

8. ENGLISH PARK/ST ALBANS SCHOOL NEW PLAYGROUND

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PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is to seek the approval of the Shirley/Papanui Community Board to proceed to detailed design and construction/ implementation of the English Park/St Albans School New Playground.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2. Christchurch City Council staff have been working with the St Albans School Board of Trustees on a proposal to install a new playground on the school site, which will be open to the public out of school hours. St Albans School has a policy of welcoming the community into its grounds. This joint project will result in benefits to both parties with the school gaining a new senior playground and the Council gaining a new public playground, out of school hours, in an area that is deficient in senior play equipment and has limited public space in which to locate one. The Council will contribute \$50,000 and the school will contribute \$38,000. A large part of the school's contribution was raised through a School Fair and other events, with the support of the Parent Teachers Association.

3. In designing a new play space, the school was aware that there were a number of traditional playgrounds in the area. With the new playground, the school wanted to create a play space that promoted creative and social play. To determine the views of the school children, workshops were run by the school. This included taking the children to several playgrounds around the city (e.g. Spencer Park and Owen Mitchell Park) and resulted in the selection of different types of play elements, which were popular with the children, such as the climbing net.

4. The preliminary research helped to inform the project objectives, which were to:

- Develop a concept incorporating feedback from workshops with children, input from the school representatives, council officers and the wider community;
- Provide play equipment that encourages children to develop a range of fundamental movement skills (locomotor, stability, manipulation, movement and body awareness);
- Provide play equipment that encourages social and physical play;
- Design a playground space that is safe, creative, has educational values (considers the link with the waterway);
- Playground meets NZ playground standards.

5. The Project Team developed a concept to meet these objectives, which included the following:

- A small spacenet climbing frame - approx 5m high;
- A 'Pukeko Egg' play structure - painted concrete;
- An eel motif play area - containing stepping stones, bar/climb play structure, climbing rings and spacewalker, seating;
- 'Raupo' climbing poles and balance beam;
- Landscaping;
- An interpretive fence panel - to compliment the design of English Park.

This concept provides a range of activities with differing degrees of challenge, from the imaginative and social play associated with 'pukeko eggs' and 'raupo' climbing poles to the smaller climbing structures and the more challenging 5m high climbing net.

6. In April 2007 a publicity pamphlet was distributed to approximately 600 residences and key stakeholders (refer attachment 1). This pamphlet included a summary of the concept, an initial concept plan and a feedback form. More detailed design plans were on display at the school. The project team sought feedback from the community to see whether the proposal was generally supported.

The project team also attended a meeting arranged by the school for parents to comment on the plans (August 2006) and visited the St Albans Community Market at English Park (April 2007). These meetings provided the project team with the opportunity to hear any issues and answer questions about the proposal.

7. The public consultation received a 13% response rate (78 responses). Community feedback was generally very positive. From the 78 submissions there was 94% support for the proposal. Four opposed the proposal due to concerns about security, lack of challenging play opportunities, impingement on school's outdoor space, inadequate consultation. The consultation outcome and project team responses are summarised in attachment 2.
8. The key issues identified by submitters relate to:
 - Security;
 - Issues relating to the ongoing management of the school;
 - Preference for the money to be spent on other projects.
9. In terms of the security issues, the project team acknowledge that there is always a chance of attracting undesirables in to any area. However, in terms of park management it has been found that attracting more people to an area and incorporating Crime Prevention through Environment Design principles into the design, serves as a deterrent to antisocial/illegal activities. The gate between English Park and the school will be closed during school hours, during which time the school will supervise the children's use of the playground. After school the gate will be opened, at which time the appropriate level of supervision will need to be provided by parents/caregivers.
10. A number of issues relating to the ongoing management of the school, e.g. use of the OSCAR facilities, were raised in the public consultation. All of these issues had been considered by the school as part of developing this concept. The school's responses are included in the attached consultation summary (attachment 2).
11. Some concerns were raised by the community about using these funds for reserve development, in light of the recent decommissioning of Edgware swimming pool. However, funds allocated for reserve development, such as this playground proposal, are separate to the funds for pool upgrades and maintenance and the budgets are not interchangeable. This project is responding to a need for senior play facilities in the area. It includes a modest contribution by Council of \$50,000 and would not be possible without the cooperation of the school and the Ministry of Education.
12. No amendments to the concept plan were required as a result of consultation.
13. The recommended concept plan is included as attachment 3. The implementation of this project is scheduled for June/July 2007.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

