

4 Recreation

4.1 Existing conditions

The open space system in the northern suburbs provides for a range of outdoor recreation uses and activities through the provision of:

- community parks
- local parks
- sportsfields
- bush reserves and open space
- tracks and walkways within these open spaces or as connectors between them.
- Cemetery

Within these areas a range of recreational activities occur that can be divided into four main categories:

- **informal activities** such as jogging, walking, biking, dog walking, skateboarding and children's play
- **organised sports** such as soccer, rugby and cricket
- **private club/group activities** such as guides, bowls, horse riding and playcentre. Note some of these are also organised sports activities.
- **commercial facilities/attractions** such as Tag War games.

Whilst many of these activities are limited to certain types of area, for instance sportsfields are primarily used for organised sports, others such as children's play (playgrounds) can occur in community parks, local parks and sportsfields. This is because provision of outdoor recreation activities is based on current community needs and not historical distribution of open space. This section will look at the provision of open space for recreation in the northern suburbs and will identify:

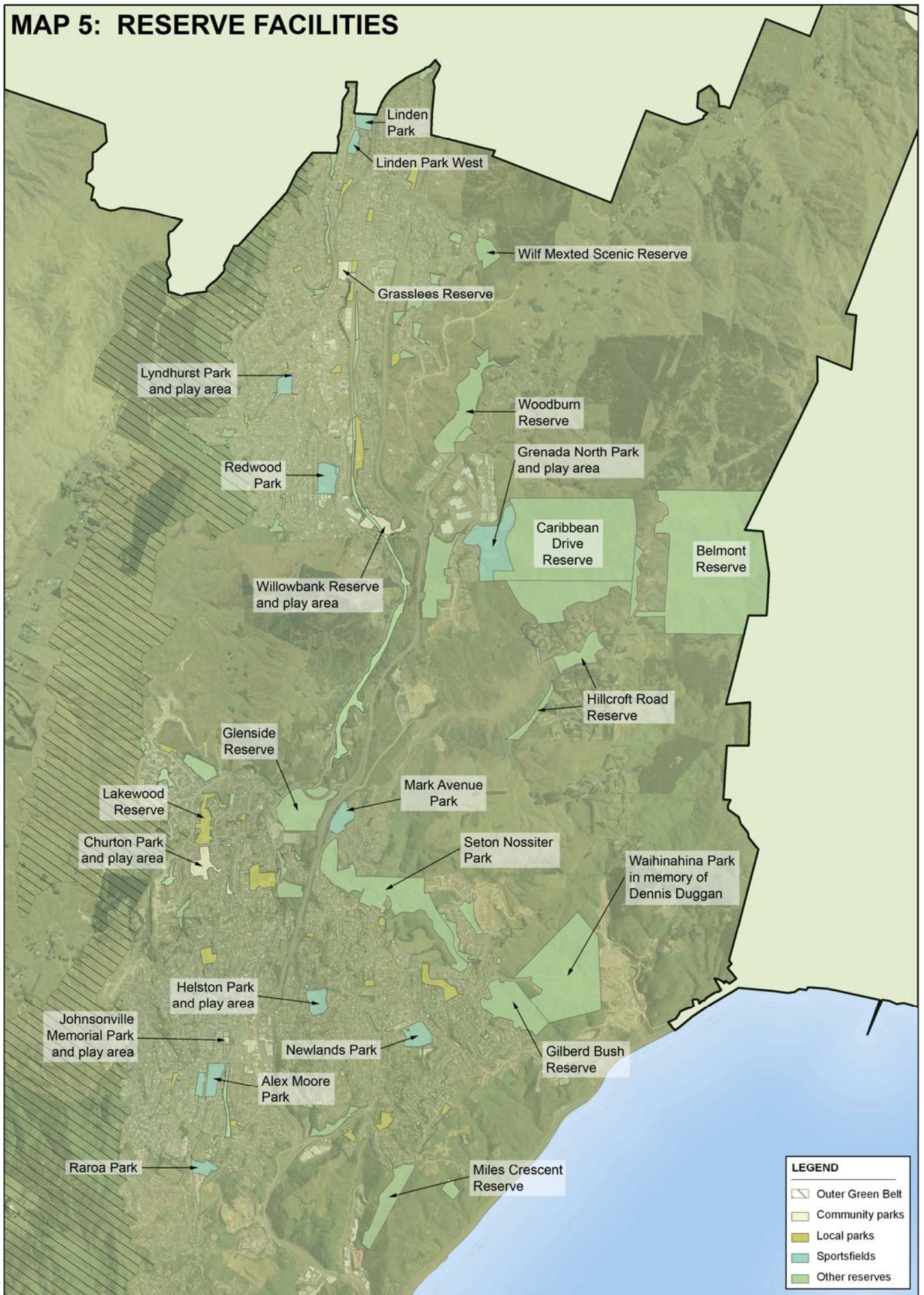
- how the current open space system provides for recreation activities
- what changes are needed to improve provision
- additional areas required.

