

## 1. RECREATION AND SPORTS FACILITY STRATEGY

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The purpose of this report is to outline the development of a city-wide Recreation and Sport Facilities Strategy (hereafter referred to as the Strategy), and to recommend priority needs for major recreation and sport facilities. The draft Strategy has been circulated separately.

### BACKGROUND

During the process to develop the Physical Recreation & Sport Strategy for the city, the need to prioritise the city's needs for sport and recreation facilities was highlighted. The Council has carried out planning for some facilities, such as swimming pools. However, no evaluation and prioritisation of recreation and sport facilities needs has been carried out across a broad range of facilities.

The Council and other funders are regularly approached for facility funding requests and have to make decisions based on no clear priorities or strategy for the development of facilities in Christchurch City. The Strategy seeks to establish the future needs for sport and recreation facilities, including major facilities for Christchurch, and to identify and prioritise those needs.

Accordingly, the Strategy is intended to identify the priorities for the provision of sport and recreation facilities. These are described in the following aims:

- To identify and prioritise the city's recreation and sport facility needs over the next 10-15 years.
- To develop a strategy which outlines future provision of major sport and recreation facilities.

Facilities to be considered in the Strategy were defined firstly in terms of relevance, i.e. if the Council is expected or asked to contribute to development, renewal or upgrade of a facility. Secondly, a "major facility" test was used, i.e. if the facility can be used for or capable of being used for regional (e.g. interclub competition), national and international event/fixture purposes. Local purpose facilities, informal activities, and naturally occurring areas were excluded.

### STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

The development of the strategy was divided into several stages:

- Stage 1: Information Gathering
- Identify sport and recreation facility needs
  - Identify existing major facilities and their level of utilisation
- Stage 2: Prioritisation Process
- Match needs identified with capacity of existing facilities
  - Develop sport and recreation facility priorities for the city
- Stage 3: Council's Priorities
- The Council to identify its Strategy and priorities for recreation and sport facilities

As part of Stage One, over 150 questionnaires were sent out to regional Canterbury or Christchurch sporting associations and sporting facilities in 2002. Seventy-five organisation questionnaires have been received (63% response rate) along with 43 facility questionnaires (96% response rate). Information received from the questionnaires has been analysed in terms of organisational issues and facilities issues.

### CLARIFICATION OF ISSUES

Given that the proposed Strategy is to prioritise sport and recreation facility needs of Christchurch City, rather than only those of the Council, a Strategy Steering Group made up of Council staff, Council politicians and external people involved in the sporting arena analysed the information received from sports organisations. They were assisted by an internal Council working group. As issues were assessed, clarification was sought from time to time from sports organisations. Some also participated in cluster group meetings to discuss common issues. These were held for equestrian sports, ice sports and shooting sports.

From the questionnaires and from the resulting additional information received from sports organisations the following substantive points emerge:

- That QEII is operating at or near capacity for several water sports.
- That capacity exists at the QEII Sports Hall for sports such as athletics, court sports, cricket training, martial arts, and trampolining.
- That capacity has been reached at the city's gymnasiums and leisure centres for court sports.
- Potential capacity lies in the new Wigram gymnasium, and for court sports at the proposed new YMCA recreation facility in Bishopdale.
- That there are issues of access and affordability at the Westpac Trust Stadium for several sports wishing to stage major events or competitions.
- That there are several facilities who are either at or nearing the end of their life cycles, which are affecting the sports of track cycling, rowing, ice sports, rugby league, and in line hockey.
- That there are significant maintenance issues for the Bryndwr YMCA, Denton Park Velodrome, and the McLeans Island shooting facilities.
- General maintenance and improvements issues were noted for Bowls Canterbury, Skellerup Hall, Ruapuna Raceway, and Wilding Park.

## **STAGE TWO: THE PRIORITISATION PROCESS**

Facility issues raised through the information gathering stage were split into two categories, one containing the more substantive issues that had at least regional implications, and those that were more minor or at a community level in the other category. The major list was then subjected to a prioritisation process to determine the relative priorities of facility issues. This process consisted of evaluating each identified major facility issue against a set of assessment criteria, listed below:

1. Is there a significant level of unmet need in the city?
2. Has there been a long-standing need with some ongoing momentum for the facility?
3. What are the estimated participation levels in the activity or activities to be undertaken at the proposed facility?
4. Does the proposed facility address the participation levels of key identified groups?
5. Does the proposed facility have the potential to enhance active participation?
6. Does the proposed facility take into account trends in recreation?
7. Does the proposed facility take into account the city's demographic and growth trends?
8. Does the organisation have the infra-structural capability to sustain and manage the facility?
9. Will the proposed facility enhance community and individual well-being?
10. Will the facility contribute to the local and/or regional economy?
11. Does the proposed facility have negative impacts?

