

Officers responsible Leisure and Community Services Manager, Parks Manager	Authors Councillor Anna Crighton, Lee Kelly, Schools Advocate, City Streets
Corporate Plan Output:	

The purpose of this report is to seek the Council's consent (as landlord only) to the Canterbury Car Club building and operating a burn out pad and public toilet facilities on an area of approximately 4000 square metres in the Canterbury Car Club's leased area at Ruapuna Park.

CURRENT PROBLEM

For at least three generations Christchurch streets with their long straight, flat topography, have provided an arena for young men and women who wish to use their vehicles in an inappropriate manner.

These days with the availability of cheap, powerful, imported, vehicles the problem and the danger has escalated and the potential for serious harm, to the drivers and to the public has increased.

Damage to Christchurch streets with resulting repair costs is also escalating. The last intersection subjected to a diesel burn out, Crondyke Drive/Canada Crescent, Hornby, cost approximately \$30,000 to repair.

This repair work included completely removing the contaminated material. Shaping and recompacting the base course and relaying an asphaltic surface.

This year an estimated \$60,000 has been spent to repair the damage that diesel burn outs produce. This does not include the many thousands of dollars spent on proactive engineering works to make some roads unattractive from a burn out perspective but still environmentally attractive for the rest of the community.

BACKGROUND

On 12 March 1997 a presentation to the Parks and Recreation Committee was made by Ruth Dyson MP on behalf of a group of young people interested in establishing a diesel strip in Christchurch, similar to the one in Auckland.

Also before the Committee was a report by Councillor Anna Crighton endorsing the concept and proposing further investigation.

The two resolutions from the Parks and Recreation Committee meeting on 12 March 1997 were:

- “1. That a full investigation be carried out on the provision of a diesel strip*.
2. That consultation with appropriate staff, Police, local car clubs and the young people involved be commenced.”

*Diesel strip - incorrect description. Correct terminology is “burn out pad”.

With this in mind a steering group chaired by Councillor Anna Crighton with members drawn from interested City Councillors, Council staff, Car Club members and a youth representative was formed and has met on a regular basis for the last 12 months.

WHO IS INVOLVED IN BURN-OUTS?

Initial research was undertaken with the car enthusiasts to determine who was involved in burn-out activities and whether they and the community would benefit from the Council allowing a purpose built facility.

This research identified two distinct groups. The first group, which appeared to represent the majority of the young people, were enthusiastic about the proposed facility. They had a genuine interest in cars and motor racing in general and recognised the benefits of having a controlled, safe burn out pad facility available.

The second group, however, were anti social in nature and were attracted to the street burnouts purely because it was illegal. It is acknowledged that this group would in all likelihood continue their illegal activities, but Police pressure would dissuade them from continuing their activities.

Hamish Broadbent Youth Representative and member of Working Group writes:

“I am writing this letter as a concerned 24 year old in regards to the abovementioned burnout pad, which has been proposed for Ruapuna. When I was 17 years of age, I lost my licence for executing a manoeuvre known as a burn out, at the New Brighton off ramp, and was subsequently charged with dangerous driving, which this was not, as I had full control of the vehicle.

On the same day, 34 other youths were also charged with the same offence, and we all felt that a major injustice had been done, as we were all charged with operating a vehicle in a dangerous manner and fined \$1,000. Even then, eight years ago we wished that there was a specified place where we could go and meet to talk about cars, and what we did in the weekend, and most of all, somewhere to do burnouts. I can't put into words the feeling that you get when you're out there in front of all of your mates and you've got smoke pouring from your rear (or front) tyres. I suppose in a way, it's sort of like expressing your man (or boy)hood and a controlled release of aggression, if you have any, or just the sheer thrill of making a motor vehicle do something that it was not designed to do, but whatever the reason the individual has as long as there is young people and motor cars, the two combined are always going to want to create different driving styles and antics that the vehicle wasn't designed for.

I feel that the proposed burnout pad is an excellent idea as the youth on Christchurch streets is the infancy of motor sport and the more involvement with a race track, the more it may channel a percentage of them off the streets and into something highly constructive.

The tax and ratepayer have spent somewhere in the vicinity of \$550,000 in the last five years on repairing Christchurch roads and I feel that this will continue until there is a specific venue built for these people and it gives them a feeling of belonging.