4.1.1 Community parks

Community parks are key areas of suburban open space with the following characteristics:

- an area of public open space provided within a suburban residential area
- provide for a range of informal recreation activities for all age groups
- have an emphasis on providing for the needs of the local community, this may include easy pedestrian access, play equipment and seating, flat or gently undulating grass areas, and adequate space for running and informal ball games
- provide space for community events
- are typically located centrally within the geographical community, ideally within walking distance of residential dwellings

MAP 5: RESERVE FACILITIES





Community Park - Lakewood Reserve, Churton Park

- are safe (ie observable from other houses or open spaces, have safe exit and entry points)
- contain and/or capture community character and sense of place
- have high amenity values.

There are four community park groupings in the northern area. Table 3 shows their location and major facilities.

Table 3. Community park groupings

Community Park	Council Site number	Facilities
Grasslees Reserve, Tawa	1814/1790	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community playground • Roller skating rink • Skate Park • Rose Garden • Dog exercise area • Toilet facilities
Willowbank Park, Tawa	1828	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local playground • Dog Exercise area • Bush tracks • Toilet facilities

Churton Park Lakewood Reserve	540/1628	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community playground • Sportsfield and pavilion • Dog exercise area • Walkways • Tennis club
Johnsonville Memorial Park/Alex Moore Park	1604/493/162/166	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local playground • Half court • Rose garden • Tennis club

4.1.2 Local (neighbourhood) parks

These are smaller parks servicing their local community. There are 52 local parks in the northern area. They have the following characteristics:

- have a lower profile area generally and not known of by non-residents
- may contain play equipment but generally with limited facilities and amenities (27 local parks in the Northern suburbs have play equipment.)
- often lie on a pedestrian/commuting route and are typically bordered on several sides by houses
- generally have a limited amount of appropriate space for further development.

The distribution is historic and reflects patterns of subdivision. Given the built nature of many of these suburbs the ability to change the distribution and number of local parks is very limited. The focus needs to be on whether individual parks need upgrading and if they are still relevant to the needs of the local community.

Map 6 shows the current distribution of local (neighbourhood parks) in the northern area. Provision of play areas is addressed in section 4.1.4.

4.1.3 Sportsfields

There are 13 sportsfields in the northern area. They have the following characteristics:

- are designed for, and used by organised sport
- have formally maintained sports turf for a mixture of winter and/or summer sport.
- are likely to be maintained to an appropriate standard for the sports code use.
- have toilets, changing facilities and car parking which are likely to be available
- may have resident sports club facilities.