The process model and criteria used were based on a model developed by Strategic Leisure, who facilitated the prioritisation process as undertaken by the Steering Group. The process was subsequently peer reviewed by a group of Christchurch people active in sporting management circles.

Canterbury's regional sports organisations have been invited to provide comment on the Strategy, with the feedback received being generally positive of the process and the outcomes. It has been pointed out to sports organisations that facility issues assessed with higher priorities will not necessarily result in Council funding or provision.

The prioritisation process resulted in facility issues being grouped into high, medium and low bands. The facility issues are listed alphabetically within these bands in Table One. Issues within a band should be considered to be of comparable significance, while clearly being of more or less significance than issues in another band. It can be seen that the sports associated with these facilities are a mixture of high and low profile sports, and a range of summer and winter codes.

It will be apparent that the issue of another multi purpose built leisure centre has been considered and indeed shows up in Table One. This was felt necessary not only to provide a comparison of how such a facility compares with others, but also in that large-scale leisure centres can accommodate regional as well as community need.

**Table One: Facility Strategy Priorities**

<b>Band</b>	<b>Facility Issue</b>	<b>Description</b>
High	Flat Water Sports Leisure Centre	New premier facility proposal for Christchurch. Overuse and safety issues at Kerrs Reach Further provision to meet demand in areas of growth in Christchurch
Medium	Cycle Velodrome Ice Arena Marina/Boating Netball – Indoor Shooting	Modern facility sought to replace worn out facility at Denton Park New facility to meet excess demand for ice space at existing facility Marina and boating facilities in Lyttelton Harbour for public access Indoor facility sought for frontline competition, training Improvements needed at McLeans Island ranges to comply with safety requirements
Low	Athletics Track Basketball Bowls Equestrian Centre Golf Gymnastics In Line Hockey Jade Stadium Kart Racing Rugby League Grounds Rugby Union Fields	Additional all weather track sought Three court facility to accommodate growth, development, and competitions Covered greens sought at Burnside to complement regional office relocation and national development centre Indoor facility for year round access, McLeans Island approaching overuse Junior golf facility to accommodate growth Have outgrown existing facility, need to accommodate growth and development Current facility run down, inadequate; also for sale Redevelopment of eastern stands Need to relocate owing to zoning changes adjacent to existing site Grandstand redevelopment Field access in spring for representative matches

**STAGE THREE: STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS AND NEXT STEPS**

The Strategy aims to give an indicative priority for the city's major sporting facility needs. It also provides a means (through use of the prioritisation process) of considering how future issues can be assessed and compared to existing ones. Relative priorities given in Table One could also be reassessed through the prioritisation process should other facility issues either arise or be dealt with through the Council's or other provider's existing commitments and maintenance programmes.

No consideration has been given at this point to potential facility sites, sources of funding, types of strategic partnerships that may be involved, or the possible roles of other providers or partners in new facilities. Rather, the Strategy has concentrated first and foremost on identifying current and future major facility needs.

Now that the city's facility priorities are finalised, the Council can now consider what role it may play in providing or funding various facilities, bearing in mind that some are already in the process of being addressed by the Council.

**COMMUNITY AND LEISURE COMMITTEE CONSIDERATION**

In July 2003 the Community and Leisure Committee established a Subcommittee to consider the facility issues identified in the Strategy.

The subcommittee met twice to consider the Strategy. After discussing and raising questions on some of the issues noted in the Strategy, the subcommittee reaffirmed that the Strategy concentrates first and foremost on identifying current and future major facility needs.

Given that there is no discretionary capital facilities budget, the subcommittee discussed making capital provision for the Strategy. However, it is difficult to programme funding over a number of years because timing of funding is dependent on a range of factors, e.g. prospective partners such as sports associations being in a position to commit themselves. The option of budgeting a regular capital sum without a specific link to a facility was briefly considered before being rejected. It was suggested that one way forward would be for budgeting for feasibility work for some of the Strategy's facility issues.

The subcommittee came to the conclusion that the Strategy should be used to note current, and as a means of assessing any future, major facility issues that the Council may be requested to consider supporting, particularly during the annual plan process.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Strategy aims to give an indicative priority for the city's major sporting facility needs. It also provides a means (through the use of a prioritisation process) of considering how future issues can be assessed and compared to existing ones.

It will be apparent that some of the facility issues noted in the Strategy are being dealt with through the Council's existing commitments and maintenance programmes. In this regard, the Strategy should be seen as a framework to provide direction for identified current and future capital expenditure, as well as providing a framework to assess existing and future major facility needs. One way to utilise the Strategy would be for the Annual Plan Subcommittee to use it as a reference tool.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the priorities listed in Table One be used as an input to future Council decisions on proposed recreation and sports facilities.
  2. That the prioritisation process be used to assess any new facility proposals, as a basis for establishing their priority relative to the facility needs already identified.