A burn out is executed by spinning the rear wheels while the front brakes are applied some cars will not and do not have enough horsepower to do a burn out

so for years a layer of diesel has been applied to the road, which I feel is dangerous and the underpowered cars have been able to do them this way, a safe alternative to diesel is detergent and 20 litres of detergent dropped into a 210 litre (44 gallon) drum would be more than adequate, and if this cases concern, biodegradable detergent is available for relatively the same price and achieves exactly the same result as diesel.

To finish, I feel a burn out pad is a very much needed item in this city and would effectively be an asset to the community if it was run correctly and is controlled properly. Burn out pads are in operation in Australia and seem to work quite well and there is no reason why they can't work here."

PROPOSED LOCATION AND DESIGN

The steering group then went on to look at a possible location, design and approximate costs for a burn out pad at Ruapuna.

To comply with the City Plan noise limits the only area deemed suitable for such a facility was within the Ruapuna Motor Sport complex. Ruapuna is situated in a rural area some 15 kilometres south west of Christchurch. Ruapuna Park is owned by the Council and held under the Reserves Act 1977.

A formal design for a burn out facility and an initial costing was submitted by Graeme Craig. Mr Craig is a local business man and a member of the Rod Benders Car Club. He is also a member of the burn out pad steering group. Mr Craig's design was endorsed by the steering group and has been the basis for all subsequent planning of a purpose built facility.

Group members have appraised the facility based foremost on competition and spectator safety. Diesel will not be used, a mixture of detergent and water gives the same effect for sliding. The concept incorporates an elevated spectator embankment behind safety mesh. The competitors arena is 30 metres in diameter, being constructed of concrete 1.2 metres below the surrounding ground level. This will be surrounded with old car tyres, their purpose being to reduce noise emanating from the site, (see tabled sketch plan). The burnout pad will be fenced off so that it is unable to be used at times other than when managed.

OBJECTIVES

Although it is acknowledged that safety in motor vehicles and motor sport can never be 100% guaranteed, an objective of providing a venue is to improve the level of safety for those participating in burnouts.

Other objectives include:

- The lessening of burnout activity on Christchurch streets.
- The provision of an avenue for young people involved in this form of motor sport to have a legal and controlled environment in which to pursue their interest.
- The building of positive relationships between young people interested in burnouts and older people involved in more mainstream motor sport. Such relationships may open up a range of motor sport activities that the young person thought inaccessible.

Older enthusiasts may also be able to pass on practical advice regarding car care and safety.

LEASE

Ruapuna Park is leased to Canterbury Car Club Incorporated. The lease runs until 2016 and is for the purpose of:

- (a) Motor sport racing including driver education, motor vehicle testing and all associated sporting activities permitted by the club's rules; and
- (b) Any other recreational activity approved by the Council.

The terms of the lease provide that no buildings, improvements, or other structures that require either a resource consent and/or a building consent shall be carried out without the prior written consent of the Council.

MANAGING THE BURNOUT FACILITY

The Canterbury Car Club intends using a trust and the "Rod Benders" Club to manage the burnout pad facility.

It is envisaged that the facility would operate on two nights per week, up to midnight and perhaps one afternoon on a weekend. This will be subject to the provisions of any resource consent.

The Trust and the "Rod Benders" will be required to sign a management agreement recording that (among other things) they will not breach any of the covenants of the lease.

Mr Don Grindley has formally been requested to become patron of the Trust. The trust will be called the YES Trust (Youth, Education, Safety in motor sport). Mr Grindley has willingly accepted the position of Patron. Members of the Trust will be drawn from the steering group. Trust members will include a Christchurch City Councillor, Lesley Keast, four members from two local car clubs, Ronald Blakemore and Colin Ryan from Canterbury Car Club and Graeme Craig and Donald Hoff from Rod Benders Inc, and a youth representative, Hamish Broadbent.

A workable Health and Safety Plan will be put in place which will have input from the following organisations: Rod Benders, New Zealand Police, New Zealand Fire Service, ACC Advisory Service, OSH (Independent adviser), St John Ambulance Service, FMROC Rescue Unit and participants.

