts and club room buildings. Some of these sites also include playgrounds. Table 2 below lists the main sport and recreation sites in the district, briefly summarizing what is provided at each. Note: this excludes facilities provided by schools.

There are 19 playgrounds provided on KDC land across the district. These are listed in Table 3 below. There are many other playgrounds in the district owned by third parties (e.g. schools/kura). It is noted that there will be other play, active recreation and sports facilities across the district that have not been captured in the current data. Further work needs to be done to improve the data capture of existing facilities in the district, particularly facilities that are provided by schools and marae.

## **Alignment with Regional Strategy**

The Kaipara Spaces & Places Plan is a facility-focussed plan that helps support the regional strategy for play, active recreation, and sport – Kōkiri ai te waka hourua. The regional strategy provides the high-level strategic framework to guide future decision making, with the district level plan providing more detailed guidance for the Kaipara area. Both the regional strategy and the Kaipara Spaces & Places Plan will help inform Council long term plans (LTPs) and work programmes across the full range of sector organisations in the Kaipara District

## **Key findings and Recommendations**

It is positive that the district already has many multi-use sport and recreation facilities. 13 of the main sites provide for two or more sport and recreation facilities and activities. Currently, according to the data provided, bowling and tennis tend towards single use facilities.

There are also several single use sports fields. There are many club room buildings, many of which require maintenance to bring them up to date with current expectations of participants and spectators.

There is a mixture of ownership and management models for the key sport and recreation assets in the Kaipara District. The range of different approaches can lead to inconsistencies with asset management and operations between different facilities and communities.

With single club facilities, there is a risk of facility decline, if maintenance is not prioritised, or even facilities being lost from the district network if a club does not remain viable for any reason.

The inventory indicates there are very few specific facilities providing for water sports. However, it is known that many locations which are used for water sports have not been captured in the inventory. It is important for future planning, that more detail on water sports facilities is gathered before the first review of this plan is undertaken.

Generally, most communities in the district have access to playground facilities and equipment, either through KDC or school/kura-provided facilities. The gap seems to be in facilitation and support provided to ensure young people maximise play opportunities. It is also important that future planning for play considers alternative types of play space provision, including the potential for natural play and Mara Hupara (traditional playground) space and the potential for enhanced play features at existing sport and recreation sites.

A range of general actions are required, to help the district progress towards achieving the future priorities identified in the regional Kōkiri ai te waka hourua strategy. These recommendations align with the pillars, objectives, and priorities of the regional Kōkiri ai te waka hourua strategy.

Overall, there are sufficient facilities to meet most identified needs in the district. The key challenge is maintaining play, active recreation, and sport facilities at appropriate standards as they age. There are opportunities to maximise use of facilities through provision of features such as lighting (e.g. outdoor courts and sports fields) and increased partnerships between sport, recreation, and community groups both for multiuse facilities and also activation through locally led programming. The following series of tables outlines specific recommendations by facility type and where relevant by sports code or activity type.

## Next steps | E whaiake nei

Provide feedback on Kaipara Spaces and Places Strategy to RSL for addition/removal from report.

## Attachments | Ngā tapiritanga

	Title
A	Kaipara Spaces and Places Plan Draft
B	Kōkiri ai te waka hourua