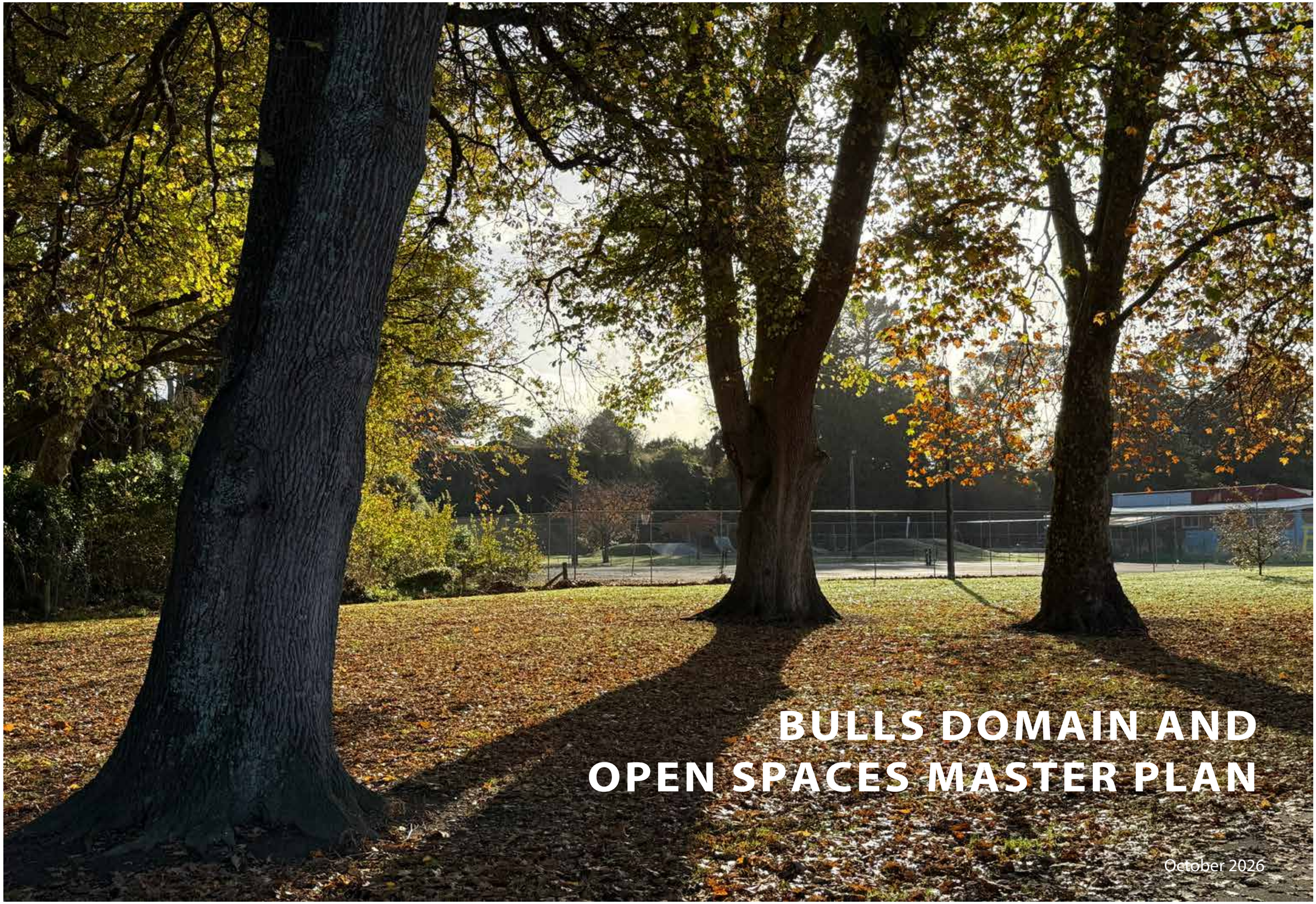

BULLS DOMAIN AND OPEN SPACES MASTER PLAN

October 2026

Revision History

Revision	Prepared by	Description	Date
A	Craig Pocock	Draft	10/12/2025
B	Craig Pocock	Draft	12/02/2026
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A special thanks to the community members that came along and gave us their time, shared their stories, passion and aspiration for their community, open spaces and the Bulls Domain. We would like to thank Councillors and Council officers for their time, leadership and input into this collaborative process.

We would also like to acknowledge and Haylock Family time and their intergenerational interest in the recreation and health of the community. Finally I would like to thank Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa, Ngāti Raukawa and Ngāti Parewahawaha for sharing their whakaaro.

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BULLS DOMAIN AND OTHER OPEN SPACE

ANALYSIS

The Bulls township has an approximate population of 2,100 and is located at the intersection of State highway 1 and 3. It is a midway point between central region destinations and many travellers stop to eat and stretch their legs which supports the town centre. It is also a township of dedicated people investing in wellbeing, sports, recreation;opportunity and environment. The community is growing due to its central location and surrounding employment opportunities and so there is a question about whether there is enough existing open space in the right locations to support that growth.

Bulls has one significant open space, the Bulls Domain and a handful of minor open spaces. All these parks and reserves have had minimal amenity investment over the last decade even including the recently developed Te Matapihi open space in the town centre, which is predominately a lawn. The community is advocating investment in the domain, Haylock Park and other open spaces but there is need to align that investment with current community needs and future growth.

The Bulls Domain is central to the community's recreational needs; from dog walking and playgrounds, to organised sports, camping, and events. The domain and the Bulls Rugby clubrooms play a significant role in supporting the wider regional community by providing an important meeting space for national and local events which supports community health, well-being, and the local economy.

However, the Bulls Domain location can be challenging for some community members to access due to the busy highway intersections and the sites location which is slightly out of the town centre, at the bottom of a river terrace. It is mainly accessed by vehicles with little infrastructure to support walking and cycling. The Domain is also out of sight to most visitors passing through Bulls, with little signage directing you to the domain. If you did not know of the domain's existence you are unlikely to find it by accident which means it does little to support the visitor economy for the township.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

BULLS TOWN CENTRE

PRIVATE OPEN SPACE (NZDF)

SCHOOLS

WALKWAYS AND POPULAR OPEN SPACE CONNECTIONS

PROJECT CONTEXT

SCOPE

To work alongside the Rangitīkei District Council and Bulls community to gain a better understanding of the current open space network including the role of the Bulls Domain. To provide strategic and master planning advice to inform the future of the Bulls open space network and domain investment. The issues that inform this project:

- Aligning the future investment in Bulls open space with the future residential growth areas.
- Understanding constraints (such as the State Highway) and the opportunities (such as the Rangitīkei River) and how they might inform an open space strategy.
- Review pedestrian and cycleway connections that connect the community to the recreational and open space network and future investment suggestion.
- Understanding the community's current and future recreational and open space needs, with a focus on both passive recreation and active sports codes, sporting facilities, fields, and future investment suggestions.
- Understanding how the historical and cultural landscape might inform the future recreational and open space network investment.
- Understanding the type of recreation investment that might be needed on Haylock Park and other reserves around the township.

PROCESS

We had meetings and site visits with council officers to better understand the current council open space assets and strategies. We did multiple site visits observing and mapping out the landscape context, topography, structures, boundaries, historic and natural heritage, and landscape character of parks and the domain.

We had meetings with community leadership, local councilors and mana whenua to get advice on whether the community engagement process was fit for purpose and to gain an early understanding of their views on community issues, opportunities and strengths.

With the councils help we organised and ran a series of community and user group workshops over a three-day period. We met and worked with domain user groups, sport teams representatives, local schools, mana whenua, Ohakea leadership, event organisers, Bulls community committee, councillors and the mayor.

The user group and community workshops were flexible allowing the groups to discuss any issues or aspirations they have for the open spaces while we gained a better understanding of recreational and event use, current sports team memberships, trends, event types and frequency, development aspirations and funding issues. We had one evening session that was open to all community members. After the workshops were completed, we returned to Bulls for a few more site visits, meetings and conversations with groups and individuals that we had not identified in the first round of workshops.

MASTER PLANS

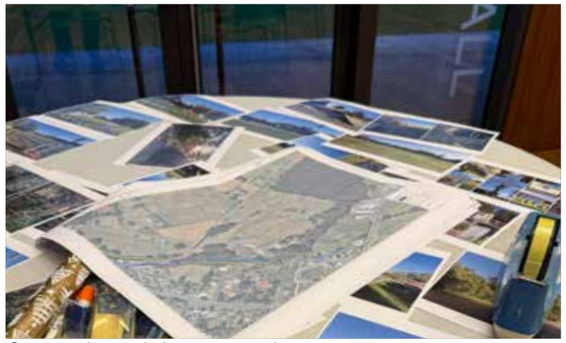
This document is in three parts; The first part reviews the current open space strategy for Bulls and quality of open spaces.

The second part records the comments from each group workshop including an analysis diagram. These diagrams show the constraints and opportunities per user group which then informs the master plan.

The third part of the document contains master plans for the Bulls Domain and Haylock Park based on the feedback from the community workshops. These master plans provide suggestions for future spatial layout of recreational amenities including playing fields, toilets, playgrounds and walkways. The report provides strategic suggestions for Walker Park, Clifton Grove Reserve, Bridge Street, KittyHawk open space and Te Matapihi open space that might inform future investment.

