

**12. PORRITT PARK – REQUEST FOR FUNDING ASSISTANCE  
CANTERBURY HOCKEY ASSOCIATION**

RR 10894

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Corporate Plan Output: Stadia Leased – Porritt Park	

The purpose of this report is to present to the Parks and Recreation Committee a proposal by Canterbury Hockey Association for funding assistance to construct a second water based artificial turf at Porritt Park to meet the demand for Canterbury hockey players and for hosting international matches and tournaments.

**BACKGROUND**

The Canterbury Hockey Association made a presentation to the March meeting of the Parks and Recreation Committee identifying the improvements needed to bring Porritt Park up to the standard for club, national and international hockey. This included improvements to the showers and changing rooms, alterations to the stand to accommodate internal spectator facilities and an improved lounge, a second artificial turf and additional administration/office space.

The timing of the presentation did not allow the Committee to consider the proposal in sufficient depth to include funding in the 1999/2000 Annual Plan. The Committee agreed to support a bid for improvements to the grandstand, as a No 1 priority for funding from the unspecified capital sum for the 2000/01 Annual Plan. Alterations have been scheduled to the changing rooms/showers within the 1999/2000 budget, which will make improvements to that part of the facility. In 1993 Canterbury Hockey made a submission to the Council for upgrading of the No 1 turf to a watered turf. At that time they also identified the establishment of an additional turf on the No 2 ground as a future requirement.

The Canterbury Hockey Association has provided a comprehensive submission for funding assistance for the second artificial turf. This is separately circulated. The Leisure Unit would like to address a number of issues on the submission to the Committee.

**MANAGEMENT OF TURFS**

Following the presentation to the Committee in March and on receipt of advice from the Leisure Unit, the Canterbury Hockey Association and the Waimairi Artificial Surface Project Trust (WASP) have met to formulate a means by which the responsibility of all the hockey turfs fall under the Canterbury Hockey Association umbrella. This is an important factor in the allocation of matches to the turfs and their future replacement.

## **REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING TURFS**

The submission not only deals with the funding of a new turf but also the programmed replacement of the two existing turfs. It is important in reviewing this submission to recognise that it would be very detrimental to the sport of hockey if it was burdened with the repayment of replacement turfs as soon as it has cleared debt on the new turf. The cashflow/funding programme submitted by the Canterbury Hockey Association provides for not only funding the one off capital payment for a new turf and associated amenities but also the replacement of Nunweek in 2002/03 and Porritt No 1 in 2005/06. With minimal borrowing on these turfs, the Canterbury Hockey Association can fully fund the replacement of the proposed new turf when it comes due in 10–12 years.

## **LOCATION**

While it would be desirable from a user's point of view to have the location of turfs in Christchurch demographically located throughout the city, for a variety of reasons it is proposed that the next artificial turf be located at Porritt Park as follows:

1. Two co-located turfs are now a requirement for international hockey matches.
2. Utilises existing booking process, grounds maintenance and security. Existing staff on-site.
3. Huge benefit when holding tournaments. All players located at one venue.
4. Improved spectator lounge will provide viewing for both pitches.
5. The proposal will benefit touch rugby who are co-located at the park with hockey.

## **OTHER PROPOSALS FOR TURFS**

At the present time the Leisure Unit is aware of proposals to build two other artificial hockey turfs in the city. One is by the University of Canterbury and the other by the Selwyn Hockey Club and Riccarton High School.

The Selwyn Hockey Club wrote to the Leisure Unit on 6 March 1998 seeking support for funding for a turf to be based at Riccarton High School. The response from the Leisure Unit was, that it is policy to support the parent body or association rather than individual clubs and that our priority is to ensure that Porritt Park meets international standards. For this proposal to have been supported would require the endorsement of Canterbury Hockey Association and be in direct competition for Council funds.

The turf proposed by University of Canterbury is still in the planning stages and consultants are preparing a resource consent application for submission to the Council at present. The proposed site for this turf is on the Ilam fields with the entrance off Waimairi Road. The financial viability of this turf is also reliant on an allocation of games from the Canterbury Hockey Association. The provision of four turfs in Christchurch would place Canterbury at 20th place on Appendix 2 of the Canterbury Hockey Association's submission (Number of Artificial Surfaces per Population Base) and still greater than the current average. This turf would complement the existing and proposed turf and provide the demographic spread of turfs in the city as referred to earlier.

## **PLAYER NUMBERS**

The number of players has increased by 6.8% since 1994. The number of people playing the sport has now stalled due to the unavailability of turf time or the unreasonable times that competition games are forced to be held (ie 8.00pm Saturday and Sunday nights, 9.30 pm weeknights and juniors commencing 7.45 am weekends). The letter from Kerry Henderson - Canterbury Secondary Schools Sports Director (Appendix 4 of submission) reported that: "In 1998 for the first time in any sport, we had to say to three teams that we were unable to accept their entry into the Hockey competition. Additionally other teams were limited in the number of teams they could play. We have considered all possibilities including busing to Ashburton."