14. The funding from Council is being provided from the Transport and Greenspace Capital Programme. The Council is contributing \$50,000 plus GST towards the play facility. As the funding is from the capital budget, the Council will retain ownership of listed equipment for the purpose of depreciation.
 - Play equipment to the value of \$35,887;
 - Soft Fall undersurfacing to the value of \$14,113.

Do the Recommendations of this Report Align with 2006-16 LTCCP budgets?

15. Yes. Funding is provided from within existing Playgrounds–New Installations, and Playground Undersurfacing budgets within the 2006/07 Transport and Greenspace Capital Programme.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

16. The legal instrument to be used to give effect to the proposed shared arrangement relating to the playground is a licence to occupy that the School Board of Trustees propose to grant to the Council. The proposed Licence will set out the terms regulating the relationship between the School and the Council concerning the playground and will grant the Council legal rights of access to the playground to be erected in school grounds for the benefit of the community.
17. The terms of the proposed Licence have substantially been agreed between with the School Board of Trustees and the Ministry of Education, but subject to formal Council approval being obtained and the Council being satisfied that it has undertaken all necessary public consultation in relation to the proposal.
18. In summary the proposed licence contemplates the following arrangements:
 - The Council will assist the St Albans School Board of Trustees to construct the playground by providing project support. The Board of Trustees is to be primarily responsible to provide the playground equipment and to construct the playground;
 - The Council will contribute equipment to the playground as part of construction to a maximum value of \$50,000 plus GST;
 - The Board of Trustees will contribute funding of \$38,000 to the playground as part of the construction;
 - The Council is granted a licence to use the playground for the benefit of the community generally after school hours;
 - The School is entitled to exclusive use of the playground during normal school hours;
 - The School is required to maintain the playground and to ensure that it complies with NZ Standard 5828 2004, however the Council is required to contribute up to \$1500 plus GST per annum to the costs of such maintenance;
 - The Council is required to conduct an annual inspection or audit of the playground to ensure that it is being properly maintained;
 - The Board of Trustees and the Council may form a committee to manage their relationship concerning the playground;
 - The Board of Trustees is required to insure the playground, but the Council is required to contribute a proportion of that;
 - The term of the licence is 25 years, subject to a right of the Board of Trustees to cancel the licence if the licence area is required for any educational purpose;
 - The licence fee payable is a nominal \$1 per annum.
19. In a separate report, supported by the Shirley/Papanui Community Board on 2 May 2007, Council staff have sought that the Council grant delegated authority to the Corporate Support Manager to agree as he shall see fit the terms of a Licence to occupy part of the St Albans School site with the St Albans School Board of Trustees and the Ministry of Education for the purposes of establishing and operating a joint school/community playground within the St Albans School site and to enter into such licence on behalf of the Council.

ALIGNMENT WITH LTCCP AND ACTIVITY MANAGEMENT PLANS

20. **LTCCP 2006-2016**
Parks, Open Spaces and Waterways – Page 123

Recreation – By offering a range of active and passive recreation and leisure opportunities
Health – By providing areas for people to engage in healthy activities.

Recreation and Leisure – Page 131

Recreation – By encouraging more people to participate in leisure, physical and sporting activities.

Parks and Open Spaces Activity Management Plan

Do the recommendations of this report support a level of service or project in the 2006-16 LTCCP?

ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIES

21. Social Wellbeing and Youth Strategy and Safer Parks Policy.

Do the recommendations align with the Council's strategies?

CONSULTATION FULFILMENT

22. Extensive consultation has been undertaken with the local community via a letterbox drop and comment form to the local community. Meetings with the school and local community market were also undertaken.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

23. It is recommended that the Shirley/Papanui Community Board approves the plan in attachment 3 in order to proceed to detailed design and construction/ implementation of the English Park/St Albans School New Playground.

CHAIRPERSON'S RECOMMENDATION

That the staff recommendation be adopted.