Undeveloped Haylock park

Community workshop poster



Community workshop preperation

Heritage planting at the Haylock homestead

Community workshop in action

REVIEW OF BULLS BACKGROUND PLANNING DOCUMENTATION

PROCESS

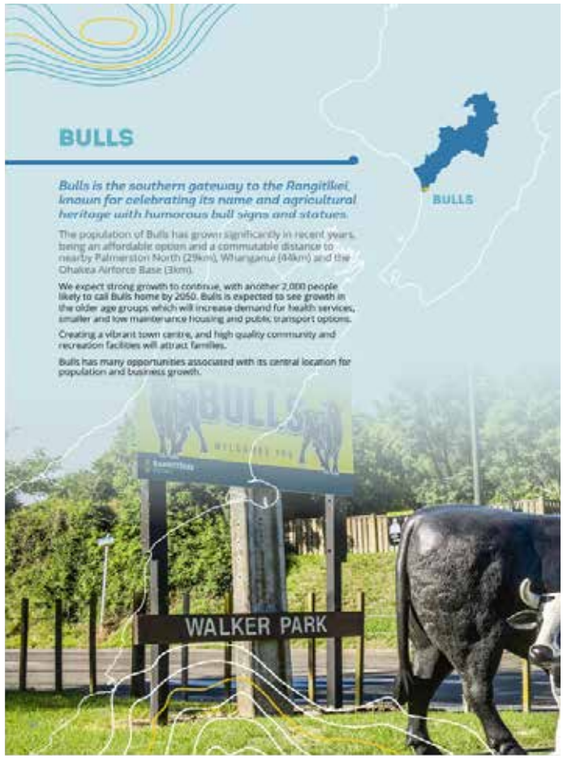
As part of the Bulls open space and domain master planning process we reviewed important existing community documents including the “Bulls Community Spatial Plan” 2023 and the Rangitīkei District Council District Plan. This was to gain an understanding of the community’s values and views from past engagement processes as well as understanding the constraints and growth areas outlined by the District Plan.

There is a clear pattern of community aspirations highlighted within the existing spatial and district plans. The 2025 community workshops and conversations generally aligned with these values and aspirations. Issues posed by the state highway, the need for investment into open space and the town centre, connected future resident developments and the importance of the Rangitīkei River were all central themes across all documents. The analysis below highlights the small differences between 2023 and 2025 engagement that should be considered before moving into the next stage of planning, design and funding.

BULLS SPATIAL PLAN

https://www.rangitīkei.govt.nz/files/general/Pae-Tawhiti/Pae-Tawhiti-Rangitīkei-BeyondSpatial-Plan-w_Bulls.pdf

Bulls is seen as the gateway to the Rangitīkei District and is likely to see future population growth due to its amenity and proximity to Palmerston North, Whanganui and Ohakea Airforce base. There is an expectation of another 2,000 people calling Bulls home by 2050. This highlights the importance of maintaining and continuing to invest in the town centre, open space network and natural environment to support both the existing community and proposed population growth.



The Bulls Community Spatial Plan is a comprehensive piece of planning that considers the future of Bulls. However there are differences between the 2023 and 2025 engagement outcomes. The 2025 engagement was focused on open space and recreation and not the comprehensive big picture that was covered in the 2023 engagement. The 2025 engagement provides a more detailed view of open space investment than the Spatial plan would have considered. However both should be considered together in any future investment decisions.

Key Messages from the Bulls Spatial Plan that impact on open space and recreational planning

“The Bulls is a growing community, strongly connected to the Rangitīkei River and its high-quality green space”

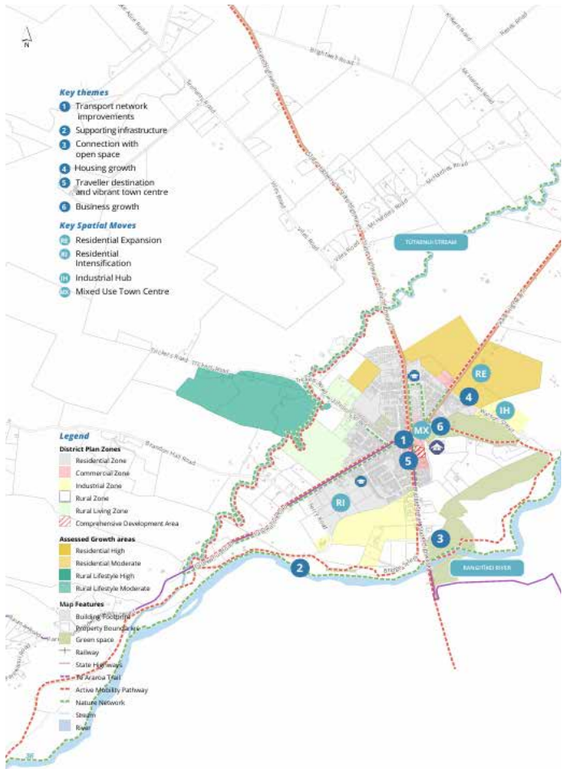
Community Workshop observation: Many people feel the river landscape has recently degraded with significant 4WD activity which has reduced pedestrian access to the river. It is believed that this important open space requires better recreation management and investment with a focus on walking and cycling connections.

Bull is “a popular stop for travellers”

Community Workshop observation: Many believe that there needs to be better investment on Bridge Street to support visitors and community alike, such as a public toilet on the southside of Bridge Street, better pedestrian access across Bridge Street and investment in Te Matapihi landscape to encourage visitors to stop.

“Key community priority Bulls Domain development”

Community Workshop observation: Most of the community support investment in the Bulls Domain but it needs to be balanced with significant investment in Haylock Park and safer pedestrian connections across the State Highways.



Bulls Spatial Plan Key Themes Map illustrates similar values to the 2025 Open Space Community workshops. These include themes of improved pedestrian connections across the state highways and walking and cycling connections between open spaces. The 2023 Spatial Plan does not highlight the importance of Haylock Park, however the community was very focused on getting investment in Haylock Park during the 2025 open space workshops.

“Connections to open space” and “community led design development of the Bulls Domain”

The Spatial Plan talks about connections to open space with a focus on the Bulls Domain, Rangitīkei River, landscape and the Tūtaenui stream. There are comments about the importance of indigenous flora, improved connections between open spaces, ecological corridors, incorporation of art and culture into open space, the use of low impact design, and increasing the tree canopy cover in Bulls. There is mention of community led development of the Bulls Domain.

Community Workshop observation: Many of the Spatial Plan open space observations aligned with the Open Space Community workshops. The 2025 workshops highlighted that Bulls has a well organised, hardworking and passionate community, and that sports organisations are capable of co-planning and co-designing the future of Bulls open spaces; including the domain and Haylock Park. This aligns with the 2023 Spatial plan observation “community led design development of the Bulls Domain”.

The Tūtaenui stream did not come up as a consideration during the workshops but that is probably a reflection of the recreational focus of the 2025 workshops. During workshops and site visits it was noted that the Bulls School sports fields, which is an important open space used by the community, currently floods. This should be resolved for a range of reasons and could be seen as investment in the Bulls open space network. This would require a collaboration between MoE, NZTA and the council.

The main departure between the 2023 Spatial Plan and the more recent 2025 open space workshops is the lack of focus on Haylock Park, Walker Park, KittyHawk, Clifton Grove and Te Matapihi open spaces. The open space workshop 2025 outcomes are more aligned with the current community thinking on open space investment.

The Spatial Plan key themes open space diagram highlights the importance of the Bulls Domain and the Rangitīkei River open spaces and the connections between domain, river, Bridge Street and the town centre. There is little focus on the role or connections of other existing open spaces notably Haylock Park and Te Matapihi.

"Wherever housing is built there needs to be some green space for people to relax in".

Community Workshop observation: Many felt that open space investment to support both the existing community and future housing was critical. There was a focus on Haylock being the early open space investment but equally along with additional investment at the domain.

"Bulls has two primary schools that have capacity to cope with projected growth"

Community Workshop observation: During the workshop both schools mentioned that they don't currently have capacity for significant student growth which is a contradiction to the Spatial Plan statement. Both schools play a critical role in providing playground equipment and recreational space which takes pressure off the public open spaces. If the schools come under student growth pressure due to,"another 2,000 people" by 2,050, then council advocating to MoE and NZTA for investment in the localschools, highway cross connections and investing in open space is going to be critical and the investment in public open space may have to increase sooner.

"Enhance Bulls as a key stop for travellers" and "improve the flow and pedestrian safety through the town" and "create way-finding connections"

Community Workshop observation: Investing in Bulls to support a vibrant town centre and to become a "destination" aligns with outcomes from the 2025 open space community workshops. Bulls is already a destination due to community organised events such as regional rugby games, dog championships and camping events. Investment in the domain to support those events would likely create more event opportunities. Investment in getting the "passing by" travellers to stop at Bulls would require a different type of investment focusing on Te Matapihi, Walker Park and Bridge Street Reserve open spaces. This investment in those key open spaces would not only encourage travellers to "stop, shop and relax" but also supports the communities use and enjoyment of those open spaces, increasing liveability in Bulls.

Open space investments in Te Matapihi is the key to encouraging travellers to stop and spend their time and money in Bulls because of it's visibility from the state highway and access to high quality toilets, showers and the information centre. Investment in the Bulls Domain would reinforce Bulls as a destination. High quality playgrounds, changing rooms, event infrastructure and adventure dog park is likely to increase the frequency of events. Investment should focus on both short stop travellers and events because both benefit the local community.

Action and Priority Plan from the 2023 Spatial Plan

The Action and Priority Plan at the end of the Spatial Plan document outlines actions, partners and whether an investment is short, mid or long-term priority. All the actions are generally aligned with the community aspirations we understood from the 2025 open space workshops. However, there is a couple of misalignments between the Spatial plan priority plan and the 2025 Open Space workshop outcomes which might be just a reflection time between community engagement and changing ideas.

The priority plan does not mention investment in Haylock Park to support the existing community and future housing growth. It seems that the community currently see investment into this park as critical to supporting the existing community. The investment in Bulls Domain is shown as a long-term priority which is not aligned with current community expectation. The domain needs investment now just to meet current recreational and event needs and any investment would also contribute significantly to enhancing the domain's event destination status. Early investment in the domain is possible by working with community partners to bring in both government and non-government funding and this should be seen as priority in the short-term.

The Rangitīkei River landscape is a critical community amenity highlighted in both the Spatial Planning and workshops. This critical community landscape needs a recreation reserve plan, co-written by the District Council, Regional Council, iwi and the community.