Table 4 – Sportsfields on the Northern Reserves

SPORTSFIELDS	SITE CODE	GRADING	WINTER SPORTS CODES	SUMMER SPORTS CODES	USED FOR TRAINING	PAVILIONS (toilets and changing rooms)	CLUB ROOMS	Upgrade proposed in next 10 years
Alex Moore Park	P0495	Higher senior grades	Soccer, Rugby	Cricket, Softball, Touch, Athletics	✓	✓	✓	
Churton Park	P0540	Junior/Senior	Soccer	Cricket	✓	✓		
Grenada North Park	P1956	Lower senior grades	Soccer, Basketball	Cricket	✓	✓	✓	✓ 10+ yrs
Helston Park	P0535	Elite	Rugby	Softball, Touch	✓		✓	
Kowhai Park	P1799	Junior	Junior Rugby					
Linden Park	P1917	Higher senior grades		Cricket		✓	✓	
Linden Park West	P1797	Junior/ Lower Senior Grade	Hockey	Cricket, Soccer	✓	✓		
Lyndhurst Park	P1804	Higher senior grades	Rugby		✓	✓	✓	
Mark Avenue Park	P1899	Junior	Junior Soccer		✓			
Newlands Park	P0103	Senior	Soccer, Rugby	Cricket, Softball	✓	✓		Possible artificial surface in future
Pinkerton Park	P0467	Lower senior grades	Soccer	Softball		✓		Minor upgrade
Raroa Park	P1065	Senior	Soccer, American Football	Softball	✓	✓		
Redwood Park	P1807	Higher senior grades	Soccer, Rugby	Softball	✓	✓	✓	



Rugby, Tawa V Wellington, Lyndhurst Park

4.1.4 Playgrounds

The Wellington City Council Playground Policy (2002) identifies four categories of playground (centralised, community, local and local basic). The basic provision in the policy is that:

- a significant majority of dwellings should be within 800 metres of a community Playground
- a significant majority of dwellings should be within 600 metres of a local playground

The standards are designed to be the ideal to be achieved where possible but not as an absolute standard for existing areas.

There are currently 31 playgrounds in the northern area, no centralized, 4 community and 27 comprising local and local basic.

Table 5 . Community playgrounds

Site Name	Council Site Number	Description	Condition
Grasslees Reserve	1814	Community	Good quality
Churton Park and play area	540	Community	Upgraded in 04/05
Helston Park and play area	535	Community	Upgraded in 03/04
Duncan Park and play area	1869	Community - excellent new play area	Upgraded 07/08

Table 6. Local and local basic playgrounds

Site Name	Council Site Number	Description	Condition
Wall Park and play area	1831	Play area with new 1/2 court with matting	Average
Tui Park play area	1818	swing/whirl/see-saw plenty of open kick about space - next to kindergarten	Good condition, safety surface upgraded 05/06
Kowhai Park and play area	1799		Poor
Mahoe Reserve	1806	Swings with baby bucket seats only	Poor
Raroa Park	1827	Swings/seesaw/	Poor
Victory Crescent	1812	Swings /fort/slide	Good
Coronation Park	1822	Play equipment for little ones - swings etc fenced play area	Upgrade
Lyndhurst Reserve	1804	Separate play area/ swings/seesaw	Upgrade
Larsen Park and play area	1856		Poor condition.
Taylor Park and play area	1830	Swings/new matting	Average
Willowbank Reserve	1828		Good quality 10-15 yrs life
Brasenose Park and Play Area		Basic	Poor
Grenada North Park and play area	1956	Fort/swings/ playing courts. Well used	Average

Grenada Village play area	1243	Excellent new play area – upgraded 2005.	Excellent
Chorley Grove	1415	Basic play area	Average
John Walker Park		Basic play area	Average
Burbank Crescent play area		Basic play area with poor drainage	Poor
Pinkerton Park	467	Decommissioned	
Cheyne Walk play area	531	Steel pipe see saw/swings/whirl	Average
Edgecombe Street play area	637	Play Area. Steel slide	Poor
Lyndfield Lane play area	496	Swings/whirl/see saw	Average
Newlands Mall play area	2313		Good
Salford Street play area	517	Steel seesaw/swing/whirl	Upgraded in 2007/08
Meekwood Reserve	528	Fort structure and one slide	Poor
Johnsonville Memorial Park	493	Junior and senior play equipment	Excellent
Branscombe Street play area	671	Two sets of swings good kick about space	Poor
Kipling Street play area	502	Seesaw/whirl/swings	Average
Gilbert Young play area	510	Seesaw/whirl/swings	Average

The northern ward has the highest proportion of young people in Wellington (aged under 15 years). Approximately 18% are aged under 12 years while a further 18% are aged 12-24 (youth). There are also more households containing couples with children (65%) than Wellington in (57%). An assessment has been carried out over current provision of playgrounds in the northern area. This has looked at adequacy of provision within existing suburbs and play area requirements as part of new subdivision development.