The correspondence attached in Appendix 4 of the Canterbury Hockey Association's submission all express frustration at the lack of turf time and the detrimental effect this is having on the sport and its organisers. The letter from the Pegasus Hockey Club also highlights a further difficulty, being that when the pitch is in use for tournaments, this seriously effects the running of the normal competition and access for practice.

## **REDUCTION IN GRASS PLAYING FIELDS**

The introduction of a third and possibly fourth (University) artificial turf could eliminate the need for grass hockey pitches in Christchurch. In 1994 prior to the No 1 pitch being water based, Canterbury Hockey required 24 pitches to operate its junior and senior competitions. At present 17 pitches are still required. However only six of these are used for senior hockey, and the remainder for junior (primary and intermediate school competitions).

The third artificial pitch would reduce this requirement by at least six further grounds and depending on use could also be reduced. This allows for pitches to be reallocated for other winter sporting codes.

## **PORRITT PARK – IMPACT OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT ON OTHER USERS**

The other main sport at Porritt Park which would be affected by this development is women's cricket. It can be seen on the aerial photograph attached to this report that there are three cricket blocks. Canterbury Cricket currently use only two of these blocks for women's cricket; however the third may be required in the future. Canterbury Cricket has been written to requesting its comments on the proposal. There is the possibility of relocating the three women's blocks from Porritt Park to the Ascot Fields at QEII if the Village Green Development including the relocation of Canterbury Cricket's headquarters proceeds. Avonhead Park was also developed a number of years ago for women's cricket but has so far not been required. The Parks Manager in his review of the proposal has outlined the future layout of the remaining wicket blocks. The Porritt Park toilet facilities are currently available for use by women's cricket during the weekends. A new hockey turf would increase the distance players would have to walk to use these toilets.

Canterbury Touch utilise the artificial turf at Porritt Park in the summertime and now run their administration from an office in the Grandstand (see Appendix 7 of the Canterbury Hockey Association submission). The provision of an additional artificial turf and access to the open fields for touch would see this facility heavily utilised both summer and winter.

## **CAR PARKING REQUIREMENTS**

The Canterbury Hockey proposal shows the location of the new turf encroaching on the existing car park and reducing access to the car parks under the stand. This is to maximise the proposed redevelopment of the grandstand for indoor spectator facilities for both turfs. This would have the effect of removing approximately 35 existing car parks.

The car parking requirements are contained in section 13 (Transport) of the plan. While the plan notes that parking is a discretionary activity in the open space 3 zone (page 13/7 in vol. 3), the requirements on page 13/6 for sportsfields should be adhered to, ie 15 spaces/ha pitch area for visitors, one space for staff, and 10 cycle spaces. This would equate to an additional nine car parking spaces, and eight cycle spaces.

Any additional car parking/cycle spaces required for additional seating or club room extensions should be as set out in the sections entitled 'Places of Entertainment' (Generally:),and Licensed clubrooms, (page 13/6 in vol. 3).

Formed sealed car parks built to the standards required in the City Plan (Transport Appendix 1,3, etc) will be required for both the new car parking requirement, and to replace the 35 car parks that will be lost as a result of the development.

The cost per car park based on recent experience at QEII is between \$1,200-\$1,500 each. Total car parking for the facility allowing for the improvements to the lounge area of the grandstand would mean that at somewhere in the vicinity of 70 car parks would be required. This would require a further funding of \$84,000-\$105,000 for the necessary car parking for the fully redeveloped facility. There is sufficient area available that does not impact on playing areas suitable for car parking.

## **SITE COVERAGE**

John Allen from the Parks Unit has advised as follows:

The total area of the site (as defined in section 2.3.1(b)(iii) page 6/9, volume 3 of the City Plan) is the area of land of Porritt Park contained inside the loop of the river and Kerrs Reach, not that shown on the titles (3), for the purposes of calculating the percentage of the site covered under exclusive lease arrangements. This area has not yet been established for these calculation purposes. If over 30% is covered a notified resource consent application will need to be made in accordance with the rules of the City Plan.

