

Waves of change

With 7.5 million annual visits, East Coast Park is Singapore's most popular and largest park, spanning 15km of coastline and occupying 185ha.

Since its opening in 1972, the park has also seen a number of changes. While the two ends of the park – Areas A, G and H – are areas with lower traffic suitable for quiet contemplation or a leisurely bike ride, NParks has

introduced a wider range of amenities throughout the park to redistribute the crowds and reduce congestion in existing popular zones.

With the opening of Cyclist Park on Nov 23 and the former Big Splash slated to be redeveloped by next year, **Timothy Goh** looks at how six key areas of the park have changed over the years.

Areas

A

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

BIG SPLASH

Built in 1977 by Singapore Aquatic Sports, the water park closed permanently in 2006 and was redeveloped in 2008 as a dining and lifestyle destination. The area is expected to be revamped by next year and turned into an active node with a water theme, featuring open lawns and water play features. The park's iconic slide structures will be retained and converted into a vertical playground.

OLD



NEW



MARINE COVE

Formerly known as East Coast Recreation Centre, its most distinctive tenant was McDonald's, which opened in the 1980s. The centre was closed in 2012 for redevelopment, and in 2016 reopened as an area with family-friendly amenities and dining options, as well as a 3,500 sq m children's playground.

OLD



NEW



RAINTREE COVE

Known as the Singapore Tennis Centre when it was built in 1977, the area was later converted into futsal courts with F&B options including Burger King, Long Beach Seafood and Ju Shin Jung Korean Barbecue. It was closed in 2017 and reopened this year as a tranquil area with swings, designed to allow visitors a respite from the adjacent high-activity areas such as Marine Cove and Cyclist Park.

OLD



NEW



LAGOON

In 1976, a swimming lagoon the size of 40 Olympic-sized pools that could accommodate up to 6,000 people was completed at the park. In 1977, it was revamped to include a hawker centre, which opened in 1978, in order to cater to a growing demand for F&B options in the area. In 2006, a cable ski park opened in the former lagoon area as well.

OLD



NEW



BEDOK JETTY

The jetty was built by local businessman Yap Swee Hong in 1966 for private use. It was later used by Mindef as a military base for conducting regular military exercises. It is now a popular jetty among local anglers.

OLD



NEW



CYCLIST PARK

This area formerly contained chalets under the Housing and Urban Development Company which opened in 1977. After changing hands several times, the chalets were taken over by Goldkist International. These were later demolished and replaced by Cyclist Park, which features two cycling circuits targeted at learners and experienced cyclists, a nature play garden and F&B and retail outlets for families.

OLD



NEW



PHOTOS: NPARKS, FILE PHOTOS
Sources: NPARKS, NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD
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