DISTRICT PLAN OBSERVATIONS ON OPEN SPACE INVESTMENT

None of the information from the District Plan seems to hinder open space development in Bulls.

As per the District Plan neither the Bulls Domain or Haylock Park have any noted layers of historical or cultural values, natural features or landscape sites, sites and areas of significance to Māori, historical heritage or contaminated land and hazardous substances sites. This allows for future master planning with few restrictions.

- The Bulls Domain is within the "Indicative Flood Hazard zone"
- Haylock Park is close to but outside of the Flood Hazard zone"
- Neither the Bulls Domain nor Haylock have any listed Notable trees however there are groups of trees of significant value on the domain site that could be considered for notable tree status in the district plan.
- The Bulls Domain encompasses more land than what most of the public are aware of. Two land lots to the south of Domain Road are domain reserve land that currently underdeveloped for recreation purposes. None of the information from the District Plan seems to hinder open space development in Bulls.

The online district plan map.

BULLS OPEN SPACES VISUAL SURVEY

BRIDGE STREET

Park location map

Park entrance is a convenient access to river walkway.

Cycleway across the bridge connects town with Ohakea.

Shelter.

Shaded picnic area under mature trees.

Cycleway access to bridge.

WALKER PARK

Park location map

Playground and open space.

Playground equipment.

Playground equipment.

Picnic Table without shade.

Shelter.

BULLS OPEN SPACES

KITTYHAWK

Park location map

Mature trees around the edge of the open space

Playground equipment

Playground equipment

Open space that gets used as informal sports fields

Play equipment now fenced off November 2025

HAYLOCK PARK

Park location map

Walkway connecting Johnson Street to Walker Crescent

Undeveloped part of park currently being used for grazing

Johnson Street entrance

Picnic tables

Walker Crescent entrance

BULLS OPEN SPACES

CLIFTON GROVE PARK

Park location map

Tree canopy.

Park amenity.

Daniell Street park edge.

Clifton Grove Park sign.

Picnic table.

TE MATAPIHI

Park location map

Public art.

Open space and mural wall.

Path to library.

View of library.

Open space.

BULLS OPEN SPACES

BULLS SCHOOL

Park location map

School grounds and exercise equipment.

Play equipment.

Play equipment.

School play equipment open to public.

Scout hall provides community space for rent.

RANGITĪKEI RIVER

Park location map

Access to the river edge.

Car parking area.

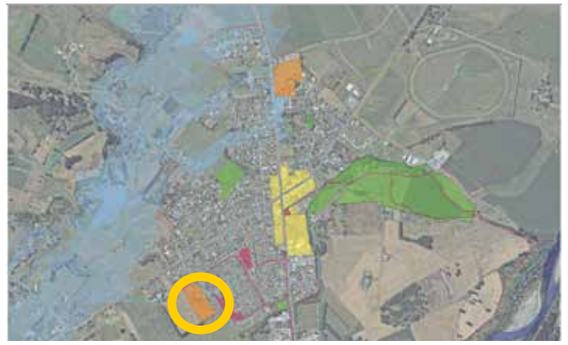
Picnic area.

Walk way beside plantation.

Access from domain to river.

BULLS OPEN SPACES

CLIFTON SCHOOL



School location map

Multiuse sports court.

Play equipment.

Multiuse sports court.

Sports field.

Play equipment and court.

BULLS OPEN SPACES

BULLS DOMAIN

Domain location map

Trees at the domain entrance providing shadedd parking area.

Sports box in front of changing rooms.

Playground.

Access from Criterion Street without clear domain signage.

Grass and gravel area used for car parking during sports days and events.

Kitchen and shaded structure facing the netball and tennis courts.

Picnic table.

Domain entrance.

Public toilets and changing room close to car parking. Toilet does not have an accessible access.

Tennis and netball courts.

Fenced creek area at the back of playground that sometimes overflows and floods the playground.

BULLS OPEN SPACES

BULLS DOMAIN

Play equipment.

Rugby club room.

Second sports field in front of treeline and space for a junior sports field to the right, adjacent to Domain Road.

Fenced dog club area.

Trees between playground and stakepark that could be developed for nature based play.

Main rugby field with the club rooms and changing rooms in the background.

Changing rooms, showers and toilets for sports.

Dog club storage.

Skate park.

Rugby clubrooms with space to expand to the right of the photo.

Sports field lighting.

Dog Club entrance and signage.

BULLS OPEN SPACES

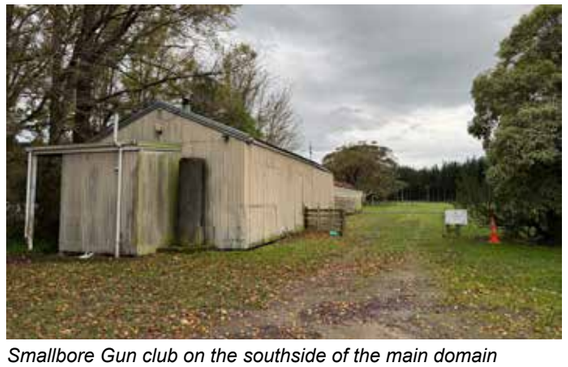
BULLS DOMAIN

Domain reserve area on the southside of Domain Road.

Overgrown BMX track under pine tree southwest of domain entrance.

Walkway signage on the southern edge of the domain boundry.

Walkway from the river connecting to the north-western edge of the domain.



Smallbore Gun club on the southside of the main domain area.

Mature trees on the northern edge of the domain sports field create passive recreational space for walking and picnicking.

Domain land south of the main domain road that is looks like a triangle paddock and is currently grazed.

Dry creek and stormwater channel on the eastern edge of domain.

Domain Road and the grass parking area used by Gun Club and Dog Club which floods.

Forestry area on domain land to the east of the second rugby field.

Undeveloped domain land in the foreground and the triangle paddock space across the road. Disused BMX track under the big pine tree to the left of the house.

ENGAGEMENT NOTES

RUGBY

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

The Bulls Rugby Football Club has been established for 150 years and was relocated to the Domain in the 1990s. The club supports a wide age-range of rugby players including senior, junior and women's rugby teams. The Rugby Club plays a key role as a community meeting space from a wider range of community groups and events from weddings, funerals, business meetings and medical testing site. The club rooms are a critical space for supporting events on the domain. The updated kitchen and bar allows for more flexibility for event and rental use. The Rugby club also support three netball teams.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

- The current rooms have a 120 people capacity, but the membership is around 350 there is a need to increase the club room size. The Rugby Club recently upgraded the bathrooms which made allowance for eventual club room expansion.
- The rugby fields are some the best in the region due to fast draining soils and are used for regional tournaments.
- There are two full size rugby fields a junior field in the southeast corner close to the forestry block.
- Due to the conditions of the netball courts some players have switched codes and created a woman's rugby team. However there is an issue of not having women's changing rooms and so an upgrade is needed.
- The existing changing rooms need an upgrade from public toilets to players showers and changing areas. This would support not only the local sports teams but also events and visitors such as the public using the playground and walking trails.
- The club has a 99 year lease and is about to go into the second 33 year term.
- During big matches and tournaments, the paddock to the south of Domain Road is used for overflow car parking. During normal games visitor coach circulation and parking can be a problem, so additional coach parking would be useful. If there is more than one match on at the same time carparking space is under significant pressure.
- There is an existing BMX track under a big pine across the road.

FUTURE VISIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

- The proposed extension of the current building is likely to be adjacent to the existing building to the south end connected via a corridor.
- A future gym should be located close to the rugby club. It would support both sport development and local community use.
- The existing junior field is not currently being used by the club and could be developed for soccer.
- Develop more car parking and coach park options across the road in the field. Increase the amount of hard surfaced carparking areas around the existing clubrooms.
- Better lighting on the fields would help allow for night practice and games.
- There is room to develop a soccer club if there is local demand for soccer and leadership.

Main rugby field and club rooms.

NETBALL AND TENNIS

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

The Bulls Netball Club currently has active teams and practices on the current courts but do not play competitive matches on the courts. The courts have a drainage issue creating a slippery surface making them unusable for competitive match play. The Rugby clubs supports netball club and both sports clubs use the clubrooms. Due to the condition of the courts and the requirement to travel for matches some netball members have just established a woman's rugby team.

We did not meet anyone from the Tennis club, the other sporting codes thought there was a club but that it is not very active.There does not seem to be consistent use of the tennis courts and the nets are in poor condition.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

- The community reiterated that there is an issue of not having woman's changing rooms and so an upgrade to the changin room needs to happen.
- The existing changing rooms need an upgrade to public toilets, players showers and changing areas.
- Remove some of the trees that are currently overshadowing the tennis courts that create long periods of winter shade. This may be causing part of the slippery conditions. The trees that need removing are not feature trees and are likely self-seeded.

FUTURE VISIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

- Resurface the court with a focus on 2 netball courts, 2 tennis courts and 1 basketball court.
- Better lighting on the courts would help nighttime practice and allows for night games.
- Upgrading the changing rooms, toilets and kitchen would support netball, rugby and events.

