

3. PAPANUI DOMAIN – PAPANUI SOFTBALL CLUB APPLICATION TO INSTALL A BATTING CAGE

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Corporate Plan Output: Consents, sub-output: Leases (9.4.8)	

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Council lease approximately 120 square metres of Papanui Domain to the Papanui Softball Club to erect a softball batting cage.

HISTORY

The Papanui Softball Club has made an application to erect a batting cage on Papanui Domain. The club is actively involved in local community activities, providing a large programme for the playing of softball for all age groups. The club was voted Club of the Year in 1997/1998, and the awarding of this accolade established Papanui Softball at the forefront of their sport in Christchurch. Player development and participation is encouraged, with coaching being undertaken by a professional coach and a coaching co-ordinator.

LEGAL ISSUES

Papanui Domain is vested as Recreation Reserve under section 17 of the Reserves Act 1977. It is situated in Block VII of the Christchurch Survey District, certificate of title volume 63, folio 212. Papanui Domain is a major park.

The Council, with the prior consent of the Minister of Conservation, is authorised to grant leases of recreation reserves under section 54(1)(b) of the Reserves Act 1977 subject to the conditions of the First Schedule of that Act.

PROPOSAL

Papanui Softball Club proposes to use the existing north fence of the softball diamond as the southern wall of the batting cage. The frame of the proposed cage will be constructed of steel piping, and enclosed by heavy diamond mesh netting. The cage will be three metres high, six metres wide and twenty metres in length. Several possible sites have been examined, with a view to providing a safe training facility that does not compromise the landscape values of the domain. The proposed area is considered to be the most practical as it makes use of an existing structure, is not hampered by lighting poles and is not aesthetically obtrusive. Amalgamating the batting cage into the existing structure will assist to reduce the visual mass of the cage. Batting cages are used extensively in Australia, America and Canada to assist in the training of elite softballers. They enable coaches to continue practice sessions while other players use the facility to develop their batting skills. This will be the first facility of this type in Christchurch. Pitching machines will be used in the cage to assist in the training of softballers. The batting cage will not increase noise levels, as the pitching machines emit limited noise and are already being used on the park. There will be no change in the hours of use of the training facilities. The club has sufficient funds in hand to complete the construction of the facility.

CONCLUSION

Officers believe that the proposed batting cage will be an invaluable asset to Papanui Softball in their quest to foster the current and future softballing talent of Christchurch and Canterbury. The proposed development uses a site that already has an artificial softball diamond and associated structures on it so it will not be necessary to create another 'stand alone' structure. The existing garden bed between the proposed batting cage and Sawyers Arms Road will assist to screen the batting cage from the residential properties opposite Papanui Domain, ensuring that the open spaces of the Domain are not unduly compromised.

The above report was before the Shirley/Papanui Community Board at its meeting on 31 January 2001. The Board supported the application and requested that residents be advised by way of a letterbox drop when the public notification is to occur.

Recommendation: That the Council grant a lease to the Papanui Softball Club, over approximately 120 square metres of Papanui Domain on which to construct a softball batting cage adjoining the existing softball diamond, pursuant to section 54(1)(b) of the Reserves Act 1977, for a period of 20 years less one day, subject to the following conditions:-

- (i) Public notification and subsequent approval by the Minister of Conservation.
- (ii) The Papanui Softball Club obtaining all necessary resource and building consents before any development commences on the site.

- (iii) The lease terms being negotiated by the Property Manager in consultation with the Area Parks Officer (Consents).
- (iv) The leased/construction area being maintained by the Papanui Softball Club in a safe and tidy condition at all times.
- (v) All costs associated with the development, and subsequent maintenance of the structure upon the site being paid for by the Papanui Softball Club.
- (vi) The Papanui Softball Club showing proof of having obtained \$1,000,000 public liability to the Area Parks Officer (Consents) before commencing work on the site.
- (vii) The Papanui Softball Club showing proof to the Area Parks Officer (Consents) of having an Occupational Health and Safety Hazard Plan in place which focuses on the machine maintenance programme, operating procedures and training before commencing operations on the site.
- (viii) The pitching machine being locked when not in use and only being used under the control and supervision of a properly trained operator.
- (ix) Before any tenders are let or work commences upon the site, discussions being held with the Parks Manager's designate, the Area Parks Officer – Fendalton Service Centre, to ascertain the Council's requirement through the development phase of the construction of the facility.
- (x) A bond of \$2,000 being paid by the Papanui Softball Club or successful principal contractor to the Christchurch City Council/Area Parks Officer – Fendalton before work commences on the site. The bond less any expenses incurred by the Council will be refunded to the payee upon the completion of the work..