The areas that are presently leased at Porritt Park are as follows:

Avon Rowing Club	2,620 m <sup>2</sup>
Canterbury Rowing Club	3,188 m <sup>2</sup>
Arawa Canoe Club	2,269 m <sup>2</sup>
Christ's College	797 m <sup>2</sup>
Canterbury Rowing Association	612 m <sup>2</sup>
Canterbury Hockey Association	16,611 m <sup>2</sup>
Total	26,097 m <sup>2</sup>

New Proposed Hockey Turf	7,700 m <sup>2</sup>
Total	33,793 m <sup>2</sup>

The land which would be leased for the new turf is owned by the Council under the provisions of the Local Government Act. It therefore does not have to be advertised in terms of the Reserves Act, the leasing being governed by the Public Bodies Leases Act in accordance with section 601 of the Local Government Act.

#### **PARKS MANAGER'S COMMENTS**

The Parks Unit has examined the proposal by the Canterbury Hockey Association and would support the proposal as per their submission.

We have, however, one major concern and that is car parking. The Parks Unit has been responsible for forming up and planting the present car park areas. However, we now believe that the provision for sealed car parking should be a requirement within the Council approval, (resource consent), as it most definitely relates to the usage of the artificial surface.

I also believe that we should plan for the future and ensure that car parking will be sufficient to cover a third surface (north east area) in, say, five years.

We would support two cricket wickets remaining on the park in the short term as this ground was developed as a joint hockey/cricket sports ground, with the appropriate drainage and irrigation system.

The Parks Unit can relay No. 2 & 3 and the remaining hockey three grounds can be re-sited and marked appropriately.

This proposal will also release other grassed hockey ground and this will allow the re-allocation to other sports to take place, including making long term provision for a special provincial No. 1 cricket wicket.

In the long term with development of a third artificial ground, there will be sufficient open space left to develop a high class provincial cricket table and outfield.

## **VISUAL IMPACT**

In discussions with Chris Freeman (Parks Planning Officer) fencing of the turf should be wire mesh so that there is minimal visual impact and this would allow activity on the turf to be seen by other users of the park and the public. The additional floodlighting would also have minimal impact.

## **FINANCING**

The Canterbury Hockey Association Submission has provided not only a cashflow for the construction of a new artificial turf but also a sustainable programme which enables the replacement of all three turfs over a 12 year period. This involves a total dollar value of capital expenditure of \$2.4M.

**The submission requests funding assistance in the form of a one off capital grant of \$300,000 in the 2000/01 financial year, plus four annual grants of \$100,000 from 2000/01 to 2003/04. A further \$25,000 grant is identified in 2005/06 when the No 1 turf is replaced making a total commitment of \$725,000 over six years.**

**While this is a considerable commitment to make, it is benefiting two sports, hockey and touch, and it also provides now rather than later the ability for Canterbury Hockey to self fund the future replacement of its turfs.**

Revenue from both turfs for the 1998 season was \$98,000. While this will increase with the additional turf, there are operating expenses relating to the turfs and Canterbury Hockey have traditionally used part of the turf revenue to offset administration costs. The revenue in the cashflow projection from three turfs has been made at \$105,000 which appears very realistic and should be achievable even with a fourth turf at the University. The funding scenarios for the first three years could be changed slightly. However it doesn't get away from the fact that the Nunweek Turf is also due for replacement by 2002/03.

The sport has been hindered from the large commitment to loans in the past and it is important the players and administrators are given the opportunity to concentrate on the development of their sport rather than their financial commitment to loans. This proposal enables the Canterbury Hockey Association to meet the desperate need for an additional turf in Christchurch and the future replacement of existing turfs without making a heavy burden on the Christchurch ratepayer.

If the requested funding of \$100,000 for four years was provided from within the grants to organisation total allocation there would be no additional demand on rates.

A capital grant of \$300,000 could be presented as a bid for part of the \$1.55M unspecified capital sum and provided in the 2000/01 Leisure Unit capital budget.

The total project cost should also include the replacement of the 35 car parks lost in the siting of the pitch plus the provision of a further approximately 50 car parks and these should be funded by Canterbury Hockey as part of the overall development.

## CONCLUSION

The Leisure and Parks Units both support this submission by the Canterbury Hockey Association for the development of Porritt Park and see it as a necessary progression for the provision of the sport in Canterbury. The added benefits of these turfs to touch, (another rapidly growing sport in the city), and the release of sports grounds to other winter codes makes this development particularly appealing. Canterbury Hockey have not only looked at their immediate funding requirements but also the future replacement of their turfs and proposed an overall funding scenario that meets these needs. The merging with WASP and bringing the operation of all turfs under the one umbrella reduces the exposure to the Council of future funding commitments also.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the Parks and Recreation Committee support the submission by Canterbury Hockey Association for the provision of a second artificial turf at Porritt Park.
  2. That a bid in support of a capital grant of \$300,000 be made to the 2000/01 Annual Plan and that the Grants Committee be requested to support a four year commitment of \$100,000 per annum starting from 2000/2001.

**Chairman's**

**Recommendation:** That the above recommendation be adopted.