4.1.5 Youth Facilities

Youth facilities provide for children in the 12-24 age group and are located as follows:



Duncan Park Play Area, Tawa

Table 7. Youth facilities

Park	Site number	Facilities
Grasslees Reserve, Tawa	1814/1790	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roller skating rink • Skate Park (adjacent to Tawa Pool just north of the park)
Wall Park and play area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half court
Duncan Street Railway	1793	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BMX track, upgraded in 2007.
Grenada North Park and play area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basketball court
Victory Crescent Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half Court
Johnsonville Memorial Park and play area		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half Court – not specifically at the Memorial Park, but around the corner at the Wanaka Street Park.
Newlands Park		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skatepark

4.1.6 Dog Exercise Areas

There are 11 dog exercise areas in the northern area. These are designated under the Dog Control Policy (2004) as areas where dogs can be exercised off leash provided the owners maintain control over their dogs at all times. The following table shows the location of dog exercise areas.

Table 8. Dog Exercise Areas

Dog exercise area	Site number	Facilities
Arthur Carmen Park, Tawa	1788	Large area in terraces and adjacent car park
Duncan Park, Linden Avenue Tawa	1870	Small area at southern end of Park. No fence between this area and playground at northern end
Grasslees Reserve, Main Road, Tawa	1814/1790	Western side of stream to main road. No fence between area and main road.
Taylor Park, Tawa	1830	Southern area of park adjacent to railway line. No fence
Willowbank Park, Tawa	1828	Two exercise areas in this reserve. One between the public toilets and the scout hall. The other on eastern side of the stream.
Churton Park	540	Area between Halswater Drive and sportsfield
Edward Wilson Park, Churton Park	1058	Small exercise area above Middleton Road
Seton Nossiter Park, Paparangi	1406	The valley floor to the titoki grove. Well used area.
Spennmoor Street Park, Newlands	506	
Waihinahina Park, Newlands	1085	Large flat exercise area
Meekswood Reserve, Johnsonville	528	On Ohariu Road side of reserve up to crest of hill
Flinders Park, Johnsonville (In Outer Green Belt area)	1260	Well used area below Old Coach Road

4.1.7 Other facilities

Tag War Games: Tag War Games lease land in Caribbean Reserve off Caribbean Drive in Grenada North. They have operated here since 1999 and run a commercial war games type leisure activity. The current operation comprises a container for booking and several building and structures throughout the area. It is a seven-day-a-week operation primarily catering for organised groups who book a time for its use.

Newlands Paparangi Horse Riding Society: The club has been based at Glenside Reserve for over 15 years and its members are the main users of the site. They graze up to 15 horses, use the flat field as an exercise area and dressage ring, and have the use of several temporary and permanent buildings for storage facilities and clubrooms.

4.2 Issues and opportunities

4.2.1 Community parks

4.2.1.1 Gaps in existing network

The characteristics of an optimum community park are presented in Table 9. These have been developed from the Playgrounds Policy, information from New Zealand Recreation Association, and best practice from other Councils. The optimum will not necessarily be appropriate in every situation, and it is important to consider how well each community park serves local needs and how it fits in with the local setting.

Table 9. Characteristics of an optimum community park

Accessible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located within 10-15 mins walking distance of residential dwellings • Accessible via safe and convenient walking and cycling routes - access should not include the need to cross arterial roads, railways or other major physical barriers • Accessible for all • Car parking space available • Connectivity to public access ways, recreation networks and other recreation facilities
Safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observable from neighbouring houses and/or other public areas • A number of safe entry/exit points • Follow best practise in safety design
Size	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enough flat or gently undulating space for running and informal ball games/kick-about
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheltered from wind with good aspect • Shade available • Natural green space • Heritage or local character enhanced
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toilets • Play equipment • Infrastructure to support community events • Picnic area • Space for multiple informal recreation activities
Functionality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good flow and user-friendly • Follow best practise landscape design principles

From an assessment of the above, there is a gap in provision in the Newlands/ Papanangi area. The ideal location would be in Newlands Park but there are some limitations. These include:

- limited car parking space available
- exposed site
- no playground

An upgrade of the existing park needs to be carried out in conjunction with the redevelopment of the Newlands Mall just over the road to ensure the facilities are complementary.

