

11. PAPANUI SOFTBALL CLUBS PROPOSAL TO INSTALL A BATTING CAGE UPON PAPANUI DOMAIN

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Corporate Plan Output: Consents 9.4.8 Sub-output: leases	

The purpose of this report is to enable the Board to recommend to the Parks and Recreation Committee 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. The Club was voted Club of the Year in 1997/1998, the awarding of this accolade establishes 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. The Papanui Softball Club provided Canterbury with the first fenced softball diamond and would like to retain their role as a leader in the sport of softball by providing the first batting cage in Canterbury.

The proposed batting cage will directly benefit Papanui softball users, Papanui High School pupils and all soft-ballers in the Canterbury region. The Papanui Softball Club, with the assistance of New Zealand Softball representative Travis Wilson, has liaised with Papanui High School students to encourage them to participate in all sports. The High School believes that the proposed batting cage will be of tremendous benefit to young people at the school.

Dale Eager, Chairman of the New Zealand Softball Board has endorsed the use of softball cages to assist with player development. Batting cages are used extensively in Australia, America and Canada to assist in the training of elite softballers. They present the opportunity for coaches to continue their practices while other players are able to use the batting facility to condition these specific skills. At present a facility of this type does not exist in Christchurch.

PROVISIONS OF THE RESERVES ACT 1977

The Council with the prior consent of the Minister of Conservation is authorised to grant leases of recreation reserve under section 54 (b) of the Reserves Act 1977 subject to the conditions of the First Schedule of that Act. This section incorporates the leasing of Recreation Reserves to:

“...voluntary organisations for the purposes of erecting stands, pavilions, gymnasium, and subject to sections 44 and 45 of this Act, other buildings and structures associated with and necessary for the use of the reserve for outdoor sports, games, or other recreational activities...”.

TRAINING FACILITY PROPOSAL

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

Papanui Softball Club proposes to erect a softball batting cage using the existing north fence of the softball diamond as the southern wall of the batting cage (see attached Site Plan and Elevations). The frame of the proposed cage is to be constructed of steel piping, and will be enclosed with heavy diamond mesh netting. The batting cage will be three metres high, six metres wide and twenty metres in length, to enable a safe training facility that does not encroach upon the landscape values of the Domain.

Several alternative sites have been examined. The proposed area is the most practical as it incorporates the use of an existing structure, is not hampered by lighting poles and is not aesthetically obtrusive upon the open spaces of the Domain.

Pitching machines need to be used in the batting cage to assist in the training of softballers. The club possess two machines which are powered by a generator. It is envisaged that the proposed batting cage will not increase noise levels already associated with softball training, as the pitching machines emit limited noise and are presently being used in the park. The hours of use of the pitching machines and batting cage will not differ from those already being carried out. Amalgamating the batting cage into the existing structure, which is significantly large, will assist to reduce the visual mass of the cage. The club has the money with which 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 utilises a site that already has an artificial softball diamond and associated structures upon it without necessitating the need to create another 'stand alone' structure. The existing garden bed between the proposed batting cage and Sawyers Arms Road will assist to obscure the batting cage from the residential properties opposite Papanui Domain, ensuring that the open spaces of the Domain are not unduly compromised.

Recommendation: That the Papanui/Shirley Community Board recommends to the Parks and Recreation Committee that the application by the Papanui Softball Club, to lease 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 one day less than 20 years be approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Public notification and subsequent approval by the Minister of Conservation.
2. The Papanui Softball Club to obtain all necessary Resource and Building Consents before any development commences upon the site.
3. The lease terms to be negotiated by the Property Manager in consultation with the Area Parks Officer (Consents).
4. The leased/construction area to be maintained by the Papanui Softball Club in a safe and tidy condition at all times.
5. All costs associated with the development, and subsequent maintenance of the structure upon the site to be paid for by the Papanui Softball Club.
6. The Papanui Softball Club is to show proof of having obtained \$1,000,000 public liability insurance to the Area Parks Officer (Consents) before commencing work upon the site.
7. The Papanui Softball Club is to show proof of having an Occupational Health and Safety Hazard Plan in place which focuses upon the machine maintenance programme, operating procedures and training before commencing operations upon the site to the Area Parks Officer (Consents).

8. The pitching machine is to be locked and unable to be used when not under the control of a properly trained operator.
9. Before any tenders are let or work commences upon the site, discussions are to be 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.
10. A bond of \$2,000 is to be paid by the Papanui Softball Club or successful principal contractor to the Christchurch City Council/Area Parks Officer – Fendalton before work commences upon the site. The bond less any expenses incurred by the Council will be refunded to the payee upon the completion of the work.

**Chairperson's
Recommendation:**

That the officer's recommendations be adopted and that residents in the area be consulted on this proposal.