

17. **RICCARTON/WIGRAM ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH COMMITTEE
REPORT OF 19 SEPTEMBER 2001**

Officer responsible Community Advocate	Author Roger Cave, Community Secretary DDI 372 2502
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The purpose of this report is to submit the outcomes of the Environment and Health Committee meeting held on Wednesday 19 September 2001.

The meeting was attended by Alison Wilkie (Chairperson), Mary Corbett, Neville Bennett, David Buist, and Mike Mora.

Ishwar Ganda was also present.

1. **UPPER RICCARTON DOMAIN CONSULTATION UPDATE
VILLA MARIA COLLEGE DEPUTATION**

On behalf of Villa Maria College, Messrs Bernard Duncan (Chairman of the Board of Trustees) and Tony Sewell (Chairman of the Property Committee) were in attendance.

On behalf of the Tennis Club, Peter Reyland was present.

The College representatives had been invited to outline their future development proposals (at the College), as part of the community consultation process, currently underway, in respect of the Domain and the tennis club's wish for more courts.

Messrs Duncan and Sewell discussed the following proposal:

- Villa Maria is presently developing a Ten Year Capital Development programme.
- Part of that plan is to provide a combined netball court/tennis court facility to replace the existing inadequate facility next to the Peer Street entrance to the college.
- Proposed location of these new facilities is near the main Brodie Street entrance to the school where the indoor netball facility is located, along with fifty carparks.
- The facility proposed would consist of six courts with building of them to be staged, pending available funds.
- The college is aware that the City Council is anxious to minimise further erosion of parks and green spaces in the Upper Riccarton area but also wants to see the provision of further sporting facilities.
- The college wants to broaden its participation in the wider community and therefore would consider making land available to the Council for the provision of new facilities at the Brodie Street entrance of the college.
- Our limited research shows that the timing of community or local club use would complement the college's requirements for the facility. Other schools who have entered into such an arrangement confirm this.
- Villa Maria sees this as a great opportunity for the college and the community to work together to avoid a duplication of facilities and to produce a win-win for both parties.

There was discussion on other related issues, such as direct access from the Domain to Brodie Street, traffic/pedestrian issues at both Brodie Street and Peer Street, (Council) support for community funding applications to develop the new courts.

Peter Reyland commented on the College proposals, also.

The Board had agreed to facilitate a meeting with other sports code groups, also; this was held in late October.

The Committee **received** the information.

2. FERRIER PARK – NEW TOILET BLOCK

The Committee was in receipt of an extensive report from the Parks and Waterways Area Advocate (Rod Whearty) regarding the outcome of consultation for the siting of the new toilet block on Ferrier Park including a proposed meeting with those residents adjacent to the two proposed sites to confirm the final location of the new toilet.

BACKGROUND

Consultation with local residents in 1998 regarding landscape redevelopment and playground equipment for Ferrier Park identified the need for toilet facilities on the park. The Parks and Waterways Unit recently consulted with local residents around Ferrier Park regarding the siting of a new toilet block for the park.

There was an excellent response from the local community with a total of 256 residents returning the questionnaire indicating their preferred location for the proposed toilet block.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

Residents were given information along with a site plan showing the two proposed locations which included a computerised image showing how the toilet would look on the park in both of these locations. Residents were asked to indicate their preferred option. The results from the questionnaire are listed in the table below.

1. Preferred location for the new toilet block on Ferrier Park

Site 1 (Adjacent to the main path leading to Avonhead Primary School).....	143
Site 2 (Adjacent to the playground equipment)	111
Other	3

SITE SELECTION AND REQUIREMENTS

The siting of toilets on parks is a critical factor in the successful operation and use of these facilities. In both situations the building has been set back off the street to assist with integrating the building on the park frontage. Adjacent shrub borders in both locations allow some minor screening and “softening” of the facility.

The following factors were also key considerations when selecting the site.

- Located near the road frontage with good visibility and not in a secluded area of the park.
- Located within easy walking distance of both sports fields and the play area.
- Located near existing paths enables the construction of permanent all weather access to the facility.
- Located close to an area with high numbers of pedestrians and vehicles regularly passing by enhances user safety.
- The need to provide adequate separation between the building and adjacent sports fields for player safety.
- Proximity to existing services assists in keeping construction costs to an acceptable level

SITE 1

The location of the sports field influences the siting in this location as there needs to be adequate boundary clearance between the building and the playing field to ensure player safety. This results in the toilet being located slightly closer to the road, where under normal circumstances it would probably be set back a further 5-10 metres or so.

However increasing road setback and sports field clearance could be achieved by locating the toilet in the current location of the existing path which leads to Avonhead School and then realigning a small section of the existing path around the toilet block.

While this site has the advantage of being centrally located to both sports fields and in an area with high pedestrian numbers, it is more difficult to visually integrate a stand alone building on the park in this location.

SITE 2

The location of the existing sports field and playground influence the siting in this location. Under normal circumstances we would probably locate the facility slightly closer to the road, however in this case that would place the facility in front of the children's playground which is undesirable as it would restrict visibility into the play area from the road.

An advantage with the proposed location is that the doors face the street and play area so parents or guardians can maintain constant visual contact with children going to the toilet. The toilet is close enough for them to provide effective supervision while remaining seated near the play area or watching over other children.

This site also provides much better visual integration of the building into the park surrounds through being located near other structural features.