4.2.1.2 Future growth

The Northern Growth Management Framework predicts growth of around 10,000 people over a 20 year period from 2003. This growth is predominately in Stebbings Valley and the Lincolnshire Farm area. It is estimated that growth of around 2000 people has already occurred – mainly in Churton Park, Greenacres and West Johnsonville with an average of 220 new houses built each year since 2001. Approximately 20-25% of the population in the area is currently school aged.

The bulk of the remaining development will occur in Stebbings Valley and Lincolnshire Farm area. Both of these areas will take around 15 years to develop fully.

- Stebbings Valley can accommodate around 1300 houses with these being developed from 2008 onwards. This is split into two areas – lower Stebbings, which is currently zoned residential (800 houses), and upper Stebbings (north of the power lines – 500 houses) which is still zoned rural
- Lincolnshire Farm can accommodate around 1200 houses. While some development is currently occurring in the Woodridge and Mark Avenue area the bulk of the area will be developed from 2009 onwards.

Each of these subdivisions will need one community park to service the surrounding residential areas. Provision has already been made for a community park in the Lincolnshire Farm Structure Plan. Development of this park will occur as part of the development of the subdivision. Final plans for upper Stebbings have not yet been approved but a suitable location will be discussed with the developer as part of a reserves agreement.

4.2.1.3 Existing community park upgrades

An assessment was carried out in 2006 on community park provision in Wellington city and an assessment done on priorities for upgrade. In respect of the northern suburbs, the sequence for upgrading parks, approved by the Council is:

1. **Johnsonville Memorial Park** is the highest priority because of its location in the growth spine. Johnsonville has been identified as a future major destination hub for both suburban centre and high density housing use. An upgrade of this park must align with the Johnsonville Town Centre Plan, including linkages to the town centre. There may be an opportunity to co-

ordinate the upgrade with the Keith Spry Pool extension project. In addition its relationship with Alex Moore Park and the provision of facilities between the two areas should be investigated.

2. **Grasslees Reserve** is the second priority given the high proportion of youth in Tawa and the need to upgrade the skating rink and create a better connection through to the pool. Its central Tawa location is ideal to serve the Tawa community as a whole. This will also fit in with the development of the Porirua Stream Walkway and cycleway, identified in the Open Space Access Plan.
3. **Willowbank Park** is considered to be a lower priority against the parks identified above. This is due to its location on the fringe of Tawa and the limited number of residential homes surrounding the park at this stage. The redevelopment will also incorporate the proposed Porirua Stream Walkway and cycleway.

Churton Park and play area is not a priority given the major upgrade works both in Lakewood Reserve and Churton Park over the past five years including a new playground in Churton Park. Future works may be required to link the park areas with the new suburban centre being proposed on the corner of Westchester Drive and Halswater Drive. *This will include an assessment of how best to protect and restore the stream at the northern end of the Park*

4.2.2 Local (neighbourhood) parks

While many local parks serve the neighbourhood well, there are some parks that require further assessment to ensure they are continuing to provide an effective service to the local community and decisions made to upgrade, change use or divest.

Arthur Carmen Park – This 1.8 hectare park consists of a large car park and three flat grassed terraces adjacent to the motorway between Linden and Greenacres. It was formerly used for horse grazing and was leased to the horse club. It is now designated as a dog exercise area.

The park is used as a thoroughfare between Collins Avenue and Mexted Terrace. With the adjacent play area at Tui Park only 100 metres away this park is little used. The flat terraces, however would lend themselves to sports activity such as junior sport.

