

# Draft Heritage Places Plan of Management

## Gregson Park Hamilton



# Gregson Park, Hamilton

# Part A

## Supporting Information - Gregson Park

### Cultural Significance

#### History

The municipality of Hamilton was established in 1871, its name taken from that of the governor of the AA Company, whose mining operations in the area had begun in 1848. As its mining activity declined, the company released land for residential subdivision, and in 1889 it transferred a parcel of land to the municipality for public open space. This was named Gregson Park after Jesse Gregson, superintendent of the company at the time.

A competition for the design of the park was held in 1890, won by Alfred Sharp, who in the same year won a similar competition for the design of the Upper Reserve (King Edward Park). Unfortunately Sharp's ideas seem to have been ignored in both cases. At Gregson Park he proposed to develop the line of a creek flowing through the area, a tributary of Styx Creek, into a serpentine lake with islands. Instead the stream was covered over, and is no longer visible.

The park, however, quickly became a popular public area, with tree planting and other improvements carried out by the municipality alongside the formation of the Hamilton Bowling Club in 1896, the fourth such club to be formed in Newcastle (Newcastle/City 1889, Waratah 1890, Lowlands 1892). Other features and monuments were added in the first decades of this century, including: a pair of guns from Victoria Barracks, erected in 1905 at the corner of Tudor and Steel Streets, subsequently moved to their present position opposite James Street; iron gates with stone posts to the James Street entrance in 1908, and a fountain in the same year; the gates to the Tudor/Steel Streets entrance commemorating the members of the first Hamilton Council, erected 1912; and the war memorial of c 1919, the floodlighting of which in 1937 attracted a crowd of 7000. A band rotunda was also part of the original features of the park, and was mysteriously demolished in 1940. In recent years the link between Gregson Park and Beaumont Street, the main street of Hamilton, via James Street, as been reinforced by its use as part of the Carnival festival process.

#### Description

#### Category of Land

Community Land classification: Area of Cultural Significance, Park, General Community Use and Sportsground.

#### Character Statement

The park is a good example of an urban Victorian park, serving an identifiable community. Its limited size, clear shape and sense of containment by surrounding building frontages give it a strong sense of unity and identity. In terms of its relationship to its context, it has two principal public faces:

To Tudor Street to the south: this address to a major thoroughfare is well defined at the Tudor/Steel Street corner, but less coherent towards the west, and there is an opportunity to reconsider the landscaping of this southern side to reinforce this aspect of the park;

To James Street to the east: James Street forms a strong visual and functional link between Beaumont Street, the main street of Hamilton, and the park; while some features (e.g. the gateposts) support this, others (the Ladies' bowling clubhouse) conflict with it, and there is an opportunity to better acknowledge and reinforce this aspect.

Adjacent to the park on its southern, Tudor Street boundary is a triangle of land that should be included in any future landscape plan.

The following items are listed as heritage items in the Newcastle LEP 2012:

- Gregson Park - Landscape Item
- Fountain Monument – Built Item
- Gregson Park Steel Street gates – Built item
- Gregson Park Tudor Street gates – Landscape item
- War Memorial – Built Item

Refer to State Heritage Inventory for details of each item

### **Physical**

**Area** 3.8 ha, bounded by Lindsay, Steel, Tudor and Samdon Streets.

### **Landform**

Generally level site, formerly containing course of creek in NE corner, no longer visible.

### **Current Uses**

Park – passive leisure, picnics  
Tennis – two courts plus club house  
Playground  
Amenities Building  
City of Newcastle park maintenance building  
Events – markets etc

### **Masterplan for Gregson Park 2021**

A Masterplan has been prepared for Gregson Park with two key aims being to:

- Identify the role of Gregson Park in meeting local recreation needs and respecting the heritage significance of the park.
- Identify the way in which the Gregson Park can be most effectively utilised to help meet the broader recreation, sporting and community facility needs of the surrounding communities and the wider Newcastle region.

**Phase 1 Community Engagement** was undertaken from August to December 2020.

Through analysis of the data, several common themes have emerged across the school workshops, stakeholder interviews, in-park drop-in sessions and broader online engagement.