Only one car will be allowed on the burnout pad at any one time. The trust will be responsible for the ongoing management of the facility. The Canterbury Car Club, the Trust and the "Rod Benders" Club will be required to show that they have obtained \$1M public liability insurance (in their joint names) before use of the burnout pad commences.

The safety of vehicles will be handled by the normal motor sport procedures.

CONSULTATION

Safer Community Council

“The Christchurch Safer Community Council (CSCC) was impressed by the burnout pad proposal which was presented to it by Lee Kelly and Hamish Broadbent and has decided to give its support to the project. The CSCC was particularly impressed by the priority given to safety issues in the plan.

The CSCC recognises that this will not completely solve the problem of burnouts and drag racing on Christchurch streets but it will provide a reasonable alternative for those young people who are more interested in enjoying themselves than in being anti-social.

We wish you well with your project.”

Inspector of Police Grant Buchanan, New Zealand Police

“During my attendance at a meeting at the Civic Offices on Friday 13 March I was encouraged by the concern and support of those present with regard to the problems of young drivers hussing and doughnutting their vehicles on public streets.

The concept of providing a safe and controlled environment at the Ruapuna Raceway has considerable merit. The Christchurch Police are very happy to support such a project and wish those involved every success. Anything that makes our roads safer must be good.”

Youth Advocate

I thoroughly support the concept of a supervised burnout pad in Christchurch. This activity is very popular with many young people and I am aware that street burnouts have been taking place here for many years despite their illegality. I believe that the street burnout scene is very unsafe and is also causing significant damage to roads. A supervised burnout pad cannot guarantee complete safety but it is my honest belief that the proposal being considered will enable young people to pursue their interest in the safest environment possible - thus reducing the risk of harm to people and property.

Local Residents

Residents groups within the vicinity of the proposed location at Ruapuna have been addressed on the proposal and individual residents living opposite Ruapuna have been advised of the proposal.

Feedback from many residents suggests that they are sympathetic to the needs of the young people in the community and that these needs should be catered for where possible.

Residents believe, however, the noise disturbance will increase to become a year round problem as opposed to a seasonal one at present.

The residents would appreciate any practicable measures possible being taken to ensure that the impact of noise, smoke and dust from the burn out facility is kept to a minimum.

SOUND LEVEL MEASUREMENTS

Measurements were undertaken by Environmental Health staff of a demonstration of “donuts” (controlled wheelspins in a circle, on a lubricated concrete pad) at the Ruapuna Park drag racing facility between 5.45pm and 6.30pm on 22 April 1998. The demonstration was performed using a Mazda RX7 sports car, by arrangement with representatives of the Canterbury Car Club, Gary Ryan and Graeme Craig.

The weather conditions, cold, with a light north-easterly breeze (<5m/s), were suitable for accurate sound level measurements to be taken.

Measurements of each demonstration run were undertaken at distances of approximately 25m, 50m, 100m and 550m downwind of the concrete pad; at these positions the noise was carried toward the sound level meters by the prevailing wind. Locations downwind of the pad can be expected to experience higher noise levels than upwind; the measurements therefore were undertaken in “worst case” locations in terms of loudness and audibility.

While it is accepted that the car was demonstrated in a representative manner, it should be noted that the concrete pad used for the demonstration is substantially smaller than the proposed burnout pad (approx 150m² existing v. 1000m² proposed) and is at ground level, whereas the proposed pad is to be 1.2m below ground level. It is not clear whether or not the larger pad would result in less or more noise being generated. Also, vehicles different from that tested may generate greater levels of noise.

Approximately 20m from the pad is a wall of tyres approximately 1.2m in height and one set of measurements was undertaken behind the wall, out of sight of the car activity, in an attempt to ascertain what attenuation of noise would be gained by placing the pad 1.2m below ground level.

The following table summarises the measurement results (all measurements dBA):

Distance	Duration	L _{max}	L ₁₀	L _{eq}
25m	2min 40sec	95	69	70
50m	2min 30sec-2min 37sec	84-88	65-68	63-67
100m	1min 27sec	76	59	56.9
25m (behind tyre wall)	3min 30sec	68	62	58
550m	3min 38sec	56	48	46
550m (background level - no car noise)	1min 27sec	55	44	43

These need to be considered in relation to the current City Plan noise limits for land use activities within Ruapuna Park, which have been set to provide reasonable residential amenity to rural dwellings in the vicinity:

Special exemption for motor sport activities: On no more than 120 days in any calendar year, between 0900 and 1900 hours	L _{max} 85dBA	L ₁₀ 65dBA	L _{eq} N/A
On all other days and times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> between 0700 and 2200 hours between 2200 and 0700 hours 	75dBA 65dBA	49dBA 42dBA	50dBA 41dBA

It should be noted that although submissions have been made to the City Plan to extend the number of occasions and the finishing time for events under the special exemption, no decision has been released on these matters and the current rules must be applied to the proposed activity.

