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History

Pre-European history

There is no record of the area (which was very swampy) being of particular significance but the general area around Tasman Bay was used for fishing, eeling and hunting by Māori.

1800s

Saxton Field was acquired from the New Zealand Company by one of the original settlers, John Warring Saxton, and was located in the Waimea East accommodation section block. Records suggest the land was purchased for 150 pounds in 1849.

Saxton farm passed to John Saxton's children and remained in the family until the 1900s. The family homestead, Oaklands, still stands today on land behind Saxton Field. It was originally the NZ Company's barracks at the Port and it was moved in 1844 to its current site.

1932

The Aero Club leased 45 acres from the Saxtons for their first terminal.

1934

Kingsford Smith opened the first hanger and landed his plane, the Southern Cross, at the airfield.

1935

Cook Strait Airways started operations from the Aero Club.

Date unknown

Land passed to the Crown.

1955

Saxton Field area leased to Henry Robert King-Turner.

1975

Council received a report from the Director of Parks and Recreation and the City Planner on the need for future sports fields for Nelson and a recommendation was approved "that steps be taken to acquire land somewhere south of the city for sportspeople.

1977

After negotiations with the King Turner family, the Minister of Lands and the Broadcasting Corporation of New Zealand, the Nelson City Council acquired 23.5 hectares of land, now known as Saxton Field. An additional lease of seven hectares



The old homestead "Oaklands"- The Nelson Provincial Museum, Nelson Historical Society Collection, C30



Kingsford Smith lands the 'Southern Cross', 1934 – The Nelson Provincial Museum, F N Jones Collection, 26634

of adjoining land (around a radio transmitter) was acquired at the same time from the Broadcasting Corporation. The land was outside the city boundary at that time, within Waimea County and zoned “Rural A”.

1979

Nelson City Council and Richmond Borough discussed the future use of the land.

1980

Site survey for a sporting complex prepared and a first detailed site plan.

In October/November individual meetings were held with sporting codes to determine what facilities they would like to see on Saxton Field.

The first management plan and an initial concept plan were prepared in December.

1981

Gazette Notice classifies Saxton Field land as recreation reserve and appoints Nelson City Council to control and manage.

1984

Nelson City Council prepared a concept plan for the layout of Saxton Field and this was sent to Nelson sports associations, interested clubs and other organisations for feedback.

1985

Work began on developing the first sports grounds. Further development continued on internal roads, drainage, irrigation, lighting and car parking.

1986

July – Saxton Field redesignated by Waimea County Council’s District Scheme as General Recreation, Sports Fields, Charge Grounds and Associated Club Facilities and Amenities.

Winter – Hockey games played on Stage I sports fields.

September – Driveway access to stage one put in at cost of \$7000. Woolshed is dismantled.

October – Tenders let for Stage II:

- Earthworks O F Howey \$64,818
- Drainage swales and ripping \$19,200
- Drainage, Chambers and Jacket Ltd \$16,500.



Antique farm equipment enthusiasts helped out with creating the first fields

1987

January – Sports groups canvassed for further input into development plan. Two well-attended meetings held.

March – Stage II contracts completed.

May – Boundary fence along Raine boundary replaced. Council's share \$2,500.

Winter – Considerable tree planting carried out. Irrigation line and hydrants installed – cost \$10,000.

September – Pressure put on Waimea County to install sewer down Saxton Road so that proposed pavilion could be connected.

Summer – Embankment formed using spoil from Apple and Pear Board coolstore extensions.

1988

March – Extra field laid on Lower Saxton Field for \$3,000.

May – Plans underway for hockey pavilion.

July – Conflict with Waimea County over sewerage disposal from Saxton Field facility. Septic tank is acceptable in short term.

September – Tender accepted for \$143,200 to build pavilion. Women's Hockey Association contributed \$30,000, Cricket Association contributed \$5,000.

1989

February – Contracts let for construction of a carpark off the end of Suffolk Road – job priced at \$86,500.

May – Nelson Women's Hockey Association granted tenure of at least six hockey fields and the pavilion for winter seasons up to and including 1999.

Work on pavilion complete.

October – Sealed road extended past the hockey pavilion cost \$9,300.

November – Three artificial cricket wickets constructed – total cost \$21,000.

1990

July – Initial meeting for artificial hockey field.

September – Clubrooms and amenities for enclosed ground



The Saxton Field aerial has long been a landmark



Work begins on the first grassed hockey fields

proposed by Soccer Association – expected cost approximately \$575,000.

October – Council approve this project in principle.

November – Earthworks carried out to form oval Sports ground at cost of \$3,000.

1991

March – A ground is made available to Rugby League for the 1991 season.

Netball decide to build 13 court facility at Saxton Field. Expected cost around \$130,000. Joint amenities building with soccer. Yet to be costed.

April – Drainage installed in oval Sports ground at cost of \$10,000.

June – Council agree to contribute \$150,000 to changing rooms and social facility for netball and soccer.

July – Cost of netball/soccer facility revised to \$756,500. Funding sought from Lottery Board.

Nelson Hockey are investigating the construction of an artificial pitch at Saxton Field.

August – Council approaches the Alliance Freezing Works to register an interest in purchasing land adjacent to Saxton Field.

