

Media release

Embargoed until 9am, 18 December 2013

Colin Maiden Park to stay in public ownership

Auckland Council has added Colin Maiden Park in St Johns to its parks network, ensuring this open space and sports field complex remains in public ownership and available to the people of Auckland forever.

The unconditional agreement with the University of Auckland means that the 20 hectare park will be taken over by council early next year, which allows the university to focus on plans for its new developments in the city centre and Newmarket. The park is being acquired for \$60.7m.

Mayor Len Brown says this is one of the most significant urban park acquisitions in Auckland's history and council's decision to acquire the park will ensure that the people of Auckland have access to this asset forever.

"We have acquired Colin Maiden Park for the people who use and enjoy it every day of the week, whether they are from Glen Innes, Glen Eden or Glenfield. We can all be proud that the last major piece of private open space on the isthmus has been retained for the people of Auckland," he says.

The Chair of council's Parks, Recreation and Sport Committee, Councillor Christine Fletcher, reflected on the significance of this decision to the community.

"Together with the netball centre and Ngahue Reserve, this decision creates an incredible 44 hectare sports and open space complex for Auckland. This rivals Western Springs or the Domain for scale and significance," says Cr Fletcher.

Orakei Local Board Chair Desley Simpson expressed great pleasure and relief at the decision.

“We have honoured the opinions expressed by so many Orakei residents – the future of the park was the one of the most submitted-on issues in the draft Unitary Plan.

“Our community was particularly concerned that the park might become intensive housing. It is now guaranteed to remain as public open space and available to everybody,” says Ms Simpson.

The park will transfer to the council’s local and sports parks portfolio on 1 February 2014.

This acquisition was an unbudgeted item which has been factored into the draft Annual Plan 2014/15. Council has also agreed to explore the sale of three parcels of council-owned land around Colin Maiden Park, to assist with the cost of acquiring the park.

Sale of land will follow the relevant public consultation processes in the Reserves Act and the Local Government Act. If any land is sold, any existing uses and activities on that land will be provided for on Colin Maiden Park or in the same general area.

In the coming months, council will work with all current users of the park to discuss their existing arrangements and look at how we continue to work together. Long term management of the park will also be addressed through council and the local board’s planning processes.

ENDS