Assessment

The measurements indicate that noise is attenuated over the open ground of the Park by approximately 8dBA for each doubling of distance from the noise source.

They indicate that if the L_{max} levels of the City Plan rules are to be complied with then the following approximate separation distances would be required:

Special exemption for motor sport activities: On no more than 120 days in any calendar year, between 0900 and 1900 hours	L_{max} (City Plan) 85dBA	Approximate Separation distance 75m
On all other days and times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> between 0700 and 2200 hours between 2200 and 0700 hours 	75 dBA 65 dBA	100m 250m

While the measurements indicate there could be non-compliance with L₁₀ and L_{eq} levels, it should be noted that the assessment period for these parameters in the City Plan is 1 hour. It is considered that as the activity is not continuous, and that there are pauses between individual participants, these values should be complied with on an

hourly assessment basis. The L_{\max} is also a good indicator of audibility, and if L_{\max} levels are complied with the impact on the noise environment will be minimised.

It is understood that the proposed pad will be situated approximately 100m from the Hasketts Road boundary of the park, and at least 250m from the other boundaries. The proposed activity would therefore comply with the City Plan rules only between 0700 and 2200 hours, or otherwise according to the exemption for motor sport activities. As the proposal is for the activity to occur after 2200 hours, then either a resource consent would be required to operate after that time, or else some means of reducing noise exposure at the Hasketts Road boundary would be needed to achieve compliance. The measurements indicate that at least 10dBA reduction in the L_{\max} would be needed.

Some of that noise reduction can be expected to be provided by the burnout pad being located in a 1.2m pit as specified in the proposal. A comparison of measurements taken at 25m from the pad and those taken behind the tyre wall indicate more than 20dBA attenuation of L_{\max} . However in practice, effective attenuation will vary as a car moves around the pad, and will be less than 10dBA due to the width of the pad and the depth of the pit.

The extra attenuation needed to ensure compliance with the Plan rules could be provided by a earth mound, either close to the pit or close to the Hasketts Road boundary. As it is understood a spectator mound will be provided around the pit, it is suggested that this mound be used for attenuation purposes. This could be at least

partly constructed from the material excavated to make the burn out pit. The mound should be at least 2.5m high, and must be continuous, except for the entry point to the pad which should be at the west side of the pit so that noise does not escape towards Hasketts Road. It should be noted that any pit excavation and mounding work will be subject to compliance with the City Plan rules for filling and excavation (Vol.3, Pt 9, Table 1).

SITING

The burnout pad is to be sited in the south east corner of the Canterbury Car Club's Lease area approximately 100 metres in from the Hasketts Road frontage. A site plan will be displayed at the meeting.

Administration/Storage/Toilet Block

There will be a need to build public toilets adjacent to the site for users. The final design and location of the facilities has not been determined. These public toilets will be available for the general public to use when events are being held at the Canterbury Car Club's track, speedway or the Model Car Clubs track.

FUNDING

Preliminary costs indicate a figure of approximately \$170,000 would be required to complete the facilities.

It has been suggested that funding may be available from a joint initiative by the Christchurch City Council and the Community Trust, as well as other major sponsors.

The Community Trust is a charitable trust. Its purpose is to provide charitable, cultural, philanthropic, and recreational benefits to the community. The Trust services Canterbury and the Nelson and Marlborough regions.

It is proposed to seek ongoing sponsorship for the facility.

This report is not intended to cover the question of whether the Council should be making funds available to the Canterbury Car Club for the purpose of a burnout pad facility. If the Canterbury Car Club wishes to seek funds from the Council then this will require consideration at that time as to the conditions of the Council's financial input.