### **Plantings and Aboriginal Culture**

- Retain fig trees and flower beds, add native plant species and Awabakal cultural interpretation

### **Basic amenities**

- Upgrade and extend toilets
- Add more open-sided shelter and seating for larger groups

### **Playspace**

- All ages, inclusive, larger footprint

### **Community gathering**

- Upgrade park assets to support events; pop-up cafe; community/edible garden (edible plantings and plots cared for by community organisations).

### **Heritage**

- Keep cannons and monuments

### **Recreation**

- Upgrade existing paths for bike/scooter/run; Flat and open green grass areas
- Add bat ball wall, basketball half court; keep tennis courts, upgrade clubhouse to multipurpose building

The Masterplan will be placed on City of Newcastle's website once adopted by Council.

## Part B

# Gregson Park Heritage Places Plan of Management

City of Newcastle will manage Gregson Park consistent with the Vision, Guiding Principles, Objectives and Strategies of its Heritage Places Strategic Plan 1998.

### Categorisation

Gregson Park is community land categorised as Park, General Community Use and Sportsground, and the whole park is Area of Cultural Significance to reflect the local landscape heritage value of the park.

"The core objectives for management of community land categorised as Park are:

- (a) to encourage promote and facilitate recreational, cultural, social and educational pastimes and activities,
- (b) to provide for passive recreation; activities or pastimes or for the playing of casual games, and
- (c) to improve the land in such a way as to promote and facilitate its use to achieve the other core objectives for its management." (Sec 36G LGA 1993).

"The core objectives for management of community land categorised as Sportsground are:

- (a) to encourage promote and facilitate recreational pursuits in the community involving organised and informal sporting activities and games, and
- (b) to ensure that such activities are managed having regard to any adverse impact on nearby residences." (Sec 36F LGA 1993).

"The core objectives for management of community land categorised as General Community Use are to promote, encourage and provide for the use of the land, and to provide facilities on the land, to meet the current and future needs of the local community and of the wider public:

- (a) in relation to public recreation and the physical, cultural, social and intellectual welfare or development of individual members of the public, and
- (b) in relation to purposes for which a lease, licence or other estate may be granted in respect of the land (other than the provision of public utilities and works associated with or ancillary to public utilities). "(Sec36I LGA 1993).

"The core objectives for the management of community land categorised as Area of Cultural Significance are to retain and enhance the cultural significance of the area for past, present or future generations by the active use of conservation methods" (Sec. 36H Local Government Act 1993).