Kitchen area and shaded seating area for courts

Netball and tennis court

Tennis nets in poor condition

Trees that shade courts

SOUTH RANGITĪKEI DOG CLUB

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

South Rangitīkei Dog Club is a dog training club that provides weekly courses and organises a National Dog Championship Show on the domain once a year. The national show brings people from all over New Zealand to Bulls for the weekend and is part of competition that moves to diffrent locations around New Zealand. The club has been running for around 20 years. The domain is a critical space for the club, providing space and facilities for champion events, training and general dog walking. The club manages a small fenced portion of the domain for dog training on the southern edge, adjacent to Domain Road. The training ground has two small sheds for equipment storage and a shade structure. During winter, wet ground conditions and the lack of lighting means the club move to the Scout Hall to continue their training.The club leases the grounds from council and hopes to continue so.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

- The club allows community members to use the fenced training space to walk their dogs. It is a safe area for people to run their dogs that don't have good recall or have social issues with other dogs.
- The Bulls community paid for the construction of the Bulls Scout Hall and the hall is well used including the dog club, other activity groups, weddings and 21st celebrations. There is some concern about the possibility that the hall might be sold in the future due to low scout membership numbers.
- The club runs a dog championship show once a year and uses the western end of the main rugby field closest to the rugby clubrooms for the main event stage area. During the show they use all the domain space for camping and other activities. The show runs for a weekend and people camping on the domain, use the rugby club rooms, kitchens and toilets. The public changing rooms and toilets are used especially after dark for the campers and during the show. Dog owners use the whole domain and walkway down to the river including the forest area during the show to walk their dogs.
- Beyond club usage the domain is used significantly for general dog walking both around the domain and down to the river. However, the 4WD users have made the paths too dangerous for walkers due to deep ruts created by this activity. This impacts walkway users including families, cycling, push-chairs and mobility scooter users. The 4WD damage also limits emergency services access to the track.
- People travel from outside of Bulls to come and walk at the domain and the river walk.
- There is contaminated stormwater run-off from an old dump site on the northeastern edge of the domain, dog owners try to keep their dogs out of that area.

FUTURE VISIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

- Need more dog waste bins especially closer to the walkways entrances and carparks.
- New river pathway should allow better access to the river.
- New lights and security cameras around sheds would reduce damage and dog training gear being stolen. Better lighting would also allow for the space to be used for dog training in wintertime.
- Develop a fenced-off dog adventure park area in the forest.
- Create forest walking paths to connect between the domains northern and southern edge tracks through the pine plantations.
- Stop the flooding around the domain play area.

Fenced-off dog training area.

Storage sheds.

SMALLBORE GUN CLUB

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

The club has run competitive, smallbore target shooting, training, and competitions for 101 years. The club has a small diverse membership from school students to adults with some members being part of the club for 60 years. There is an April to September shooting season, and they run interclub competitions in Bulls as well as travel to other locations to compete. The club meets three times a week during the season.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

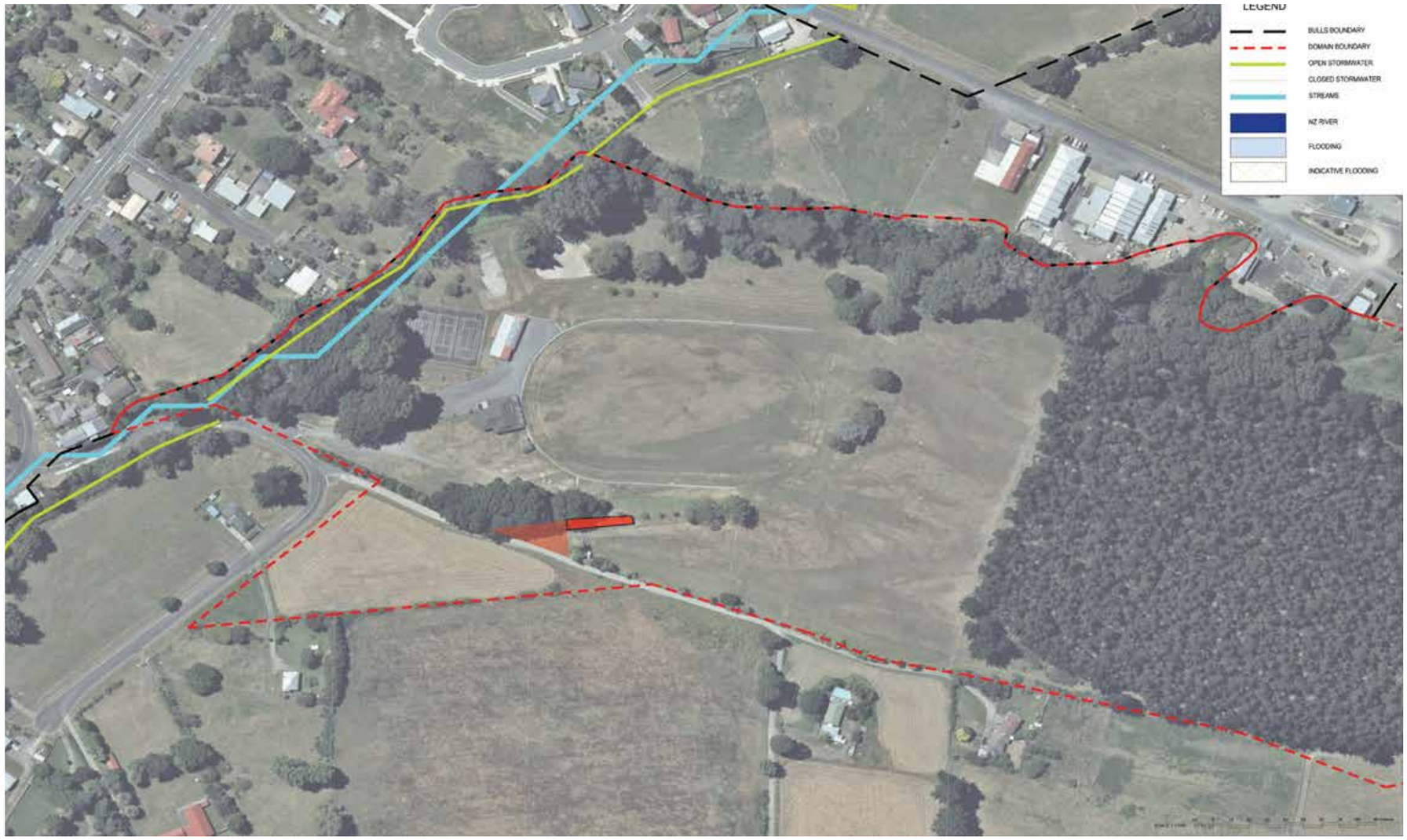
They only use a building on the domain for meeting and shooting and the grass carpark area on Domain Road. The club considers this a great location because it is out of the way.

They have a small group meeting space and toilet.

Future Vision and Aspirations for the Domain

No major changes or investment planned, if a new building was being developed on the domain for example a grandstand or similar, then a modern smallbore gun range could be developed underneath.

Better drainage around the existing car park close to the shed and dog training areas would help.S



BULL DOMAIN INVESTMENT GROUP

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

The domain upgrade group has historically promoted investment in the Bulls Domain and within the wider township. Investment promotion recently included the development of a Domain Master Investment Plan presented to Council and a River Walkway Plan.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

Township

- The State highway is a significant barrier for the community especially children trying to access school and recreation. There have been conversations with NZTA to date resulting in a pedestrian refuge and a pedestrian crossing being established. It is felt that the highways are still a significant issue for the township's future growth, quality of life and connections. There is a strong community feeling that more needs to be done to mitigate the impact of the state highways on the township.

- The highways create a "quadrant affect" in the town dividing the town into four areas each with different degrees of access to community facilities, services, shops, doctors, open space and playgrounds.

- KittyHawk Park is an important space for the community in the Southwestern area of the township but is largely undeveloped as a recreational space. The park is owned by Ohakea Airforce Base who don't have an investment budget to further develop the park. The council is limited to how they can invest in land they don't own, hence KittyHawk Park remains an important but under invested-in open space in.

- There is a higher population of children in Bulls than the national average, making access to open space important.

- The Scout Hall in the Northeastern area of the township plays an important role for providing indoor space for sports and community activities. It is a privately owned hall that the community rents for events.

- Te Matapihi Community Centre has an central open space that has shared ownership with a private developer. The open space's interface to the highway limits the type of activities that can happen on the space. Temporary fencing is required for any event on this space.

River

- The Rangitīkei River is an important open space for walking, 4WD driving, off lead dog walking and swimming. There is a popular walking track from the Bulls Domain to the river through to Bridge Street that then connects into the town centre and back to the domain.

- The river area is managed by the Horizons Regional Council. Recent 4WD activity has cut deep holes into the tracks making it harder for walkers to use this walking track.

Domain

- The group submitted a Bulls Domain Investment Plan to Council to encourage future investment in the Domain. The investment plan suggested a gym, woman's sports changing rooms and toilet, courts and playground upgrades.There is local interest in privately funding a gym on the domain.

- The courts need upgrading, they are not draining well and are too slippery for netball to use hence the netball team travels for all their matches.

- The Domain is an important event space with the rugby club rooms, changing rooms, toilet, playground and fields all playing an important role in supporting successful events. Events range from short events for an hour or two, to multi-day weekend events. The domain location is great for managing event noise especially music events due to its location. Events use power from the changing rooms.

- The Tennis club does not seem to be active with the nets in poor repair.

- The domain changing rooms are not set up for women's sports teams.

- The changing rooms needs a significant upgrade which is important because they are used by a wide range of sporting, school and events groups.

- There used to be a BMX club and the track still exists but is now overgrown.

- Domain playground area floods due to the drain overflowing during rain events.

- The forestry at the southern end of the domain maybe 10 years away from being harvested and could be redeveloped for other uses.

- The Domain fields has been used as a helicopter landing area in emegencies due to being a safe spot to do so.

FUTURE VISIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

Township and Haylock park

- Additional safe highway crossing points and improvements to the existing crossing points.

- Investment in KittyHawk Park to provide more play and recreation opportunities. Could be a "removable play" play equipment that can be relocated if necessary.

- Investment in Haylock Park to fill a gap in the current bulls playground and open space network. Was intended to have sports fields, shelter and toilets but not to be developed to compete with the domain's current uses. Maybe softball or T-ball area. Playground and community hang-out space but not a basketball court because it would be to noisy for neighbours.

- More interpretation signage around the township on places of interest and trails linking important areas.

- Invest in Te Matapihi to increase local use of the space and attract visitors to stop and engage in the township. Could be a tactical urbanism approach with movable play and seating.

