

### 3. CORRESPONDENCE

#### 3.2 Otautahi Sports Association Incorporated - Lower Linwood Grounds Ferry Road

The following letter has been received from Jean Te Whetu, Secretary of Otautahi Sports Association Incorporated:

*I am writing on behalf of the Otautahi Rugby Club members who have been using the Lower Linwood grounds belonging to Linwood High School for the past five years as their home grounds.*

*The Otautahi Rugby Club has been in existence over the past 35 years; we are affiliated to the Canterbury Rugby Union. We are a small club and vary from year to year with teams. This year we have a Div II, Div III and Div VI team, one women's team, and four teams in the JAB. Most of our players come from the Linwood, Woolston, east Christchurch area.*

*In our 35 years of existence we have never had any offer of permanent home grounds in our area from the Rugby Union or the Council. We pay Linwood High School \$3,000 per year for the use of these grounds. We have also installed lighting costing in excess of \$20,000.*

*An alternative ground we often play on, which is in our area, when Lower Linwood is not available is Bromley Park which belongs to Linwood Club.*

*As far as we are aware Linwood High School uses the grounds during school time for cricket and rugby, but are saying that they do not have funds to maintain or upgrade the grounds and may be interested in selling.*

*We are hoping that the City Council will purchase and upgrade the grounds to a sufficient standard for public use and hopefully we will be able to stay and use them as our home grounds.*

*We look forward to hearing from you.*

**The Parks and Waterways Area Advocate comments:** In 2002, when it first became known that the Ministry of Education was contemplating the disposal of the Lower Linwood Grounds in Ferry Road, an enquiry was made with Mr Rob Burrows, the principal of Linwood College.

Options suggested to explore included the Council purchase (although there were no immediate funds), leasing the site, or a maintenance agreement.

A recent discussion with Mr Burrows indicates that the Ministry of Education is now keen to see part of the site used for an early childhood centre, with the balance in playing fields. The principal is interested in having the area retained as playing fields with an emphasis to be placed upon greater participation in active recreation as part of the college curriculum.

Drainage of the playing fields is an urgent issue and the principal has suggested that the Council may be interested in a partnership to enable the drainage work to be undertaken.

If at any time in the future the land does become available for purchase the Council would be wise to acquire this land as public open space; as identified in the recently completed Hagley/Ferrymead, Leisure, Parks and Waterways Study.

Currently, Council funds for the purchase of land for public open space are committed through to 2006.

**Chairperson's Recommendation:** For discussion.