DRAFT BUDGET

Construction Costs

Site Works	\$15,400
Concrete pad and roading	\$29,300
Retaining wall	\$12,375
Security fencing	\$16,000
Lighting	\$8,900
Drainage	\$3,900
Administration/toilet/storage block	\$60,000
PA system	\$1,000
Provisional sum for design, working drawings, consents and legal fees	\$10,000
Contingencies	<u>\$10,000</u>
	\$166,875

Revenue

Legal fees (donated)	\$1,500
Construction work donation Pothole People	\$10,000
Tyres transportation	\$2,000
Design and landscaping and consents	\$8,500
Toilet/admin block construction - labour donation	\$20,000
Sale of advertising signage	\$5,000
Naming rights	\$5,000
Grants/sponsorship	<u>\$114,875</u>
	\$166,875

SUMMARY

Street racing and burn-outs have been a part of the culture of this city for a long time. It has almost become a rite of passage for many of our young people. We could try to ignore this activity, by lumping all the young people involved together as antisocial and irresponsible, and therefore unworthy of being taken seriously. Or we could accept that this type of motor sport is of interest to a large number of youth in the City and seriously look at providing a purpose built facility.

Over the last few years there has been an increasing acknowledgment and awareness by the Christchurch City Council to the needs of the youth in our community.

Many communities and local governments in New Zealand and overseas are faced with youth issues and how best to provide for their needs without disbenefitting others.

The provision of a burn out pad facility would allow what is a growing number of young people interested in this type of motor sport to feel a part of their community.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Council grant its consent (as landlord) to the Canterbury Car Club building and operating a burnout pad and public toilet facilities on an area of approximately 4000 square metres in the Canterbury Car Club's leased area at Ruapuna Park (as shown on the tabled plan), subject to the following conditions:
 1. The Canterbury Car Club obtaining the necessary resource and building consents before building commences on the site.
 2. The design and placement of the proposed administration and toilet block in the Canterbury Car Club's leased area being approved by the Parks Manager before the necessary resource and building consents are applied for.
 3. Before any tenders are let or work commences on the site discussions being held with the Parks Manager's designate, the Area Parks Officer - Sockburn, to ascertain the Council's requirements through the development phase of the construction of the facility.
 4. A bond of \$2,000 being paid by the Canterbury Car Club or successful principal contractor to the Christchurch City Council before work commences on the site. The bond less any expenses incurred by the Council will be refunded to the Canterbury Car Club or contractor on completion of the work.

5. The Canterbury Car Club obtaining a written agreement from any manager of its burnout pad and toilet facilities (if any) upon terms and conditions that are fully acceptable to the Council's Legal Services Manager. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, such agreement would record that:
 - (a) The manager will not breach any of the covenants of the lease; and
 - (b) The Canterbury Car Club will not be released from any of its obligations under the lease by the appointment of a manager.
6. The area being maintained in a safe and tidy condition to the satisfaction of the Parks Manager or his designate at all times.
7. All services provided to the burnout pad and toilet block being installed below ground level.
8. Any landscaping being carried out to the satisfaction of the Parks Manager.
9. All costs associated with this development and subsequent maintenance being paid for by the Canterbury Car Club.
10. The Canterbury Car Club and any manager that the Canterbury Car Club may use complying with the provisions of all statutes, ordinances, regulations and rules including those of Motor Racing New Zealand/FIA or appropriate nationally recognised governing bodies and bylaws relating to the use of the burnout pad by the lessee.
11. A workable Health and Safety Plan being put in place before use of the burnout pad commences, such Health and Safety Plan to be in accordance with the provisions of the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992.
12. The burnout pad being fenced off and locked up in such a way to preclude use other than at properly managed times.
13. An earth mound at least 2m in height being constructed on the west side of the burnout pit to the satisfaction of the Environmental Health Officer.

14. The Canterbury Car Club obtaining (in its name or (if applicable) the joint names of the Canterbury Car Club and any of its managers) \$1M of Public Liability Insurance, which insurance is to remain current throughout the term of the lease.
2. That the members of the working party be sincerely thanked for their many hours of voluntary work.

Chairman's

Recommendation:

That the Ruapuna Park Sub-Committee (Councillors Buist, Freeman, Cox, Ganda and Wright) be reformed to discuss the above proposal with the working party, Canterbury Car Club and the Police.