River

- The group has proposed and mapped out a dedicated walking track that includes fencing and a shell rock surface. The project is to be delivered in 3 stages once funding can be secured. The project is likely to be a partnership between the community, rugby club, Regional Council and local farmers.

Domain

- New or resurfaced all weather courts to support netball and tennis.

- Upgrade the changing rooms and public toilets.

- Invest in a gym.

- Invest in the domain as an event and sport space including better circulation design and parking, power and water access for events and camping, and toilet block upgrade.

- Develop space for soccer and softball fields and cricket pitch.

- Manage the domain drainage around the playground area.

- Basketball court.

- Maybe an adult fitness trail around the edge of the domain.

- Cycle track through the pine forest.

- Frisbee golf in the domain or river bank (9 holes).

- New playground with a point of difference, inclusive and disability friendly.

- Community gardens.

EVENTS

GENERAL

A range of events in Bulls each year using two key open spaces, the Bulls Domain and Te Matapihi. The events happen throughout the year and rely on access to outdoor space and adjacent indoor amenities such as toilets, kitchens and meeting spaces. There are a range of events such as camping festivals, rugby and sports tournaments, national dog championship competitions, Christmas gatherings, music events and school sports.

The domain caters for larger events that need open space for competition, large gatherings and camping. These events often focus on the area in front of the rugby club as the main event space. The domain fields are fast draining and seen as a reliable all weather event and sports space. The rugby club rooms play a critical role in supporting events with it's kitchen facilities, toilets and all-weather meeting space. The domain changing rooms and toilets are important event facilities offering kitchen, changing, showering and after-hours access to toilets. The domain supports a high-quality camping experience for events with a range of camp sites around the edge of the domain. Recreation amenities such as the playground, skate park and general landscape provide amenity especially for the younger generations during events. The walkway to the Rangitīkei River is popular activity and adds amenity to the domain as an event space.

Te Matapihi provides space for smaller events both on the grass area out front and inside the hall and library. These events and activities tend to be focused on youth and families getting together and tend to happen more often than events at the domain.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

- The domain changing rooms don't provide for female changing space to support events. The kitchen space is not set up to support big events.
- There is a lack of power supplies around the domain perimeter to support camping, food trucks and events. Currently, fuel powered generators are used to provide power for events but it comes at a significant cost.
- The domain has a lack of accessible toilets to support events.
- Domain lacks car and bus parking space for big events.
- Te Matapihi open space requires fencing from the road to support significant events which is costly They currently use scaffolding fence.
- Traffic management at Te Matapihi and in town comes at a significant cost. Council provides planning and management support to event organisers.

ASPIRATIONS

- Upgrade Domain changing rooms to include female changing area and showers. Upgrade changing toilets and kitchen area.
- Have storage at the domain for event tables, chairs, signage, barriers and shelters.
- Provide power and water supplies points around the domain. This might be integrated into sports field and event lighting.
- At Te Matapihi consider a integrated fencing and planting solution for at least the Criterion Street edge to reduce event fencing requirements while creating a less exposed, more family friendly space.
- Investing in the domain playground area and creating a dog park to supportS events.

NGĀ WAIRIKI NGĀTI APA

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

Through a Ngāti Apa lens, is an issue of importance is the naming conventions of Bulls which historically was known as Te Tara Taumaihi and occupied by the Ngāti Tupatau hāpu. There is a Taumaihi Street in Bulls which references the original name. The original marae to Bulls is called Parewanui (hāpu Ngāto Kauae and Ngāti Tauira) and is South of Bulls on Parewanui Road.

Ko Kurahaupō te waka

Ko Ruatea te tangata

Ko Paraekaretu te maunga

Ko Rangitīkei te awa

Ko Ngāti Apa te iwi

Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa pepeha,

The focus on recreational space within Bulls ties nicely with physical activity and the name Rangitīkei – a day of striding out. This talks about the journey of an Ngā Wairiki Ngāti Apa ancestor named Hau who travelled down this coast and named this river having made his way from Turakina, which was quite some distance. This was his day of striding out, and this is how he named the Rangitīkei River.

Note: The township name of Bulls came from a European shop owner called James Bull, people would reference going inland to visit the Bull's store and the name Bulls continues to be used today.

Hillary and Owen Haylock were inclusive and community focused. They belonged to a range of community organisations and help to build a local church and other community buildings. When the Haylock family gifted the land at Haylock Park it was with the intention of creating space for "families to be together outside". Mrs Haylock was a keen gardener and managed an amazing rose garden planted by her grandmother.

There are notable historic trees in the community that could be used in the future development of Haylock Park. Maybe Haylock Park could have fruit trees including heritage fruit trees that connect to the past. From an iwi lens it is important to leave land in a better condition than you found it. Creating connections to heritage food, referencing ancestors, historically important people and events in public space is important. The names with interpretation information at different locations could be done both physically and digitally with the likes of QR codes that link to digital information. There is a lot of existing content that could be used including historical information from iwi.

Amazing people have come out of Bulls that need to be recognized such as Victoria Ranson and Chris Amon. Locals absolutely care about the history for their town both people and events and should be an important consideration moving forward into any design process around town. It would be a negative outcome if the state highways ever by-pass the town and missed the town business, spaces and history. Bulls is an outdoor focused, physically active sporting community that could use more outdoor exercising equipment. This investment needs to be spread out between spaces, not just one park or open space. The Domain has always been an important intergenerational space that connects people through sports and passive gathering.

However, there has been more recent antisocial behaviour due to it being out of sight and the lack of lighting. The antisocial activity reduces the number of children going to the domain alone. The domain can be hard to access if you are not in a car. The BMX track used to be super popular.

There used to be a popular and fast flying fox at Walker Park which if created again could make Walker Park a popular family stopping point. In general, we need to create more, higher quality spaces for travellers to stop and engage with the Bulls community.

HAYLOCK FAMILY

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

The Haylock family have been a part of the community for generations. Owen Haylock donated time and money for the purchase of land for a park that is now known as Haylock Park. The focus of the park was for families to use for recreation and to provide enough space for a football field. Owen and Hillary Haylock thought the park should have fruit trees and daffodils. The Haylock homestead on Daniell Street has a large historical landscape with notable historic, feature and fruiting trees

- The park could have fruit trees that are grown on from the historical trees at the homestead including walnuts, yew and cherry trees.
- The homestead has a historical beech tree that was planted after World War 1 as a "peace tree". It might be possible to grow more beech trees on from this tree to create a historical peace link to Haylock Park.
- Haylock Park could be a foraging space with community food production gardens.
- There are several historical shrubs and hedges that could be used as inspiration and a seed source for the park including rhododendrons and hydrangea. This would create a modern landscape park that acknowledges the past by using historic plants and planting layout.

NGĀTI PAREWAHAWAHA

GENERAL

Sanson and Marton and Halcombe are experiencing growth driven by people wanting space and country air.

There is a proposal for Marton's wastewater system route to come through Bulls, including a new pump station and pipes close to the domain. There is concern that the additional waste water from Marton will use up capacity in the Bulls system. The Martin wastewater system overloads already and flows into a near stream hence why the council is considering Bulls as a location to manage Marton's wastewater. There is a concern that the wastewater pipeline will impact on iwi and the domain reserve land, close to the Marae.

Talked about the "triangle piece" of domain land being reserve land and whether it is leased. It is currently grazed and has a driveway cutting across it. Need to confirm the triangle paddock ownership.

Talked about the history of Parewahawaha Marae.There is a Marae at the Ohakea. There are a lot of Marae in the area.

Over 180 families participate at Parewahawaha Marae. There is consideration for future marae development and interest in investigating feasibility on iwi land. Talked about the Whanganui District Plan papakāinga rules that make it easier for mana whenua to development land and the current Rangitīkai Council review process of their district plan.

It would be great to see more investment in the domain including new buildings for sports. Talked about a collaboration between iwi and sport clubs to create better domain investment. We talked about different funding sources both government and private for these types of projects. It normally requires a clear vision often via a master plan.

Concerns about the industrial and Ohakea wastes going into the river via historical excavation pits.

Talked about the restoration of the whenua around the domain including the creek at the base of the escarpment which is part of the old river alignment.

There have been past conversations about setting up a soccer club on the Domain land. Sports is very important for the youth and it is not that hard to set up a sports club. Talked about considering setting up a marae-based sports event on the domain. Could be a weekend event like they have in Whanganui.

Access to the Bulls domain via the Domain Road hill slope makes it hard for many people to access the domain land.

Passed over a base plan for the marae committee to make additional comments if needed which could then be passed over to Fran at council.

BULLS COMMUNITY PARTNERS

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

This engagement group is made up of individuals from the organisations including the Bulls Community Committee, Beautify Bulls, Bulls Community Trust and the Historical Society. They have a good understanding of what town planning and investment has happen to date, what is currently happening and how Bulls would benefit from future investment.

ISSUES, OBSERVATIONS AND ASPIRATIONS

Township

- Bulls is an interesting historical township that lacks signage and interpretation that engages with visitors.
- Water tower needs an art and or lighting approach, it could be a significant piece of public art.
- Needs a new town centre map and wayfinding strategy that identifies locations of interest and walking distances and times to those locations. This work is underway by the council but unsure when it is going to be complete.
- Generally, needs better signage from the highway including signs directing to the marae.
- Walker Park used to have a well-used Flying Fox. Would be great to bring back "risk managed play."
- The Inner-City bus stop is good for Bulls.
- Would like a swimming pool especially if the population grows.
- Would like a virtual maze connecting between open spaces, maybe using QR codes that tell stories and creates exciting connections between points of interest.
- Digital map of fruit trees around Bulls to support community harvesting.

Domain

- The Domain is a huge asset but lacks signage to connect people to the domain.
- Would like to see more native and fruiting trees in the domain. A food forest, could be created on the site across Domain Road that is currently undeveloped. There is an old dump site at the domain, needs better management of leachate.

