

6. RUAPUNA BURNOUT PAD PROJECT

The Community Advocate (Martin Maguire) provided the Board with an extensive report on this project, as a result of two recent meetings held with local residents in the area near to the Ruapuna site.

The issue of the provision of a burnout pad for Christchurch came to Council in March 1997 when Ruth Dyson MP headed a delegation to Council's Parks and Recreation Committee seeking Council support for the concept.

Between May 1997 and June 2001 a variety of committees, individuals and groups have investigated the feasibility, funding and development of such a site. There have been many meetings involving young people, Council staff, elected members, car clubs, legal advisors, police and sundry citizens.

Many issues related to the topic have been discussed such as the current damage to city roads and private property by people using the streets as burnout areas, health and safety, suitable sites, finance, legal liability, and supervision.

The current committee dealing with the issue has been meeting for some time. It has progressed to the point of gaining Council funding to site a pad in the area of Ruapuna, leased by the Speedway Association.

The Speedway Association has contracted "On Track Promotions" to promote and run the first series of events.

Before the pad can be built it is, however, subject to a resource consent process. That process will be heard before an independent commissioner.

As a result of the decision to site the proposed burnout pad at Ruapuna, residents of the surrounding area have voiced some concerns. This was first evidenced at a meeting of the Templeton Residents Association in May attended by the Community Board Chairperson.

As a result of the feelings expressed at that meeting an offer was made to residents to meet with Councillor Stonhill as Chair of the Council Subcommittee and others to discuss the issue.

A meeting was held on Thursday 21 June 2001 and approximately a dozen Templeton residents met with elected members and staff to discuss the issue. Also present at the meeting were Inspector John Doyle and Senior Sergeant Peter Laloli from the Hornby Police and a representative from the Speedway Association.

The Board Chair gave a background to the issue and outlined Council's proposal.

Geoff Stuart, the Area Development Officer outlined the Resource Management process and discussed options and opportunities for residents. The residents presented their concerns to the meeting and elected members including Councillor Stonhill and the Police representatives endeavoured to respond in a positive manner to those concerns.

The meeting was at times tense, but constructive.

A second meeting was held that same evening in the Templeton Community Hall. Approximately 100 people attended a sometimes lively meeting. The meeting was facilitated by the Community Advocate. Again the Board Chairperson and the Area Development Officer gave input to the meeting.

While people were mostly unhappy that yet another high profile activity was being foisted on Templeton residents (their view) the meeting gave them the opportunity to express their feelings and be heard.

The meeting also gave local residents opposed to this project the opportunity to learn about the Resource Management process and the opportunities they had in that process.

People present were more concerned about the behaviour of those coming to or leaving such an event rather than necessarily being totally opposed to the burnout pad.

The two meetings presented the opportunity for discussion between all parties. They also provided learning opportunities for those opposed to the project to voice their disapproval through the process of the Resource Management Act.

The Board **received** the report.