September – Lotteries Board gives grant of \$100,000 for sports complex.

October – Cost of netball courts escalate due to miscalculation of size required and problems with subsurface. Council now to grant \$336,000 to cost of courts and pavilion.

December – Council grants \$50,000 and a seven year loan of \$387,000 to assist in development of the artificial hockey pitch.

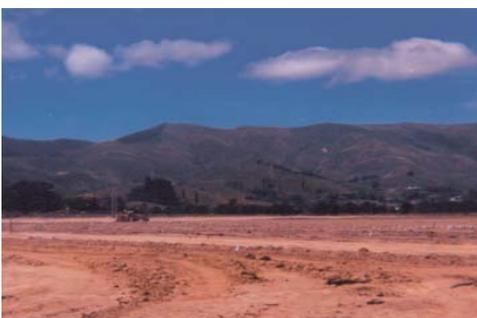
1992

March – Work starts on soccer/netball amenity building.

Tasman District Council makes a grant of \$20,000 towards cost of internal roads and carpark.

Trust Bank Canterbury offers Hockey a \$10,000 grant and a \$100,000 interest free loan over five years.

April – Netball Softball Association apply for permission to



More recent developments extend the facility even further

install an all weather diamond at Saxton Field.

July – Work on the new netball courts stalls when trouble with wet subsoil causes problems.

August – After various hold-ups the rush is now on to complete the courts in time for the National Secondary School Netball Tournament in early September.

Surrounding fencing is installed at a cost of \$27,000. An independent overseer is appointed to control the programme to ensure completion on time.

September – Pavilion and courts are completed in time for the tournament and the tournament is a resounding success.

Pavilion estimated to cost \$1,071,000. Courts estimated to cost \$390,000. Nelson City Council share \$260,000.

October – Skin diamond completed in time for softball season.

November – Bulk earthworks for the artificial hockey field are completed, but weather holds up the contract.

1993

January – Tenders let for the construction of the central carpark and associated roads

April – Lottery Grants Board grants a further \$80,000 towards the combined sports complex

Work continues on the artificial hockey pitch. Total cost \$604,120. Nelson City Council \$50,000 Lotteries \$119,000

May – Lighting is installed on the artificial pitch

Car parking and roading is carried out around the netball courts. Cost \$450,000

June – Extensive planting carried out around the hockey pitch and netball courts

August – The road berms and oval embankment are prepared and sown with grass

September – Nelson Netball host the National Women's Netball Championship

1994 - 1995

Orphanage Creek, pond and village green designed. Estimated cost of work \$227,000.



An aerial view of the netball development



Work set to start on Stage One of the extension project

1996

Proposed Nelson Resource Management Plan includes a requirement to extend Saxton Field to Champion Road.

Orphanage Creek project carried out (\$313,600).

1998

August – Irrigation installed into soccer oval (\$20,000).

Soccer oval fenced and planted (\$10,000).

1999

Property at corner of Saxton Road bought by Nelson City Council (\$165,000).

Tasman District Council purchases 10ha off Champion Road and then on-sells 5ha to Garin College.

May – Saxton Field extension land acquisition report done by Boffa Miskell Ltd.

November – Well dug to find alternative irrigation water. Unsuccessful.

2001

July – Nelson City Council purchases approximately 25ha from Nelson Meat Producers for \$1.39million.

2002

May – Draft Regional Facilities Plan presented.

June – Brief developed by Nelson City Council Business and Community Assets Department to guide design of Saxton Field Development Plan.

August – First meeting/workshop of the Joint Development Team.

October – Meeting held with Joint Nelson City Council-Tasman District Council Development Team and interested parties to discuss draft concept plan.

2003

Negotiations with Network Tasman to underground the 33000 volt power lines over the Saxton Field.

Tasman District Council purchases 11.98ha.

Planning and construction carried out for extended Saxton Field extension.

Negotiations held with New Zealand on Air and Radio New Zealand with regard to relocating the radio mast off Saxton Field and subsequent purchase of the 7.2ha of land. No

suitable alternative site has been identified .

December – Saxton Field Concept Plan passed by Nelson City Council and Tasman District Council.

2004

January – 30000m³ of topsoil stockpiled at Saxton Field extension from subdivision at Whakatu Industrial Estate being developed adjacent.

House on corner section tendered for removal.

Plans drawn up for a roundabout on Saxton Road, Main Road Stoke corner.

Tasman District Council spray out field below Garin College ready for levelling work. Plans and contract documents drawn up for this work.

2005

Stage One of the Saxton Field Extension project was carried out during February to August, and included:

- 2 permanent senior softball fields
- 7 junior soccer fields
- 3 senior soccer fields
- Playground
- Roundabout and carparks for access to the softball fields
- Rock wall sign
- Underground utilities, including irrigation system, water, sewer and drainage for the fields and any future buildings
- Site furnishings, including picnic tables, bench seats, bike racks, drinking fountains and rubbish bins

2006

New hockey water turf completed and opened in April 2006.

Tasman District Council purchases 1.17ha around the lake.

2007

Roading and carparks to soccer fields along the western side of Saxton Field completed.



Preparing the hockey turf for play