Haylock

- Recently installed two picnic tables at Haylock Park which are well used.
- Espalier fruit trees along Haylock Park fence between Johnson Street and Walker Cresent.
- Take down Haylock farm fence and start mowing so people can use the space.
- Soccer fields and junior cycle tracks around edge of park.
- No car parking at Haylock Park, use street parking.
- Toilet at Haylock.
- Want future developers to positively engage with Haylock Park including allowing walking access into the park from the southern edge.

BULLS AND CLIFFTON SCHOOLS

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

Bulls and Clifton Schools playgrounds and open space play a critical role in filling the open space and play investment gap in Bulls. Both schools have high quality open spaces and playground equipment, netball/basketball/tennis courts, nature-based play, swimming pools, cycle tracks and sports fields. The schools are located at the southern and northern edges of the town providing important play opportunities for different areas of the Bulls community. The schools do use some of the open space in Bulls for recreational events including the domain. Both schools have enviro-school status, and their playgrounds and open spaces are open to public use. Bulls has a higher than national average population of youth and Māori and Pasifika students.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

- Bulls is missing a high quality “decent” playground.
- The domain is used by the schools for recreation and amenities. The schools sometimes use the playground after a marae visit.
- Clifton School walks students to the domain, crossing the state highway at the pedestrian refuge by the Four Square, it is a 35-minute walk. They sometimes pick up rubbish as a positive community activity at the domain.
- Both schools historically have used the domain for cross country, running around the field and through the forestry block. The Bulls School no longer does this due to supervision issues along the course length, they now use the golf course landscape for cross-country.
- The schools use Te Matapihi for indoor recreation and community events. For some events Te Matapihi is too small and so they use the scout hall instead.
- Both schools have a roll of approximately 300 students and don’t have space to grow.
- Many students are part of the rugby club community and so the domain becomes a family focused space especially on match days.
- The skate park is not great for learners due to the drops.
- The schools have soccer teams, but they travel away to play.
- Students use the domain after school and weekends but there has been concerns about safety and antisocial behaviour.
- The domain landscape and recreational amenities being away from busy roads is considered a positive however at the same time there is a lack of public surveillance which is seen as a negative.

FUTURE VISION AND ASPIRATIONS FOR THE DOMAIN

- Walker Park should be a place for highway users/ visitors to stop with access to toilets and water.
- Investment in Walker Park would support Cliffton school students and families.
- Need to keep the youth activites in town with organised afternoon and holiday programs.
- Developing domain forest tracks would be great for the cross country and walkers.
- Developing domain forest mountain bike and cycle tracks would be a draw card.
- A new soccer field at the domain could support school soccer competitions and reduce away travel.
- Nature-based play on the domain with story boards would be great, like Mount Lees Reserve.
- Need more pedestrian crossing connections that students can use to connect to open spaces.
- A 25m heated covered pool would reduce travel out of Bulls and the risks of swimming at the river.

COMUNITY WORKSHOP

GENERAL

The community workshop was held at Te Matapihi for two hours in the evening. We only had a small group of people come in to share ideas which was made up of community members, councillors and the mayor. The smaller number of community participants was probably a reflection of the large number of engagement sessions we had already had with community including conversations with twenty-one interest groups. Most of the interest groups got their key concerns and aspirations out during their one-to-one meetings and did not feel the need to come to the community workshop.

The community members that showed up were highly engaged and knowledgeable in community development and environmental ideas and provided great feedback and ideas which are bullet pointed.

BULLS DOMAIN

- BBQs.
- Frisbee golf.
- Clearly identifable track toward river.
- Mountain bike track in woods.
- Dog fun area in forest.
- Community orchard around dog area.
- Power for foodtrucks or events.
- Proper campervan connections.
- Campervan waste station.
- Gym equipment and track.
- Scooter track like Levin.
- Pump track.
- More native trees planted to replace exotic trees.

HAYLOCK

- Pool.
- Sound play built into playground.
- Accessible playground.
- Maze like “A Maze World in Oz” uses QR codes.
- Something education, plant identification signs?
- Play treasure hunt.
- Storybook walk.
- Public toilets.
- Splash pad, Make accessible.
- Outdoor gym.
- BBQs and Water station.
- Toilet block.
- Indigenous food forest seven layers, native plants to harvest.

KITTYHAWK

- Outdoor gym.
- Picnic table shade.
- Flying fox.

SPORTS MANAWATŪ ENGAGEMENT WITH SCHOOLS

GENERAL

The youth voice is very important to the future of open space investment in Bulls. The project was planning to connect with youth during the workshop sessions however Sports Whanganui had recently completed a detailed youth survey at the school to gain insight into future Bulls open space and recreation investment. We decided not to duplicate Sport Whanganui's work and to include the outcomes from their work in this report.

SPORT WHANGANUI "NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAY SYSTEMS BULLS", DATED NOV, 2024 SUMMARY NOTES:

SHORT-TERM (WITHIN SIX MONTHS)
1. Equipment to support new activities

Some advancements have already been made since this project began: Sport Whanganui has sponsored a Play Station at Bulls Domain – a box filled with donated sports gear that can be borrowed and used in the park. As another example, the Bulls Community Trust gained funding from Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa to purchase games to be used in the forecourt of Te Matapihi.

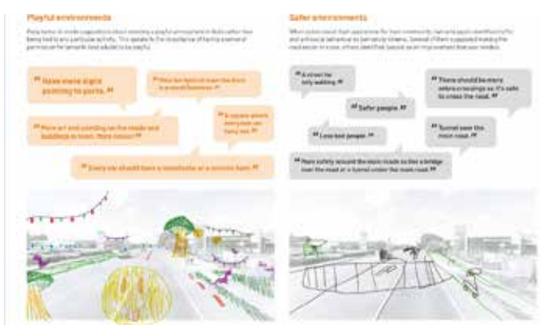
Providing equipment is a low-cost and quick way of giving tamariki access to new activities in spaces that don't have the fixed infrastructure to allow more permanent equipment. There are downsides to this approach, specifically that gear needs to be managed more intensively than fixed infrastructure. However, where there are individuals and organisations willing to act as kaitiaki of the equipment, it can be an effective solution.

2. Expand access to schools

Both schools have a range of quality play opportunities for their ākonga. They both offer a variety of ways to play, including nature play, wheels, loose parts, challenging playgrounds and sports facilities. Both have large grounds tamariki are free to explore, trees to climb, and access for the community outside of school hours.

There is an opportunity to leverage the strengths of the schools' play infrastructure, particularly in light of limited community play assets. In the tamariki survey and workshops, it was clear that the students at both schools prefer playing on their own school's grounds. The reasons for this weren't clear, but could be because of proximity to home, or not feeling as comfortable or welcome on the other school's playground. Any barriers could be investigated further, with promotions and programmes put in place to encourage tamariki to see both school grounds as options for play outside of school hours.

MEDIUM-TERM (SIX MONTHS TO ONE YEAR)
3. Nature play area



Based on the consultation with tamariki, it seems like a natural play area would be popular with the tamariki looking for new experiences. Nature play areas are typically lower cost to develop than a traditional playground and could be created relatively quickly.

4. Play west of SH1

Given the high proportion of tamariki that live west of SH1 and that the two preferred community spaces for play (Bulls Domain and Te Matapihi) are on the east side of the highway, the western side of Bulls should be considered as a site for new play activities. There are several green spaces that would be suitable, and there is the potential to link the sites through wayfinding.

5. Organised opportunities for all ages

Tamariki did not highlight a desire for new organised activities, but an increase in local activities would address some of the barriers they did highlight. For instance, increased use of parks for sports practices would address concerns about antisocial behaviour through passive surveillance. Local sports and clubs for tamariki can also support exposure to new and different activities, and incidental play times before and after the activity would be an additional benefit.

Drawing community to the domain for an event such as an adult's rugby match can result in positive play experiences for tamariki. Additionally, intergenerational events and activities can help develop relationships within the community, promoting a sense of safety as tamariki play and travel through community spaces.

LONG-TERM (OVER ONE YEAR)
6. Bulls Domain redevelopment

The need for facilities upgrades was highlighted by tamariki and adults alike. Bulls Domain was identified as an obvious place for this, with potential to improve the playground, skatepark and sports facilities. This is not the first time the idea has been raised: the council's spatial plan has already highlighted the community-led redevelopment of Bulls Domain as a priority.

7. The road crossing

Crossing SH1 is both one of the most important issues raised in the consultation process and one of the most challenging to address. Any changes to the highway will need to be done through NZTA Waka Kotahi and must balance the road's function as a key transport route. There will not be an easy or quick solution to this, but it is important to begin the conversation with council and central government partners around what can be done.In the interim, there may be some innovative ideas that could be actioned to help tamariki move safely from one side of town to the other.

JUNE 2025 WORKSHOP NOTES:

During the engagement process for this project, we did meet with the Bulls and Clifton school leadership and Sport Whanganui staff to discuss any additional information we might need to consider. Those notes are captured in the engagement notes under "Bulls and Clifton Schools".

In June 2025 after the community workshops, Sport Whanganui ran one more additional workshop with Bullsand Clifton school students to get additional feedback. The key messages from the June 2025 workshops are below:

Best Open Space

- Bulls Domain.
- Bulls School and Clifton School playgrounds.

Worst Open Spaces (Mainly due to lack of things to do)

- Haylock.
- Walker Park.
- KittyHawk.
- Te Matapihi.

Most popular "cool stuff and play equipment" youth would like to see in future

Bulls open spaces:

- Flying fox and zip lines.
- Trampolines.
- Community pool, water slides and splash pad.
- Forest bike track and mountain bike trail.
- Higher swings and slides.
- Basketball and netball courts.
- Monkey bars.
- Shaded picnic and BBQ areas.
- Bush walks and nature-based play areas.