Pinkerton Park – This 3.5 hectare park is situated about 400 metres from Newlands Park and the Newlands suburban centre. It contains a large area used for junior soccer in winter and until 2007 contained play equipment. This has been removed as part of the policy to rationalise play areas under the Playgrounds Policy.

Jay Street Reserve – This 0.4 hectare local park is situated off Bushlands Grove adjacent to Newlands College. The park is secluded and not well used. It contains play equipment in poor condition which is due to be removed permanently as part of the policy to rationalise playgrounds.

Several years ago discussions took place with Newlands College about possible acquisition of this land for addition to the sportfields at the college. The College no longer requires this land and the Council will assess the need for this reserve.

Lyndhurst Park and play area – A section of this park on the northern side of Lyndhurst Road has a small kick around area and an accessway through to Romney Square. Given the large park and play area over the road an assessment of the future use of the land is needed.

In addition to the above, an assessment has been carried out to see if additional local parks will be required during the major new subdivisions in lower Stebbings Valley and Lincolnshire Farm.

In Lincolnshire Farm the proposed structure plan identifies the need for one local park as well as the main community park.

4.2.3 Sportsfields

Demand is growing, but the city's sportsfields, including those in the northern area are already used beyond what they can physically sustain. This poses a number of significant challenges:

- Wellington's topography creates physical constraints – there is only so much flat land
- increasing demand and changing use patterns make it difficult to provide a suite of sport facilities that spread available resources equitably – between summer and winter codes; between junior, senior, representative and elite sports; between formal and informal recreation; between long-established codes and new and emerging sports
- growing populations and changing demographics mean needs and expectations will change over the coming 10 to 20 years.

Practical management issues add another layer of complexity:

- Wellington's weather can compromise access to sports fields, especially during wet winters
- teams need to train, but training can severely undermine the quality of fields for match play
- longer seasons (especially for winter codes) mean increasing seasonal overlap. Not only does this increase competition between codes, it means less time for the Council to repair and prepare grounds for the new season
- sports fields built on closed landfills are difficult to maintain because of ongoing subsidence and, in some cases, gas build up

Top priorities in the short-to-medium term are:

- developing recreation hubs to provide a central focus for communities and codes. While Wellington's topography provides a challenge, it also creates a variety of distinct suburban areas where a recreation hub can add to local character and identity and residents' sense of place. There is currently one major hub in the north, Alex Moore Park. Grenada

North Park is potentially another recreation hub as residential development and transport links develop over the next 10 to 20 years

- identifying possibilities for partnerships to access both flat land and external funding. Schools offer an opportunity to gain access to flat land Partnerships are also an opportunity to attract outside funding, particularly through partnerships with regional sports organisations, community trusts and the Ministry of Education
- providing dedicated training areas, to take pressure off match grounds. Artificial surfaces are preferred to increase durability and one option is to co-locate these at recreation hubs or at schools.

The Council is actively working with sports clubs to ensure they are sustainable and where possible to facilitate amalgamation between clubs to ensure they remain viable and make efficient use of buildings and facilities on sportsfields.

A good example is a project at Alex Moore Park looking at how the current facilities can be rationalised on the park and used by a range of sports clubs. This will involve building a purpose built facility. The current partners in the project are Johnsonville Softball Club, North Wellington Junior Football Club, North Wellington Association Football Club, and Johnsonville Cricket Club

4.2.4 Playgrounds

An assessment has been made on the future requirements in subdivisions recently completed or in progress such as Woodridge in Newlands, or proposed such as Stebbings Valley and Lincolnshire Farm. The following table identifies where future provision of playgrounds will be made.

