



Puhinui Reserve

Manukau Parks



Te Kaunihera o
MANUKAU
City Council



This brochure highlights Puhinui Reserve, one of the many walks for you to enjoy in Manukau City

Manukau City Council
Private bag 76 917
Manukau City
Phone (09) 262 5104
Email: contactus@manukau.govt.nz
Website: www.manukau.govt.nz



Welcome to Puhinui Reserve

Puhinui Reserve is one of Manukau's premier parks; and at 199 hectares set in a rural landscape, occupies the southern portion of Puhinui Peninsula. It is bound by Puhinui Stream in the east and the Manukau Harbour to the west. It forms a major component of the 'Gateway Heritage' area of Manukau and has considerable historical, conservation and amenity value.

Manukau City Council purchased the property in October 1991 to further its goals of sustaining the natural environment and providing a diverse range of recreational pursuits for the general public.

The reserve forms part of the extensive Matukuturua volcanic field and is linked with pre-European settlements centred around Wiri Mountain and Matukuturua (McLaughlins Mountain).

Visitors can experience the pleasures of both rural countryside and views of Manukau Harbour on easy walkways. The reserve is 15 minutes drive to Manukau city centre.

More recently council purchased a 57 hectare block north of and adjoining Puhinui Reserve to be named Colin Dale Park. There are plans to use this area as a local motorsport venue.

History of the Puhinui Reserve

The Tainui people were believed to have settled in this region at least a 1000 years ago. Human occupation of the Puhinui Peninsula can be seen by the significant archaeological sites on McLaughlins Mountain (Matukuturua) adjacent to Puhinui Reserve. Descendants of the original iwi (Ngati Te Ata and Te Akitai of the Waiohua) and other Waikato tribes still have associations with the area.

The reserve was thought to be an important place for gathering food, craft, medicinal resources and shelter for the settlement and gardens to the east.

The Puhinui Stream was navigable along the eastern boundary of the reserve and provided easy access to fishing grounds along the stream and Manukau Harbour.

In later years Puhinui Reserve formed part of the McLaughlins estate 'Puhinui' purchased in 1845. A short account of the McLaughlin family can be found in 'The History of Howick and Pakuranga 1991' by Alan La Roche. The estate was subdivided with the existing reserve 'certificate of title' obtained in 1858.

Conservation Area

The Conservation area located on the western shoreline of the reserve covers an area of some 39.5 hectares and comprises the largest area of salt meadow, salt marsh through to manuka/grass scrub and associated vegetation remaining on the Manukau Harbour. Some relatively rare plant species occur in this area including native musk and swamp coprosma. Some other plant species include remuremu and the versatile sea primrose. On small areas of marine deposit at higher ground inland there is flax, coastal shrub daisy, manuka, jointed rush and scrub pohuehue.

Apart from the dominant manuka cover there are limited numbers of rimu, kahikatea, and lancewood throughout these plantings.

There is no public access within the conservation zone as identified on information signage located at the entrance to the reserve and adjacent to the site itself. This area runs along the length of the Manukau Harbour (western) shoreline.

Alcohol

Liquor bans are in place in the carpark adjacent to the main entrance to the reserve. Check council's website on <http://www.manukau.govt.nz> for more information.

Dogs

Dogs are not permitted in the reserve except during the annual three-day Equestrian Event held in March when dogs must be on a leash.

Walkway/Mountain Bike Trail

There are over 3.5 kms of walkways which double as a mountain bike trail on the perimeter of the reserve with an additional network of tracks currently being developed to complement those already in place. The walks are easy and suited to all ages meandering over flat to gently rolling countryside (duration approx 45 minutes to an hour and a half).

There are seats located on the harbour side of the reserve next to the conservation area and at the start of the walk south of the toilet block (near the entrance of the car park). More seating is planned to coincide with the new walking track developments.

Birdlife

Puhinui reserve is home to a variety of rare or endangered species including the black stilt, NZ dotterel, fernbird (a coastal fringe bird) and wrybill.

Large flocks of migratory wader birds use the reserve and coastal flats for feeding and roosting. Between the southern tip of the reserve and the mouth of the Puhinui Stream there is a large intertidal area set aside as the 'Puhinui Stream Wildlife Refuge' due to its regional importance as a wading bird habitat. Oystercatchers, Godwits and Lesser Knots are not yet rare to the area, but could become so without adequate protection.

The open grazed area provides a feeding habitat for a range of other bird species including the Harrier Hawk (Kahu), Paradise Shelducks and Mallard ducks, Pukeko and Starling.

Vegetation

Puhinui Reserve was once thought to have sustained a large native podocarp-broadleaf forest. As you make your way along the perimeter walks you will observe a unique new landscape of cabbage trees to the south and the salt marsh and manuka plant communities that provide cover for other native species along the western shoreline.

To the east the Puhinui Stream contains mangroves reported to be the largest and oldest specimens on the Manukau Harbour. Open pasture close to the stream banks and gully areas are being replanted with native species such as coprosma, cabbage trees, kanuka, NZ flax, carex and hebe, as part of an ongoing revegetation programme.

There are several clumps of pines on the reserve that provide shelter for stock and add to the distinctive rural character.



At present the start of a 16 km cross-city walkway is being developed alongside the Puhinui Stream heading east from the north eastern boundary of Puhinui Reserve to link up with Totara Park.

Vehicle Access

Vehicle access to the entrance of the reserve is from the end of Prices Road which comes off Puhinui Road. Designated car parking is provided next to the old red barn. Vehicle access beyond the car park is prohibited except during special events.

Pedestrian Access

Main pedestrian access to the reserve is currently from the end of Prices Road (off Puhinui Road). Additional access is being provided on the northeast boundary via the 16km cross-city walkway to Totara Park.

Events and Existing Uses

The predominant use of the reserve is for informal passive recreation and is a popular destination for organised tramping and walking groups.

The reserve open areas are stocked over the course of the year with varying numbers of sheep (mainly over winter) and cattle.

Auckland Equestrian Events use the reserve on an annual basis to host the 'Puhinui Three Day Event' held in March.

Some other uses for the reserve include:

Jogging, orienteering, cycling, photography, sketching, outdoor education/conservation, picnics, spectator activities, interpretation and bird study.