OHAKEA AIR BASE

GENERAL: (ROLE AND SPACES)

Ohakea Airforce base is just east of Bulls and within walking and cycling distance to the township. The base has over 1000 staff working on site and approximately 180 living on base with many more living in Bulls and the surrounding area. The base has recreational facilities such as a covered pool, indoor courts, sports fields, a gym for staff members. These facilities are not accessible to the wider Bulls community. The Ohakea community engages with the Bulls open spaces, amenities and sport clubs and are an important part of the Bulls community and sporting organisations. Ohakea has air force staff housing in KittyHawk/Devon Crescent area and have developed KittyHawk Park, which is privately owned by the base but accessible to the wider community. KittyHawk Park is an important open space for the community and is well used.

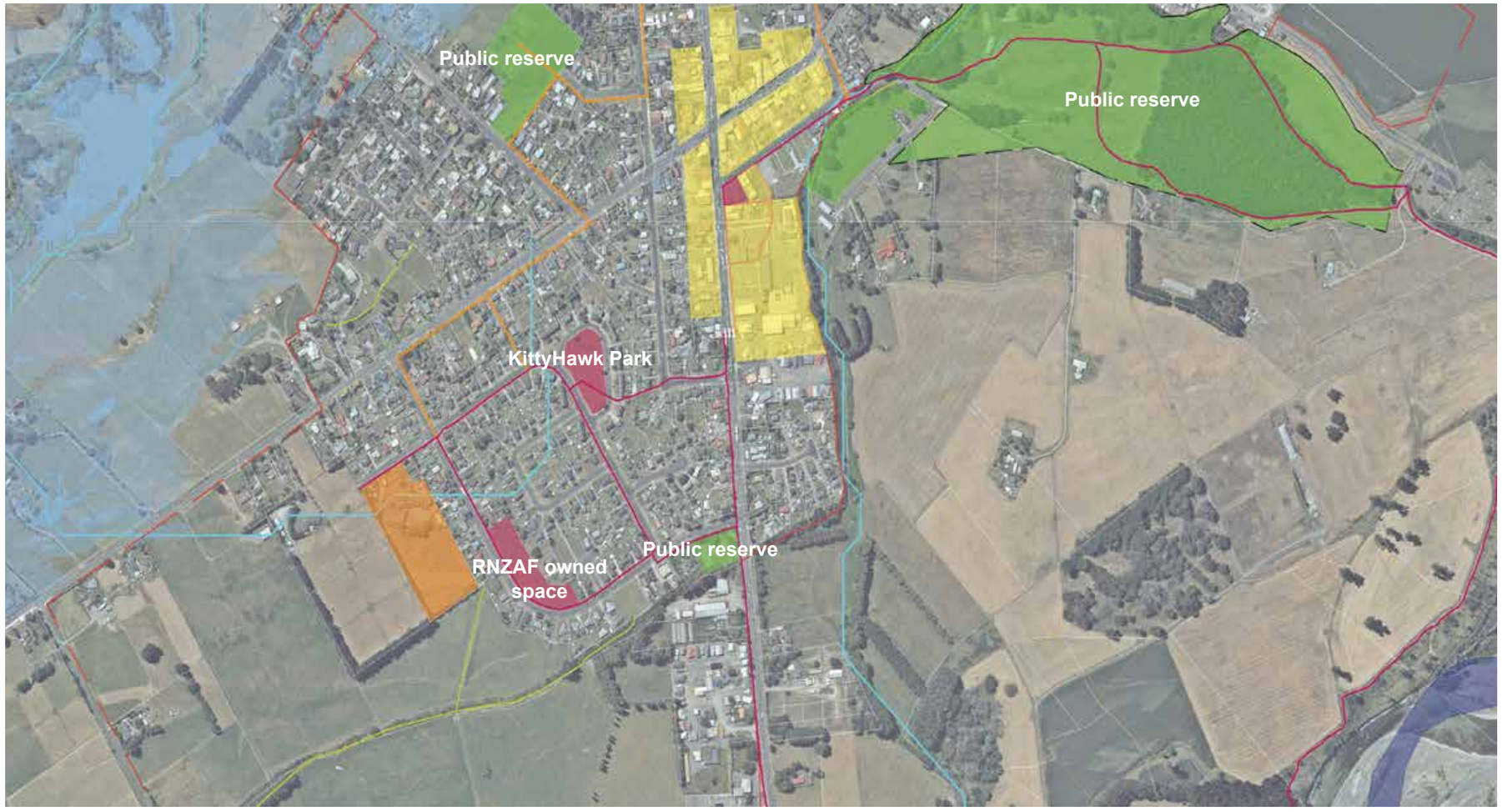
It has a small playground, shade trees and space to kick a ball.

ISSUES AND OBSERVATIONS

- KittyHawk Park is owned by RNZAF, there is no future recreational investment being considered for this park. The existing playground was funded by the “base welfare fund” which staff pay into and the money is invested in recreational activities and wellbeing.
- KittyHawk Row housing is predominately rented out to non-RNZAF families and is managed by Property Brokers.
- There is no RNZAF maintenance funding for KittyHawk playground.
- The Ohakea base commander has quarterly meetings with and Council and Mayor to discuss issues.
- Ohakea staff live in a range of locations from Whanganui to Palmerston North, not many live at KittyHawk and is unlikely to change in the future for a range of economic, and policy reasons.
- Security issues restrict community access to any recreation amenities on base.
- Base sports teams and competitions train and play on base including running sports competitions.
- The base is in the Manawatū District and not in the Rangitīkei District, but the base engages in both councils and communities.

ASPIRATIONS

- Bulls could be a great destination town with some additional investment.
- Makes sense to invest in the KittyHawk Row area to support the community and base staff. It would be possible to add “removable/semi-permanent high quality play items” to KittyHawk park through conversations with Ohakea base leadership conversations.
- Funding for additional play equipment at KittyHawk is unlikely to come from the base welfare fund. Funding would have to come from council.
- Maybe consider a meadow around the edge of KittyHawk Park.



The red areas on the map shows Ohakea owned parks which illustrates the importance of the Ohakea land to the Bulls public open space network. The development of Haylock Park will improve community access to open space but additional investment at KittyHawk would significantly improve amenity for the community living on the south side of the state highway.

KittyHawk Park open space often used for family gatherings.

KittyHawk Park playground managed by Ohakea.

MASTER

PLANS

MASTER PLANS

THE DIFFERENT ROLES OF OPEN SPACE IN BULLS

Bulls does not have too much nor too little open space, nor is that existing open spaces in the wrong locations for the current or future populations. The issue is one of investment, there needs to be more investment in recreational amenity in Bulls to better cater for the community's needs.

The Bulls Domain is the key large open space in Bulls. The access and location could be better, however, it plays a well-established and critical community role that could not be efficiently replicated anywhere else in Bulls. The domain's role needs to remain as the primary open space for sports and events. However future investment is needed to enhance the domain's recreational and economic value to Bulls.

To balance up the recreational opportunities in Bulls, Haylock Park needs to be developed to provide play and sports amenity for the southern side of town. This investment does not conflict with the domain's role but instead increases the sports and recreational opportunities for the community. Development of Haylock Park would help mitigate the impact of the state highways by creating more equitable and accessible open space for the community to the south, removing the requirement to cross a busy state highway.

The Bulls domain and Haylock Park create the foundations for Bulls sports and open space network, however, there is still a need for investment in the smaller open spaces like: Bridge Street, Walker, KittyHawk, Clifton Grove and Te Matapihi. Which will create walkable play experiences for the community. Each of these open spaces play different roles, some as quick stopping points for travellers while other spaces play the role of neighbourhood playgrounds. The master planning section highlights the potential and role for each of these spaces.

It is important to note the key spaces like KittyHawk will need collaboration with Ohakea to achieve additional positive outcomes. With a co-design process and agreed on management strategy this park could fill a critical role in Bulls, especially for large family gatherings.

The Rangitīkei River corridor also provides diverse recreational opportunities for the community but needs a better open space management strategy co-written between the council, community and regional council. Currently the lack of rules is reducing the use of this key public space. An example of this is the impact of uncontrolled 4WD use of the river area on pedestrians using the tracks and access to the river edge.

Much has been made of the state highways being an issue to resolve and that is certainly true for pedestrian movement ,however, being at the junction of two main highways also brings an economic opportunity for Bulls.

The open space master plans identify the key open spaces like Bridge Street, Walker Park, Te Matapihi and the Bulls Domain for encouraging travellers to stop and engage with Bulls and local business. Investment in the Bulls domain and Te Matapihi could also make Bulls the preferred local area for national and North Island events.

The master plans and open space ideas outline the possible future investment based on the above observations which is followed by a suggested short, mid and long-term investment plan.

PUBLIC OPEN SPACE

BULLS TOWN CENTRE

PRIVATE OPEN SPACE (NZDF)

SCHOOLS

WALKWAYS AND POPULAR OPEN SPACE CONNECTIONS

BULLS DOMAIN HEAT MAP

GENERAL

To identify the areas of most recreational use on the domain. we took each user group's map and overlaid them all together to create a "heat map". The brighter the orange the more an area of the domain is used by community or sport groups. The opposite is also true with the lightest areas of orange showing the areas used least often. The heat map shows the areas that are not only used the most by different groups but also illustrates the areas critical to the domain's function which need to be considered in any master planning processes. These areas of bright orange need to have their current function maintained or improved to support the current groups activities.

The areas of lighter orange are still important but suggest more flexibility for future master planning. For example, the paddocks to the south of the domain that are currently not used by any group but are still important to a future master plan and could be considered for future overflow car parking which would take the pressure off existing carparking which is currently shown as bright orange on the heat map.

KEY HEAT MAP OBSERVATIONS

- The rugby club rooms provide a key community amenity for sports, meetings and events. and is used throughout the year.
- The domain changing rooms, showers, toilets and kitchen are a key amenity for sports, events, and passive recreational use of the domain.
- The parking area between the netball courts and the rugby club rooms is critical for all sports and events.
- The playground and treescape to the north of the playing fields is important for events and community use.
- The triangle paddock south of the domain road is an important overflow space for big sporting and community events and is currently under-utilised.