Table 10. New playgrounds proposed

Site Name	Council Site Number	Description
Kentwood Drive Reserve, Woodridge	2569	This 2.5 hectare reserve is a mixture of regenerating native bush and a flat kick around area adjacent to Kentwood Drive. A local playground here would service the upper part of Woodridge.
Amesbury Drive Reserve, Churton Park	2359	This small reserve adjacent to Amesbury Drive is an ideal location for a community playground being located about a kilometre north of the community playground in Churton Park. This is the site for a new school in Churton Park. The playground would service both the school and the wider community.
Pikitanga Reserve	2402	This small reserve off Pikitanga close is one of the few flat reserve areas in the Greenacres/Woodman Drive area. An ideal place for a local playground.
South Stebbings,	Not applicable	The reserves agreement for this area proposed one local playground adjacent to

Churton Park		the Stebbings stream in the eastern part of the area.
North Stebbings, Churton Park		No reserves agreement has been prepared yet but the intent is to have one community playground/park in northern Stebbings with additional local play areas to be confirmed.
Lincolnshire Farm		The structure plan shows a community park which will include a community playground.

It is proposed that up to 6 playgrounds in the northern suburbs be decommissioned over the next 10 years. This will link in with the refurbishment of nearby playgrounds to ensure adequate provision remains for local communities.

Table 11. Playgrounds to be decommissioned

Site Name	Council Site Number	Description	Condition
Kowhai Park and play area, Tawa	1799		Play equipment to be removed over time
Mahoe Park, Tawa	1806	Swings with baby bucket seats only	To be decommissioned when upgrade to Raroa undertaken.
Larsen Park and play area, Tawa	1856		Poor condition. Look to reassess when Lyndhurst Park is upgraded.
Burbank Crescent play area, Churton Park	1344		Poor condition and poorly drained site. Possible decommission when Edward Wilson Park upgraded.
Pinkerton Park, Newlands	467	decommissioned	Still a few pieces there to be gone in next six months.
Meekwood Reserve, Johnsonville	528	fort structure and one slide	Look to decommission when upgrade to Branscombe

4.2.5 Youth facilities

Historically, the provision of youth facilities in the north has been based on local community demand rather than a comprehensive plan for the north. The Northern Growth Management Framework identified the need for a skateboarding facility.

Youth facilities that have been requested previously and need further assessment include:

- BMX track in Newlands/Paparangi area
- mountain bike skills areas
- half courts
- skateboard facilities such as at Grenada North Park.

4.2.6 Dog exercise areas

An assessment of the northern management area dog exercise areas has shown the following:

- several of the areas are not fenced off from busy roads and railway lines, for instance Taylor Park
- Woodridge, Stebbings and Lincolnshire Farm will require dog exercise areas in future to cope with demand
- there are opportunities to develop a dog exercise park as a destination for dog owners. One possible option would be Waihinahina Park in Newlands.

4.3 Objectives

- To provide outdoor recreational opportunities and experiences that are environmentally and socially sustainable and accessible to communities
- Ensuring the provision of recreational opportunities and experiences keeps pace with population growth in the north

4.4 Policies

4.4.1 Community parks

- Community parks should be located centrally within communities, ideally within walking distance (10-15 minutes) of residential dwellings and provide for a range of informal recreation activities for all age groups.

4.4.2 Local parks

- Local (neighbourhood) parks will be provided to serve their local community and contain play equipment (subject to the provisions of the Playgrounds Policy) but generally with limited facilities and amenities.
- Ensure that future reserves agreements have an adequate distribution of local parks and playgrounds consistent with the Playgrounds Policy.

4.4.3 Sportsfields (based on those in the Recreation Strategy (2003))

- To ensure the availability of a diverse range of recreation opportunities that satisfies the needs of Wellington citizens and visitors.
- To improve the access for all citizens to sport, recreation and leisure facilities and activities.
- Make more intensive use of and improve the linkages between sportsfields, recreation facilities and resources in the city.
- To encourage active and on-going partnerships between organisations involved in the provision of sport and recreation and the Council.
- To increase participation in all forms of sporting, recreational and leisure activity in Wellington.

4.4.4 Youth facilities

- Facilitate a study on youth outdoor recreation needs for youth in the northern area.

4.4.5 Dog exercise areas

The Council's Dog Control Policy was approved in September 2004 and has a general policy relating to the provision of exercise areas:

- to provide for the reasonable exercise and recreational needs of dogs and their owners

This policy is currently being reviewed.