RESIDENTS FEEDBACK

Overall there is a good level of support within the community for a public toilet facility on Ferrier Park which is confirmed by the number of local residents responding to the consultation. Many of the residents returning the questionnaire also provided written comments outlining why they had selected a particular option (See Attachment).

The feedback from those residents living near the two proposed sites was fairly predictable and generally those closer to site 1 preferred site 2 as the final location while those nearer site 2 preferred site 1 as the final location.

A number of residents stated "stranger danger" and concern for children's safety as their reason for choosing one site over the other. Some said don't put it near the playground for that reason while others said don't put it near the path leading to the school stating that reason also.

Unfortunately there appears to be a general perception from some sections in the community that these facilities pose a risk to children through attracting an "undesirable" element into our parks. These facilities pose little "real" danger to children when sited in an appropriate location.

This may well be due to our "Safer Parks" strategy developed some years ago in partnership between the Council, Police and Safer Community Council that among other things gives careful consideration to the positioning, siting and design of these types of facilities on our parks.

CONCLUSION

The Parks and Waterways Unit is comfortable with either site and while there are advantages and disadvantages for either of the sites, none of the disadvantages pose any significant risk in terms of user safety, which at the end of the day is the prime consideration.

Locating these facilities in areas that are easily viewed from the street with good visibility reduces the risk of vandalism and graffiti. Casual public surveillance from members of the public walking through the park, using the playground, adjacent sports fields or driving past in their cars will also assist with the successful functioning of the facility. Toilets have been successfully integrated into many other parks around the city by locating them in sites similar to this.

In general siting should probably favour the informal and casual park users who use the park more frequently which is likely to be the local residents over the organised sports players who are there only for limited periods of time.

COMMITTEE DELIBERATIONS

Whilst the officer recommendation was to arrange a meeting with those residents adjacent to the two proposed sites, in order to try and reach agreement on the final location of the toilet block on Ferrier Park, the Committee was of the view that the consultative feedback was sufficient so as to now make a recommendation to the incoming Board.

SITE 1

The location of the sports field influences the siting in this location as there needs to be adequate boundary clearance between the building and the playing field to ensure player safety. This results in the toilet being located slightly closer to the road, where under normal circumstances it would probably be set back a further 5-10 metres or so.

While this site has the advantage of being centrally located to both sports fields and in an area with high pedestrian numbers, it is more difficult to visually integrate a stand alone building on the park in this location.

SITE 2

The location of the existing sports field and playground also influence the siting in this location. Under normal circumstances we would probably locate the facility slightly closer to the road, however in this case that would place the facility in front of the children's playground which is undesirable as it would restrict visibility into the play area from the road.

A major advantage with this location is that the doors face the street and play area so parents or guardians can maintain constant visual contact with children going to the toilet. The toilet is close enough for them to provide effective supervision while remaining seated near the play area or supervising other children.

This site also provides much better visual integration of the building into the park surrounds through being located near other structural features. There is also more screening of the facility for houses that are immediately adjacent to this site than in site 1.

Recommendation: That the Community Board receive the Committee recommendation for the toilet block in Ferrier Park be at Site 2.

3. AVONHEAD BASKETBALL FACILITY

The Committee was in receipt of a report on the sites investigated for a full sized basketball facility in the Avonhead area.

This proposed court is an outcome of the Avonhead Sport, Recreation and Arts Study jointly undertaken by the Boards last year.

An Implementation Strategy was presented to the Boards in November 2000.

One of the outcomes identified by the study was the need for a full sized basketball facility in the Avonhead area.

One of the key reasons the study was jointly undertaken if the first place was an acknowledgement that communities of interest don't necessarily conform to Council Ward boundaries and there were often opportunities where Community Boards could work more closely together to obtain a more efficient and effective use of their resources.

The Community Recreation Advisors at Fendalton and Sockburn have recently undertaken consultation with potential users and Asian Youth in the Avonhead area regarding some of the design criteria for the proposed facility.

The Parks and Waterways Area Advocates and the community Recreation Advisors of both Boards supported by other staff, have completed an initial survey of 4 parks in the study area. This survey has identified Crosbie Park as the best site for such a facility.

The Fendalton Waimairi Community Board allocated up to \$20,000 and the Riccarton/Wigram Community Board \$15,000. This joint funding was on the basis that the facility would be located close to the ward boundary, and therefore provide recreational opportunities to residents on both Community Board areas.

Once the Board committees have agreed to the preferred site, full consultation with the public in the area will be undertaken.

Research undertaken two years ago of children aged 10 to 14 years showed a need for recreational facilities targeted at this group and is in line with the Council's Children and Youth Strategy Policy, and the Council's commitment to inclusiveness of all members of our community.

Sharing the cost of projects between adjacent Community Boards is an efficient use of the Boards' financial resources as it reduces the total commitment for each Community Board while providing recreational opportunities for residents in both Board areas.

Recommendation: That Crosbie Park be the preferred site for the Avonhead Basketball Facility subject to public consultation.

4. HERITAGE RIVER PROTECTION GROUP

Neville Bennett advised of this recently-established group.

5. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Committee Chairperson recorded her thanks to Committee members and staff for the work done by this Committee during its three year term.

- Recommendations:**
1. That the Community Board receive the Committee recommendation for the toilet block in Ferrier Park be at Site 2.
 2. That Crosbie Park be the preferred site for the Avonhead Basketball Facility subject to public consultation.