BULLS DOMAIN MASTERPLAN

MASTERPLAN KEY

1. Courts resurfaced including new line markings.
2. Wilding trees removed to reduce shade on court surface.
3. Changing rooms refurbished including creating a dedicated women's changing space.
4. Kitchen upgraded for court sports and domain events users.
5. Half basketball court.
6. Existing playground and skate ramps integrated as one play space by using mounding and play objects.
7. New play equipment integrated into existing trees to create nature-based play area.
8. Install additional concrete blocks on water course edge to reduce playground flooding.
9. Create swale to direct car park surface away from playground area.
10. Weed control and native planting on water course.
11. Nature based play areas focused on trees and the natural landscape.
12. Space for future clubroom expansion to support sport teams and events.
13. Possible future gym location connected or close to existing club rooms.
14. Hard surface car parking.
15. Possible future grandstand area with smallbore club and toilet integrated under the stands.
16. Diffrent optional future grandstand area with storage integrated under the stands. Both location options would support events on the domain.
17. Clear vegetation, restore BMX cycle track and create better public access to this domain land.
18. New gate access for overflow car parking during big sport and festival events. This additional carparking could also support marae events.
19. Parking for sports teams.
20. New gates to allow safer and better access to car parking.
21. Tree planting to provide shade.
22. Pedestrian path to access overflow car parking area.
23. Better drainage for club parking area.
24. Winter lighting for dog training area to allow all year use of space.
25. Develop new junior sports field
26. New car parking area to support junior sports field, walkway access and forest dog park
27. New sports field lighting to support night training and events
28. Fenced dog adventure playground in forest
29. Forest walkway, exercise trail that can be used for cross-country races
30. Exercise equipment trees along the domain edge
31. Picnic tables, rubbish bins and BBQs under trees
32. Power connections for events
33. Events and sports storage shed

HAYLOCK PARK MASTER PLAN

MASTER PLAN KEY

1. Junior soccer fields (under 14s) running north-south as per sports layout guidelines.
2. Full size softball and T-ball pitches with batter facing northeast as per the sport guidelines.There is space for one pitch per soccer field.
3. Softball catcher net outside the soccer field's lines.
4. All weather footpath connects future residential development to playground and Johnson Street.
5. Space between fields connects future residential development to Walker Crescent and creates viewing space for sport spectators.
6. Circular walking track integrates with mound forms to create a fun cycle trail.
7. Mounds create elevated viewing areas for spectators
8. Trees provide shade for footpath and spectators
9. Food forest on both side of the path and along the boundary fence.
10. Mounded nature play area.
11. Mound for viewing both sports and play spaces.
12. Boundary fence planting also creates a green backdrop for the playground.
13. Shaded seating areas for caregivers to view playground.
14. Splash pad and water play area.
15. Picnic area under trees.
16. Playground.
17. Toilet block and bike stands.
18. On street parking for reserve.
19. Reserve entrance design that may include signage, vehicle control, and 2-3 carparks.
20. Food production vines and espalier trees on fence.

WALKERS RESERVE IDEAS

This reserve is important for the community because it is the only public playground on the western side of State highway 3. It is an important space for travellers to stop for a quick break on this side of Bridge Street especially if they have a dog and are traveling west because they can easily pull into.

KEY

1. Build a flying fox into the slope (move seesaw).
2. Invest in more play equipment.
3. Nature based play on the slopes.
4. Play structure design around tree.
5. Provide a single toilet, picnic and seating shelter and bins.
6. Plant trees around existing picnic tables.

KITTYHAWK PARK IDEAS

Due to this being Ohakea land the design response must be “affordable and relocatable”. However, this private open space is important to the surrounding community on the southside of town and plays and important role, especially for larger family gatherings.

KEY

1. Picnic tables with built in shade (relocatable).
2. Paint sport field lines with relocatable soccer goals.
3. Additional play equipment that can be easily relocated off site.
4. Hammock frame or similar net play objects that function as seating and play equiptment located around mature trees.

Sign posted October 2025, play equipment no longer accessible to community.

TE MATAPIHI OPEN SPACE IDEAS

A marketing opportunity for Bulls is to become the “best midway stopping point” for travellers. Te Matapihi provides a highly visible open space that could offers amenity like seating, tables and play equiptment to travellers. This would encourage travellers to stop, explore and spend money in Bulls. This open space investment also supports the local community users as well. Future Te Matapihi design would alsao have to consider its event role as well.

KEY

1. Picnic tables with built in shade (relocatable).
2. Social media promotion frame with the mural as the backdrop. similar to Wellington or Taupo.
3. Hammock frames, for fun seating opportunity.
4. Street games like a circular ping-pong table or connect four (relocatable).
5. Way-finding signage that connects Te Matapihi to the domain and other key Bulls open spaces and amenities.
6. Map sign board that lists the close food options for visitors.
7. Public art and games intergrated into footpath.
8. Planters to create a colourful and living barrier between state highway and open space.
9. Signage for “Welcome to Bulls the “best midway stopping point” in the region.
10. Intergrated fencing and planting design to create a more family friendly space.
11. Shade trees.

CLIFTON GROVE RESERVE IDEAS

This reserve has a mature tree canopy located close to a school on a quite street. Some investment in passive recreation could be considered.

KEY

1. Rain garden connecting to existing swamp to reduce the amount of water flowing from the road across the reserve.
2. Colourful wooden picnic tables maybe painted by local students.
3. A circular seating design around the base of the tree.
4. Power pole art.

BRIDGE STREET PARK IDEAS

This is a great stopping point for walkers on the Rangitīkei River walkway and for Bridge Street cycleway users. The existing trees, tables, bins and shelter work well as they are. The issue is the noise and visual impact of traffic from the state highway has on the park which could be screened mover with mid-low planting.

KEY

1. Plant the bank between the state highway and the cycleway to create a visual barrier. The planting should be density but to a maximum height of 1.5m, something like Phormium cookianum. This allows travellers to see the space and stop but creates a green visual barrier between the cycleway/ park and the traffic movement.
2. Signage for “Welcome to Bulls the best midway stopping point”.
3. Provide access to a water station close to shelter including a built-in dog water bowl.
4. Walkway sign showing the Rangitīkei River and Bulls Domain walkway circuits.

NEXT STEPS

This document and the associated master plans provide direction for future investment and master planning. Bulls has a strong and engaged community that could partner with council to find funding, co-design and deliver future open space projects.

NEXT STEPS SUGGESTIONS:

SHORT-TERM

1. Council officers, community leaders and sporting groups work together to submit to the Council's Long-Term Plan for funding to develop the Bulls Domain and Haylock Park.

2. Council officers, community leaders and sporting groups work together to submit for private funding to upgrade Bulls Domain amenities with an early focus on changing rooms, toilet block, and netball courts.

3. Council works with the community to develop a dog park in the forest to support both the local community and travellers needing a place to run their dogs while on the road.

4. Council supports the early stages of the river walkway including working with the Regional Council to define and control recreational uses in the river corridor.

5. Council installs picnic tables and seats at Clifton Grove Park.

6. Council designs and installs relocatable play equipment at KittyHawk Play and paint sports field lines.

7. Council installs better access and gates for parking on the paddocks south of Domain Road.

8. Council investigates the Scout Hall ownership and ensure it stays accessible to the community.

MID-TERM

1. Council and community fund, plan and develops Haylock Park to balance the recreational amenities investment in Bulls.

2. Council and community fund, design and install a playground upgrade on the Bulls Domain to support both the local and travelling communities.

3. Council work with NZTA to develop upgrades to the state highway crossing points.

4. Council works with Ohakea to place "removable recreational activities" on KittyHawk Open Space.

5. Council funds, designs and develops the Te Matapihi open space to better engage with travellers. This may include a combination of permanent and removable design components depending on land ownership.

6. Private and public funding to support: the development of the Bulls Rugby Club rooms, and a future gym to support sports and events on the domain.

7. Council officers and sporting groups work together to submit for private funding to upgrade Bulls Domain field lighting for sports and events.

8. Council and community clear out and re-establish the domain BMX cycle track for community use.

LONG-TERM

1. Council and community design and develop Walker Park including; picnic shelter block and invest in further playground equipment to support both the local and travelling community.

2. Council and community develop a feasibility study for the development of a grandstand at the Bulls Domain.

3. Council and community consider developing an additional junior sports field at the domain and associated parking area.

Haylock park.

Bulls domain.

Te Matapihi.

Rangitīkei River.

NEXT STEPS

APPENDICES
COUNCIL MEETING 13/10/2026

Danelle Whakatihi spoke to the Bulls Domain Masterplan as the Captain of the Bulls Domain Netball Club. She advocated that the Bulls Domain be considered by Council as the most important place of interest in the plan. Ms Whakatihi raised specific concerns regarding the need for upgrading the netball courts, playground and ablution blocks, not only for the Club but also for residents, visitors and events hosted at the Domain. She highlighted the Club is currently seeking independent funding and is open to collaboration with Council, and acknowledged the work that has been done at the Domain by Council Officers since the report was published.

Page 18: regarding establishment of rugby team. Bulls Netball Club is an affiliated member of Bulls Rugby Club.

In 2025:

- 3 players left netball to play rugby simply due to the opportunity arising, not due to the safety of the courts.
- 3 Players also played both netball and rugby.
- Left out of report: safety of courts. Multiple players have been injured due to slipping. One needed surgery, missed seasons of netball and there was a wider impact on the player's life.

In 2026,

- Bulls Netball has had six senior competition teams, the most of any club within Rangitīkei.
- Bulls Netball was the only club within the Rangitīkei to field a men's team for the Manawatū competition.
- The success and culture of the club is likely to bring in more players in coming years.

*Yet, they are the only Club without adequate hosting facilities, choosing to host in Feilding in 2026 as the Marton Courts have been unavailable.

- Acknowledgement of Council installing lights for the courts.

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