### Categorisation of Gregson Park



Park



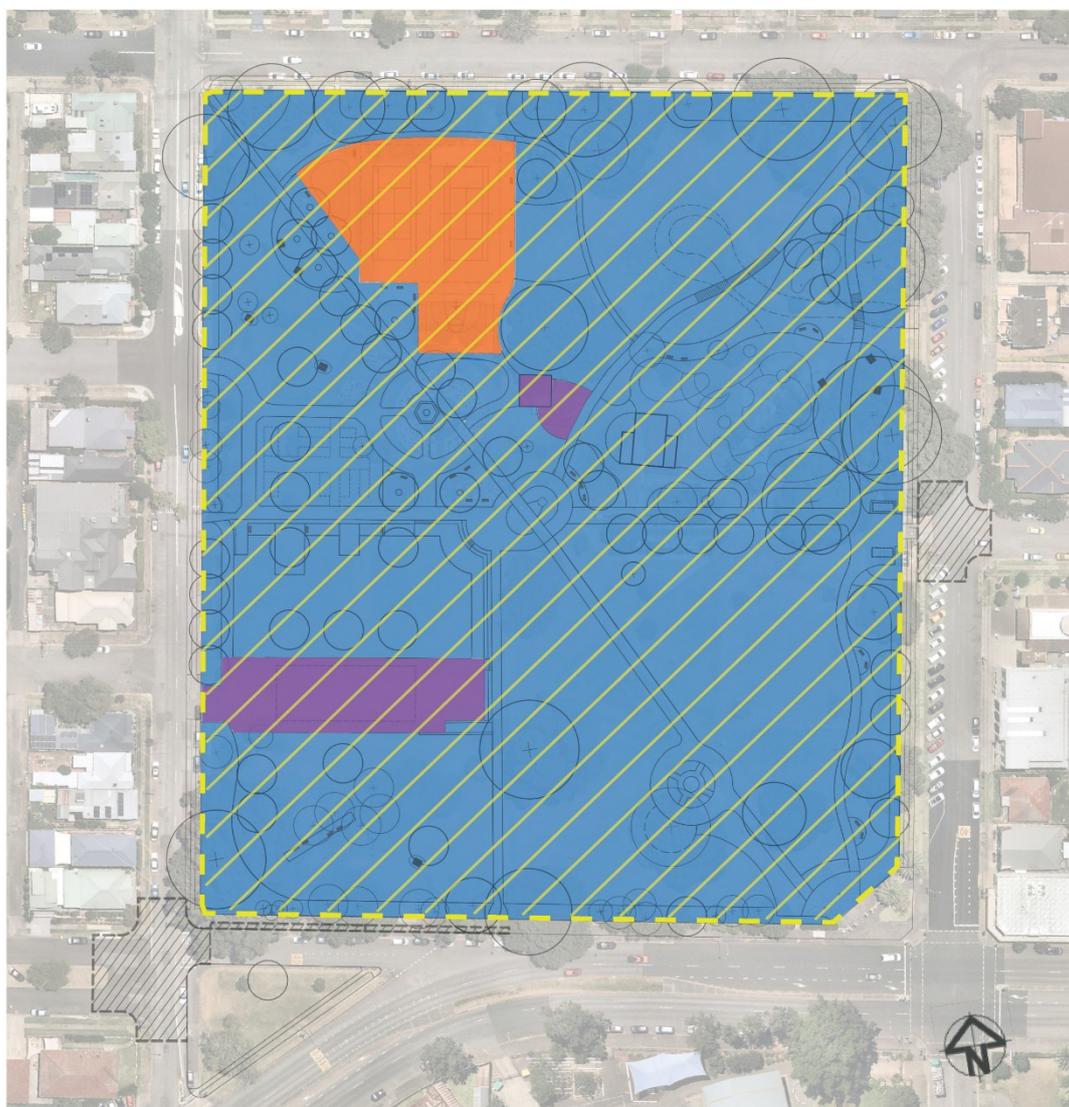
Sportsground



General Community Use



Area of Cultural Significance



## Action Table

Objective	Means	Performance target	Performance Indicator
Finalise and approve Gregson Park Masterplan	Public exhibition of Masterplan and amended POM	Late 2021	All steps are completed and timetable is met
Improve the amenity and heritage value of Gregson Park	Implement Gregson Park Masterplan	Over a 10 year period	Key actions with the Masterplan have been met

## Leases and Licences Gregson Park

**Community Use:** This Plan of Management expressly authorises leases, licenses and other estates at Gregson Park on the site categorised as General Community Use to community based organisations for the purpose of public recreation, physical, social, cultural and intellectual welfare activities.

**Kiosk:** This Plan of Management expressly authorises a kiosk to be established in the existing maintenance building within the park. The kiosk may be leased or licensed on a commercial basis.

**Tennis:** Tennis and associated court-based recreational activities are a legitimate activity in Gregson Park, at a scale and design appropriate to the categorisation of Gregson Park as an Area of Cultural Significance. **This** Plan of Management expressly authorises leases or licences at Gregson Park for tennis and associated activities in that part of the park categorised as Sportsground.

**General:** This Plan of Management expressly authorises the granting of leases, licences and other estates in Gregson Park for community uses that **enhance** the community development of Newcastle, e.g. weddings, photos, festivals, functions.

For the purposes of section 46(1) (b) (iii) of the Act, the use or occupation of community land for the following events is prescribed as a **purpose** in respect of which a Council may grant a licence in respect of community land on a short term casual basis:

- (a) the playing of a musical instrument, or singing, for fee or reward,
- (b) engaging in a trade or business,
- (c) delivering a public address,
- (d) commercial photographic sessions,
- (e) picnics and private celebrations such as weddings and family gatherings,
- (f) filming for cinema or television, and
- (g) the agistment of stock.